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Panel on Development

Meeting on 27 May 2014

**Background brief on the proposed
Environmentally Friendly Linkage System for Kowloon East**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the proposed Environmentally Friendly Linkage System ("EFLS") for Kowloon East and a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by Members at the meetings of the Legislative Council and the Panel on Development ("DEV Panel") on the subject since the 2011-2012 legislative session.

Background

2. The approved Kai Tak outline zoning plan ("OZP") in November 2007 contains a reserve for a possible elevated rail-based EFLS as a long-term transport mode subject to detailed design. The OZP alignment is mainly confined within the Kai Tak Development ("KTD") to serve the new developments in the area. In December 2009, the Civil Engineering and Development Department commissioned a study to investigate feasible EFLS network alignments ("the Study"). The scope of the Study also covered possible extension of the proposed EFLS to the hinterland with a view to addressing the public aspiration for enhancement of the connectivity and integration between KTD and the hinterland in Kowloon East.

3. In his 2011-2012 Policy Address, the then Chief Executive announced that the Administration would adopt a visionary, co-ordinated and integrated approach to transform Kowloon East, comprising KTD, Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay, into a core business district ("CBD"). In

drawing up the EFLS network alignments, the Study considered the important role to be played by EFLS in "Energizing Kowloon East", i.e. to enhance inter-district and intra-district connectivity of Kowloon East, and come up with an EFLS proposal to effectively cope with the development strategies for Kowloon East CBD.

Two-stage public consultation exercise

4. The Administration commenced a two-stage public consultation ("PC") exercise to solicit public views on the EFLS proposal. In April 2012, the Administration briefed DEV Panel on the preliminary findings of the Study and public views received during the on-going Stage 1 PC exercise, which was held from February to October 2012, on the proposed construction of EFLS.

5. The Study suggested, as its preliminary findings, adopting an elevated monorail system as EFLS and proposed a 9-kilometre 12-station line linking the MTR Kowloon Bay Station to the KTD Station Square, where it could interchange with the Kai Tak Station of the future Shatin to Central Link, and then all the way along the former runway before crossing the Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter ("KTTS") and terminating at the MTR Kwun Tong Station. The preferred EFLS alignment option provided by the Administration is in **Appendix I**.

6. The Stage 2 PC, which took place from 28 October 2013 to 4 February 2014, was aimed at responding to the views and suggestions received by the Administration in the Stage 1 PC and seeking views and suggestions on a proposed detailed feasibility study to address various concerns before committing to project implementation. According to the public consultation digest for the Stage 2 PC¹, the Administration provided response to views received in the following three areas:

- (a) Need for an elevated rail-based EFLS;
- (b) Coverage and alignment; and
- (c) Implications for KTTS.

¹ The Stage 2 Public Consultation Digest can be downloaded at the following link:
http://www.ktd.gov.hk/efls/pdf/EFLS_Pamphlet.pdf

Deliberation by Members

7. The views expressed by Members on the proposed EFLS at the meetings of the DEV Panel and the Legislative Council are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Need for an elevated rail-based environmental friendly linkage system

8. Some DEV Panel members were concerned that, with a high capital cost (around \$12 billion according to an estimate in 2012) and a low projected return rate at around +1%, which was lower than that of a typical transport infrastructure project, usually with a return of +4% or more, the proposed EFLS would have to rely on full Government subsidy for operation in the long run. They considered that the Administration should review the estimated cost by conducting a detailed study. Other members considered that despite its low projected financial returns, EFLS should be taken as an infrastructure investment aiming to achieve the non-quantifiable economic benefits. The Administration was urged to provide more information, including the financial positions of similar overseas EFLS, to the DEV Panel for further discussion.

9. As regards some members' questions on whether consideration would be given to transport modes other than a monorail system, the Administration said that it remained open-minded on whether road-based green transport modes should be adopted in place of a monorail system and would engage the public extensively on various transport modes. In reply to an oral question raised at the Council meeting of 26 June 2013, the Secretary for Development advised that environmental-friendly feeder bus services would be provided before the completion of all development projects and EFLS. Regarding the proposal of the provision of tram services, the Administration had conducted studies and concluded that it was not feasible technically as it would be difficult to find adequate space in urban areas, such as Kwun Tong, for dedicated tram rails which would take up considerable space.

