

Southern District Council
District Development and Environment Committee
Report on Progress of the Shatin to Central Link

Introduction

1. This paper briefs Members on the progress of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL).

Background

2. In accordance with the Railways Ordinance, the Chief Executive in Council authorised the SCL project on 27 March 2012. The scheme was gazetted on 26 November 2010, and amended on 15 July and 11 November 2011 respectively.
3. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council endorsed the funding of the Shatin to Central Link project on 11 May 2012. The construction of the project has just commenced. The Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section is expected to be completed in 2018. The Hung Hom to Admiralty Section will have to interface with other infrastructure projects, including Wan Chai Development Phase II and Central-Wan Chai Bypass. The construction of the Cross Harbour Section and the Hong Kong Island Section are expected to commence in 2014 and be completed in 2020. The tendering of the SCL works contracts is underway with a number of civil engineering contracts having already been awarded.
4. The 17-kilometre SCL is a territory-wide strategic railway project with ten stations, which are Tai Wai, Hin Keng, Diamond Hill, Kai Tak, To Kwa Wan, Ma Tau Wai, Ho Man Tin, Hung Hom, Exhibition and Admiralty. The project is linked with a number of existing and future railways to form two strategic railway corridors, namely the "East West Corridor" and the "North South Corridor"
5. The "East West Corridor" will be formed by extending the Ma On Shan Line from Tai Wai Station to Hung Hom Station where it will connect with the West Rail Line. Passengers can travel from Wu Kai Sha Station to East Kowloon, Hung Hom, the

West New Territories and Tuen Mun without interchanging. The railway service between the East New Territories and West New Territories will become more direct and convenient.

6. The “North South Corridor” will extend the existing East Rail Line from Hung Hom Station across the Victoria Harbour to Admiralty Station. Passengers from Lo Wu (using the East Rail Line) and Huanggang (using the Lok Ma Chau Line) can reach the heart of Hong Kong Island directly.
7. The SCL will significantly reduce the journey time for passengers who travel between East Kowloon, the East New Territories, the North New Territories and Hong Kong Island. It will enhance the rail capacity from Shatin to Kowloon and across the harbour, as well as relieve the congestion of the existing railway lines.

Works Progress

8. SCL Public Consultation and Gazettal

8.1 The Government and the MTR Corporation have undertaken an extensive public consultation on the SCL since 2008. Since the original SCL scheme was gazetted on 26 November 2010 under the Railways Ordinance, the Government and the Corporation have collected valuable opinions from community stakeholders and residents. Having regard to the public concerns and comments, the Corporation has further optimized the railway scheme and two amendments to the scheme were gazetted. Major amendments include altering the alignment of the railway tunnel to reduce resumption of underground strata, cancellation of the proposed stabling sidings in Diamond Hill, relocation of the stabling sidings to the former freight yard at Hung Hom, and cancellation of the proposed temporary concrete batching plant in Kai Tak.

8.2 No new objection was received subsequent to the two rounds of amendments to the railway scheme. 12 objectors of the original SCL scheme

have withdrawn their objections unconditionally. An independent panel formed by non-official members has heard all un-withdrawn objection cases in accordance with the administrative arrangements. All the un-withdrawn objection cases were subsequently submitted to the Chief Executive in Council for consideration.

9. Protection Works, Advance Works and Major Reprovisioning Works of SCL.

9.1 The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council endorsed the funding application of the protection works, advance works and major reprovisioning works of SCL in 2010 and 2011 respectively. The works include protection works at Wan Chai Development Phase II and the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter (CBTS), advance works at Admiralty and Ho Man Tin Station, and reprovisioning of International Mail Centre, part of Harcourt Garden and Hong Kong Park.

9.2 The protection works, advance works and major reprovisioning works have commenced with good progress since 2011.

10. Cross-harbour rail tunnel

10.1 The SCL cross-harbour rail tunnel in Victoria Harbour will be built using the immersed tube tunnel method. It is proposed to set up an immersed tube tunnel pre-cast units casting yard at the former Shek O Quarry. Another infrastructure project - Trunk Road T2 by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) will also adopt the same construction method to build their tunnel and precast their tunnel units at the former Shek O Quarry. The Corporation, the Railway Development Office of the Highways Department and CEDD have introduced and submitted documents about the arrangement of setting up an immersed tube tunnel pre-cast units casting yard at the former Shek O Quarry for SCL and Trunk Road T2 to the District Development and Environment Committee under the Southern District Council in November 2009 and July 2010. In accordance

with the current schedule, the construction of SCL at the former Shek O Quarry is expected to be completed in 2018. The Corporation will continue to coordinate with the related Government departments on the co-use arrangement of the casting yard at the former Shek O Quarry.

- 10.2 After the completion of the works at Shek O Quarry, the lot will be restored. The long term development plan of the lot will be devised by related Government departments.

Land Arrangement

- 10.3 For the purpose of minimizing the impact to the community, our principle in designing the SCL alignment is to avoid land resumption.

- 10.4 The SCL project will not resume underground strata or occupy private lands in the Southern District. The land arrangement of other districts has been shown in the gazetted railway scheme.

Environmental Impact Assessment

- 10.5 The Environmental Protection Department approved the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Reports of the SCL on 17 February 2012, and issued the environmental permit to the Corporation on 22 March 2012. The Corporation will ensure that the SCL project complies with relevant statutory requirements and will carry out any necessary environmental mitigation measures.

Tree Preservation

- 10.6 The SCL project will not affect trees in the Southern District.

Community Liaison

10.7 Building a railway is intended to enhance the rail service for the general public. Opinions collected at public engagement activities can help refine the design of a new railway line. The Corporation and the Government have maintained a close connection with the Southern District Council and the related stakeholders in order to collect opinions on the SCL. The Corporation will continue to work closely with the community. We will report the work progress regularly by attending District Council meetings and continue to listen to the community.

Conclusion

11. The SCL can enhance the current railway service. It will also help divert passengers to different railway lines, relieving the congestion along the railway lines in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. The SCL will expand rail services to districts such as Kai Tak, To Kwa Wan, Ma Tau Wai and Ho Man Tin which are currently not covered by the railway network, allowing these areas to rejuvenate and prosper.

12. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

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