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Report of ELA Subcommittee

Environmental Impact Assessment on Kennedy Road Improvement and Queen's Lines Link (ACE EIA Paper 19/97)

4 29 dwellings in four buildings will be exposed to traffic noise level exceeding the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines limit for 1 to 3 dB(A). Since the dominant noise contribution at these noise sensitive receivers comes from the existing road, direct noise mitigation measures on the new road will be ineffective. Application of indirect noise remedies in the form of window insulation and air conditioning was examined. However, these dwellings do not meet the eligibility criteria because the additional noise level contributed from the new road is below 1 dB(A).

5 As regards ecological impact, 378 trees of species commonly found in Hong Kong will be cut, resulting in some loss of woodland fauna habitats and roosting sites for bats. Replanting of trees has been recommended to re-create a landscape pattern and woodland structure similar to the surrounding environment to provide habitats for birds, bats and possibly other wildlife. Bat boxes will also be installed on trees within the site.

EIA Subcommittee's Views and Recommendations

6 While members were in general content with the report and the proposed mitigation measures, they were concerned about tree management after expiry of the normal contractor's maintenance period. The project proponent would prepare a ecological management plan for the Urban Services Department to follow. Members were also concerned about the monitoring of the effectiveness of bat boxes. The project proponent agreed to carry out inspections at a semi-annual interval for five years. The Subcommittee noted the undertakings and agreed to recommend endorsement of the report on the following conditions:-

- (a) bat boxes should be made of durable materials and post-construction monitoring should be continued for five years at six-month intervals; and
- (b) post planting maintenance would be undertaken by Urban Services Department according to a management plan prepared by Highways Department in consultation with Agriculture and Fisheries Department.

Environmental Impact Assessment on Yuen Long South Development (ACE EIA Paper 20/97)

7 This project seeks to provide the infrastructure for the committed residential and other landuses in Yuen Long Area 13 and 14. The engineering infrastructure works include site formation of about 12.4 ha for the public housing site in Area 13, construction of a road network and its connection with existing roads and the sewage transfer scheme to serve both Area 13 and 14.

8 The major impacts highlighted in the EIA are traffic noise and ecology. Noise barriers are recommended where necessary and practicable to protect existing and future residents. Where direct measures are impracticable owing to sight-line and road safety requirements at junctions, indirect remedies in

the form of acoustic insulation and air-conditioning are recommended to reduce the noise impact on the existing noise sensitive receivers. About 85 dwellings are eligible for these measures. On ecological impacts, 0.4 ha of ponds with low ecological value would be lost. Most of the trees found in the study area are common species and no wildlife listed as rare or endangered species are recorded in the study area. The EIA recommended that the trees should be retained or transplanted as far as possible. Tree planting would also be carried out along the new roads and in the future housing estate.

EIA Subcommittee's View and Recommendation

9 Members agreed to recommend endorsement of the report without condition. One Member was concerned about wetland compensation but was satisfied with Agriculture and Fisheries Department's undertaking to include "wetland banking" in the study brief for the consultancy study on wetland compensation.

Advice sought

10 Members are invited to advise whether the EIA reports on Kennedy Road Improvement and Queen's Lines Link, and Yuen Long South Development should be endorsed.

Planning, Environment and Lands Bureau
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