Coverage and alignment

10. Some members urged the Administration to consider extending the coverage of the proposed EFLS to To Kwa Wan, Kowloon City and San Po Kan and hillside areas in Kwun Tong so as to facilitate the transport needs of the residents in these communities. The Administration advised that the Study had suggested not extending EFLS to these areas due to the complicated technical difficulties, constraints of topographical environment,

including the noise and visual impact on the residential areas of the old districts, concerns about the intrusion of privacy of the residents living in the flats near the elevated rail, and so on.

11. As regards the hillside areas in Kwun Tong, in reply to a question at the Council meeting of 20 March 2013, the Administration explained that EFLS in the form of elevated monorail had limited climbing ability that made it difficult for the system to overcome steep uphill gradient. There were technical limitations and the headroom under the MTR Kwun Tong Line was insufficient to accommodate the monorail. As such, extending the proposed EFLS to the hillside area in Kwun Tong was not recommended. However, the Administration has indicated that the possibility of building in the flexibility for future expansion of EFLS would be considered in the detailed feasibility study.

Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter

12. Under the Administration's proposed alignment, the Kwun Tong Transportation Link, being an integral part of the proposed EFLS, will span across the entrance of the KTTS with a suggested vertical clearance of 21 metres above the sea level, thereby rendering it impossible for some high-mast vessels to use KTTS. There were also public aspirations expressed in the Stage 1 PC to have a more beneficial use of the water body at the typhoon shelter, such as using it as a water sports centre.

13. Some DEV Panel members suggested that in the absence of a satisfactory arrangement for accommodating the high-mast vessels to other suitable typhoon shelters, height restriction must not be implemented at KTTS. The Administration assured members that it would commission a survey and a study in mid-2012 to explore feasible and agreeable alternative measures.

14. According to the Administration, since the closure of the Kwun Tong Public Cargo Working Area in 2011, commercial marine activities in the typhoon shelter have drastically reduced, which would free the area for other activities. Moreover, in recent years, not many high-mast lighters sought shelter in the area during typhoons. Taking into account the current usage of KTTS, the proposed detailed feasibility study would explore the scope to release the water body for co-use with other activities and investigate the need for and sourcing of alternative sheltered spaces for the displaced vessels.

Questions and motion debates at Legislative Council meetings

15. Members have raised a number of oral and written questions about the progress and details of the proposed EFLS at Council meetings since the 2011-2012 legislative session. Hyperlinks to these questions are given in **Appendix II**. At the Council meeting of 20 March 2013, a motion debate was held on "Implementing the Kai Tak Planning to dovetail with Kowloon East development". The Administration was urged, amongst others, to expeditiously implement the construction of a monorail system to connect Kai Tak, the various areas in Kowloon East and Kowloon City District, and at the same time, study the extension of the system to the mid-level areas of Kowloon East, so as to better meet the transport needs of residents in these communities.

