

# **Board of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority**

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For discussion  
on 26 November 2009

WKCDA Board/41/2009

## **West Kowloon Terminus of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link – Briefing by Railway Development Office, Highways Department**

### **PURPOSE**

This paper is to brief Members on the latest design of the West Kowloon Terminus (WKT) of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL).

### **BACKGROUND**

2. The XRL is an express rail, which will link up Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou. It will shorten the journey time between Hong Kong and Guangzhou significantly from about 100 minutes to 48 minutes. The journey time from the WKT to Futian Station and the Shenzhen North Station of Longhua in Shenzhen will be about 14 and 23 minutes respectively. Through the Futian Station, Shenzhen North Station, Humen Station in Dongguan and its terminus at Shibi in Guangzhou, XRL passengers can interchange with various domestic, regional and national railway networks. Thus, the Hong Kong section of the XRL is of great strategic importance.

3. The railway scheme of the Hong Kong section of the XRL (including the proposed land and strata to be resumed) were gazetted on 28 November and 5 December 2008; and the amendments to the scheme were gazetted on 30 April and 8 May 2009. The Chief Executive-in-Council has authorized the Hong Kong Section of the XRL scheme, and the notices of authorization were gazetted on 30 October and 6 November 2009. Subject to the funding approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, we plan to commence the construction of the Hong Kong section of the XRL by the end of 2009 for completion in 2015.

4. Given the XRL Terminus to be located West Kowloon, the Hong Kong section of the XRL project will have interfaces with the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). In this connection, we have much liaison with the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) in order to work out the

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interfacing arrangement, so as to ensure smooth implementation of the two projects. We understand that the design of the WKT is of much interest to the WKCDA Board members, we have, from time to time, updated members of the latest progress at the Development Committee meetings. In 2009, we briefed the Development Committee members at its meetings on 14 January, 10 July 2009 and 12 November 2009.

## **WEST KOWLOON TERMINUS**

### **Introduction**

5. The WKT, as the southern terminus of the XRL, will be a large scale underground station at a depth of over 20m with a total of 9 long haul and 6 shuttles platforms (**Annexes 1 and 2**). It is located at the north of the WKCD, between the Airport Railway Kowloon Station on the West and the West Rail Austin Station (AUS) on the East. Terminus entrances will be provided at various levels to match with adjacent developments.

6. Locating the XRL Hong Kong Terminus in the proximity of the WKCD will enable both projects to fully realize their economic benefits. Well served by the XRL, more visitors from the Pearl River Delta will be attracted to the WKCD to take part in the arts and cultural activities; and the higher passenger volume brought by the WKCD will enhance the cost-effectiveness of the XRL. These two projects will complement each other and achieve synergy, bringing greater benefits to our economy. According to current plans, the Hong Kong section of the XRL will be completed in 2015 in tandem with Phase 1 development of the WKCD.

### **WKT Urban Design Vision and Connectivity**

7. The overall design vision for the WKT is to create a vibrant, low carbon emission, and accessible environment which allows a wide spectrum of uses and activities to be taking place at the same time. While the WKT should enjoy a unique and distinctive identity to signify itself as the southern gateway to the Mainland, its design should be subdued and neutral so that it would be able to blend in well with the adjacent developments, especially the WKCD.

8. In designing the roads and pedestrian facilities for the WKT, we will also endeavour to provide a variety of choices to give the WKCD more planning latitude. To strengthen the connectivity of the WKT with the neighbouring railway stations, the WKCD and other development areas, achieving a seamless integration, we are going to link up the whole district with at-grade

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pedestrian zones, footbridges and pedestrian subways (**Annexes 3 and 4**). Improvement will be made to the existing pedestrian subway at the junction of Canton Road and Austin Road. Flexibility has been allowed to create the right ambience for the WKCD and to enrich the experience of the XRL passengers on their way to/from the vicinity.

9. To create a comfortable walking environment, for pedestrians travelling to the south of the WKT will be segregated from the vehicular traffic. Since the Lin Cheung Road-Austin Road Underpass will be built underground, a large-scale at-grade cultural plaza connecting the ground level of the WKT, Kowloon Station, Austin Station and the WKCD will be provided for the pedestrians. There will be a substantial amount of plants at the plaza, measuring approximately 8,900 square metres in area, to create green open space. The spacious pedestrian environment not only will cater for the needs of the development of West Kowloon and a large pedestrian flow, but will also provide quality public open space for the public.

10. Specific to greening of public space, the design concept of the at-grade open space at the WKT will be to encourage spontaneous or improvised activities, so that the public can enjoy their leisure in an all-weather environment. Performing arts activities, cultural exhibitions and the like can also be held to echo with the activities of the adjacent WKCD.

## **The Terminus**

11. The underground terminus composes of 5 major floor levels which accommodates HKSAR and, when co-location implemented, Mainland Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) facilities, departure waiting lounges, underground track area and platforms, passenger arrival and departure halls, duty free, food and beverage facilities, station parking and loading facilities etc.

12. Significant space has been introduced inside the terminus. It allows natural daylight into the interior as well as improves the way-finding for the passenger. It provides a sense of arrival where passenger could see the ground level surrounding through the glazing around the space. The concept is the natural light source being the guide to the arrival passengers exiting the station from the platforms. (**Annexes 5 and 6**)

## **Extension into the WKCD**

13. A portion of the WKT is located below ground within the future WKCD. The impact to the above ground area has been minimized to two vent shaft

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structures and emergency vehicular access that provide track side ventilation and fireman access points to important areas of the terminus.

14. On the planning front, as the WKCD is in the process of drawing up its master layout plan, we have made allowance for flexibility in the design of the WKT to better cater for the future creative planning of the cultural district. For instance, the current scheme allows for the future development of the WKCD on top of the station facilities. The ventilation shafts could be integrated into any future development and a transfer zone has also been provided allowing maximum flexibility to any future development above the station facilities within the WKCD. The WKT is designed on the assumption that the development in the extension area above will be medium-rise structures (up to maximum height of 70 mPD) which do not require sophisticated noise and vibration mitigation works.

## **Phased Handing Over of Works Sites and Works Areas**

15. To facilitate the construction of the WKT, there is a need to use land adjacent to the WKT to locate plant, materials and associated construction facilities. Phased handing over works areas to the WKCDA can be arranged from mid 2012 onwards, subject to the layout of the land use as proposed in the selected WKCD Conceptual Plan. As to the land required for the construction of the underground WKT, phased handing over can be arranged from 2014. With close collaboration of the two mega projects working in close proximity, we believe these two projects would be delivered as per planned baselines.

## **Coordination Amongst Concerned Parties**

16. There have been close liaisons and regular meetings between the WKCDA and Highways Department for good design and works coordination for the two projects. Furthermore, the consultants of MTR Corporation Limited and of the WKCDA have been meeting frequently to resolve interface issues.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

17. Members are invited to note the latest design of the WKT.

**Highways Department  
November 2009**