

NOTE FOR PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

Supplementary Information on 343CL – Central and Wan Chai reclamation – engineering works (remainder)

INTRODUCTION

In deliberating PWSC(2000-01)1 on **343CL** “Central and Wan Chai reclamation – engineering works (remainder)” at the PWSC meeting on 12 April 2000, Members requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the air quality impact assessment for the proposed roads network as well as the urban design concepts applicable to the Central reclamation phase III (CRIII).

THE ADMINISTRATION’S RESPONSE

Air Quality

2. We are aware that air quality in Central will be affected by -
 - (a) the proposed surface roads on CRIII;
 - (b) emissions from the ventilation building for the Central–Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) (please refer to Annex 1 for the location); and
 - (c) the proposed surface roads on Wanchai Development Phase II (WDII).

Detailed Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) are being carried out under the EIA Ordinance to assess their cumulative impacts.

3. The initial findings of the EIA study commissioned by the Territory Development Department (TDD) under the Feasibility Study for CRIII show that air quality in Central will be acceptable after completion of the proposed works set out in paragraphs 2(a) and (b) above. The concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)¹ from vehicles on the open road sections will not exceed 300µgm⁻³ over an average of one hour, which is the prescribed Air Quality Objectives (AQO) under Air Pollution Control Ordinance, at any of the air intakes associated with existing or proposed buildings. In addition, the levels of NO₂ emitted from the ventilation building for CWB will not exceed the AQO in general. Under the worst case scenario², the air quality of a small area within a radius of 30m from the ventilation building and at an elevation of 30m above ground level would slightly exceed the AQO. However, this is insignificant as the impact would be localized near the ventilation building where there is no air sensitive receiver³.

4. Given the adjustments to the alignment and the widening of the tunnel of CWB from dual-2-lane to dual-3-lane configuration, the EIA study is currently under review. Mitigation measures will be proposed if necessary.

5. The EIA study for the proposed works in paragraph 2(c) above is being conducted under the Comprehensive Feasibility Study of WDII. TDD and Highways Department will look into the cumulative impact of CRIII, CWB and WDII and submit these EIAs in one go under the EIA Ordinance. The Administration will consult both the public and Advisory Council on the Environment on these EIA findings prior to the EIA approval.

Urban Design Concepts

6. At the PWSC meeting, a Member asked whether the government has applied urban design concepts in the proposed CRIII and requested confirmation that we had given sufficient consideration to minimize at-grade traffic. Members also expressed concern over the future crowd control arrangements in the waterfront promenade and requested that the promenade should be designed to allow convenient pedestrian access from existing districts.

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¹ Past project experience suggests that NO₂ is the most critical parameter in terms of impacts caused from road traffic and modelling concentrated on emissions of NO₂.

² The worst case scenario is the estimated emission level under unfavourable meteorological conditions and peak-hour traffic at the critical design year 2021.

³ Air sensitive receivers refer to any domestic premises, hotel, hostel, office, factory, shop, shopping centre, performing arts centre, etc.

7. We can confirm that in planning CRlll, we have adopted the concepts of segregating pedestrian and vehicular traffic and reducing the amount of surface roads as far as possible. In the Central District (Extension) Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) approved in February 2000, we have reduced the area of roads by 40% compared with that of the draft OZP gazetted in 1998. The CWB will be fully built in tunnel and the proposed trunk road P2 will be submerged under the Civic Corridor to minimize at-grade traffic. Separately, we have designed three principal corridors, viz, the Statue Square Corridor (including Open Space Corridor and the Historic Corridor), the Civic Corridor and the Arts and Entertainment Corridor, to provide pedestrian-friendly environment and connections to existing developed districts. These Corridors, as well as other inter-connected north-south and east-west elevated walkways, podiums and piazza, will link up with the MTR and the future North Hong Kong Island Line station to enhance the accessibility of the new waterfront area.

8. We will map out crowd control measures to tie in with the final detailed design of the promenade. The planned waterfront promenade will be 1.5km long and 60m wide at the narrowest point. This should provide ample open space for crowds to gather and disperse. From the planning point of view, the pedestrian connections which link up with the mass transit system as mentioned in paragraph 7 above would greatly facilitate dispersion of crowds during festivals, events and ceremonies.

Planning and Lands Bureau
June 2000