Recent developments

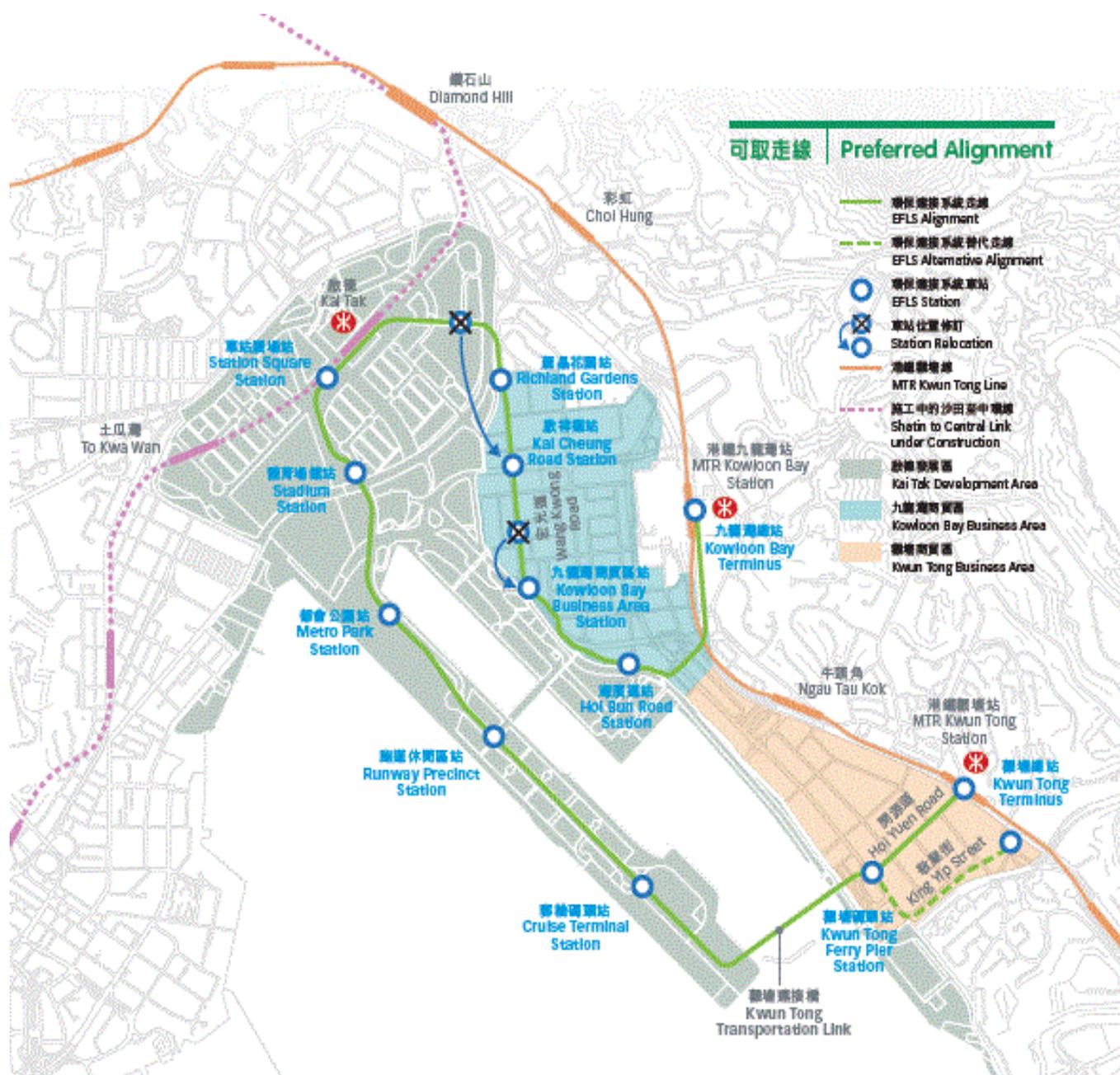
16. The Administration will report the outcome of the Stage 2 PC to the DEV Panel and seek the Panel's support for upgrading PWP Item No. 065TR (detailed feasibility study on EFLS) to Category A at the Panel's meeting on 27 May 2014.

Relevant papers

17. A list of relevant papers is shown in **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
20 May 2014

環保連接系統可取走線
Preferred alignment of the Environmentally Friendly Linkage System



資料來源：環保連接系統第二階段公眾諮詢摘要
(http://www.ktd.gov.hk/efls/pdf/EFLS_Pamphlet.pdf)
Source: EFLS Stage 2 Public Consultation Digest
(http://www.ktd.gov.hk/efls/pdf/EFLS_Pamphlet.pdf)

**Proposed Environmentally Friendly Linkage System
for Kowloon East**

List of relevant papers

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	17 April 2012	<p>Administration's paper on "Environmentally Friendly Linkage System for Kowloon East" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1514/11-12(02)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0417cb1-1514-2-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2565/11-12) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20120417.pdf</p>
Council meeting	27 June 2012	<p>Hansard -- written question (No. 8) on "Environmentally Friendly Linkage System for Kowloon East" (p. 16484 - 16487) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0627-translate-e.pdf</p>
Council meeting	24 October 2012	<p>Hansard -- oral question (No. 1) on "Ancillary Transport Facilities for New Cruise Terminal" (p. 532 - 544) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1024-translate-e.pdf</p>
Council meeting	20 March 2013	<p>Hansard -- written question (No. 10) on "Ancillary transport facilities for future development at Anderson Road Quarry" (p. 7565 - 7570) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0320-translate-e.pdf</p>

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
		<p>Motion debate on "Implementing the Kai Tak Planning to dovetail with Kowloon East development"</p> <p>Hansard (p 7782-7873) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0320-translate-e.pdf</p> <p>Progress report http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/counmtg/motion/cm0320-m5-prpt-e.pdf</p>
Council meeting	6 November 2013	<p>Hansard -- written question (No. 20) on "Planning for Kai Tak Development Area" (p. 1888 - 1891) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1106-translate-e.pdf</p>
Council meeting	14 May 2014	<p>Written question (No. 2) on "Environmentally Friendly Linkage System in Kowloon East" http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201405/14/P201405140432.htm</p>