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(ACE Paper 21/97)
for advice

Report of the EIA Subcommittee

The EIA Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) considered six EIA reports at its meeting on 7 April 1997, as below:

- (a) Environmental Impact Assessment for Tin Shui Wai Development Engineering Works for Development of Areas 3, 30 & 31 of the Development Zone and the Reserve Zone;
- (b) Environmental Impact Assessment of the Feasibility Study for Tai Wai to Ma On Shan Rail Link and KCR Extension to Tsim Sha Tsui;
- (c) Study of Military Sites in the New Territories for Residential Development : Environmental Impact Assessment;
- (d) Feasibility Study for Castle Peak Road Improvement Between Ka Loon Tsuen and Yau Kom Tau : Environmental Impact Assessment;
- (e) Environmental Impact Assessment for Hiram's Highway Improvement between Nam Wai and Ho Chung and Upgrading of Local Access Roads; and
- (f) Sha Tin New Town Stage II Road D15 Linking Lok Shun Path and Tai Po Road : Environmental Impact Assessment.

The first three were accompanied by the project proponents' presentations whilst the last three were considered by circulation and confirmed at the Subcommittee meeting.

***Environmental Impact Assessment for Tin Shui Wai Development
Engineering Works for Development of Areas 3, 30 & 31 of the Development
Zone and the Reserve Zone***

2. To relieve the pressure on housing, Government has committed to provide about 46,000 public housing flats in Tin Shui Wai for about 175,000 people by 2001. To support the aforementioned developments, various engineering works, such as site formation, construction of roads, bridges, sewage pumping station and stormwater drainage culverts and landscaping works have to be carried out.

3. The project proponent conducted the EIA Study for site formation works and the ACE was consulted on the Study in September 1996. The ACE deliberated that the Administration could proceed with the necessary procedures to secure funds for the project but no actual construction works should take place until the full EIA report was completed and endorsed by the ACE. This submission presents the full EIA report.

The EIA Study

4. The EIA Study has examined the impacts of the proposed engineering works to noise, water quality, air quality, waste, ecology and visual effects. The key recommendations on mitigation measures are as follows :

Water Quality

- (a) The provision of temporary drainage or bunds around the perimeter of the works area to collect surface runoff.
- (b) The installation of sediment ponds and oil interceptors to the temporary drainage to prevent pollutants from entering into the Eastern Drainage Channel and Western Drainage Channel.
- (c) The minimization of the amount of contaminated mud require removal from the drainage channels to reduce the release of contaminants into water.
- (d) The provision of gullet-pots, infiltration devices, planters and soft landscaping along carriageways and LRT tracks and the designation of more "green areas" to minimize the discharge of stormwater into the drainage channels.

Ecology

- (e) The provision of a 18.5 ha “constructed wetland” as replacement habitat for wetland lost from the project and for reduction of stormwater runoff pollution loads.

Noise Sensitive Receivers

- (f) The provision of road-side noise barriers and low noise road surface at selected locations.
- (g) The adoption of self-protective building design for the proposed housing developments.

EIA Subcommittee's Views and Recommendations

5. Members were generally satisfied with the proposed mitigation measures, particularly those on water quality and the proposed “constructed wetland”. They noted Yuen Long District Board’s (YLDB) concerns about the odour problem at the Western Drainage Channel and the traffic noise problem of Tin Ying Road and made the following comments :

- (a) it would not be environmentally desirable to concrete-line the whole Western Drainage Channel; and
- (b) the EIA Study had shown that, with the implementation of the proposed noise mitigation measures, the noise level at all NSRs along Tin Ying Road would meet the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) noise standards except for an existing school which will be provided with window insulations and air conditioning.

6. The Chairman proposed and Members agreed to recommend ACE to endorse the captioned EIA report without condition.

Environmental Impact Assessment of the Feasibility Study for Tai Wai to Ma On Shan Rail Link and KCR Extension to Tsim Sha Tsui

7. The proposed Ma On Shan Rail Link and KCR Extension to Tsim Sha Tsui are identified as high priority projects in the Railway Development Strategy, which was announced in December 1994, and are considered by the government as projects suitable for private sector participation. The purposes of the EIA are :

- (a) to evaluate the overall environmental feasibility of the proposal;
- (b) to identify environmental constraints that may affect the detailed design;
- (c) to identify options for mitigation measures to minimise adverse impacts; and
- (d) to establish the environmental protection requirements for incorporation into the tender documents.

The EIA Study

8. The EIA Study has concluded that:

- (a) with the implementation of recommended noise mitigation measures, the construction noise impact to NSRs could be controlled to within the EPD ProPECC limits;
- (b) with the erection of track-side noise barriers, cantilever barriers and noise enclosure of differing heights, the operational noise impact of the Ma On Shan Rail Link to NSRs could be controlled to within the HKPSG & NCO limits; and
- (c) the Ma On Shan Rail Link should be carefully designed so as to minimise its visual impacts.

EIA Subcommittee's Views and Recommendations

9. Members were concerned about the noise and visual impact of the Ma On Shan Rail Link and KCR Extension to Tsim Sha Tsui to NSRs nearby and the surrounding areas. They however realised that this EIA was only a feasibility study and the successful contractor would be required to conduct a

detailed EIA study at a later stage. Since this EIA Study had not identified any insurmountable environmental problem associated with the proposed projects, Members agreed to recommend ACE to endorse the captioned EIA report. They have however requested the project proponent to consult them on the detailed EIA report when available.

***Study of Military Sites in the New Territories for Residential Development :
Environmental Impact Assessment***

10. Four military sites, namely the Pearl Island Married Quarters, Perowne Barracks and Gordon Hard, Dills Corner Camp and Beas Stables Married Quarters, have been identified by Government as potential sites for housing developments and an EIA Study was conducted to examine the environmental impacts of the proposed housing developments, and to identify mitigation measures.

The EIA Study

11. The EIA Study has concluded that :

Perowne Barracks and Gordon Hard

- (a) The proposed residential developments would be subject to traffic noise impact from Tuen Mun Road. However, the noise impact could be mitigated through careful dispositioning of buildings and the provision of acoustic insulation.
- (b) The natural scrub at the northern part of the Perowne Barracks North Site and the stream to the east of the site should be conserved. There should be provisions in the lease conditions to protect them from construction works.

Dills Corner Camp

- (c) Proposed residential developments at the southern portion of the Dills Corner West site would be subject to traffic noise from the NT Circular Road/Castle Peak Road - Kwu Tung. To mitigate the noise level, self-protective building layout design should be adopted.

Pearl Island Married Quarters

- (d) Traffic noise and vehicle emissions would be the key constraints to the proposed residential development there. However, the problem could be mitigated through careful building layout.

Beas Stables Married Quarters

- (e) No potential adverse environmental impacts have been identified.

EIA Subcommittee's Views and Recommendations

12. Members were worried that future developers would not strictly implement the recommended mitigation measures, particularly regarding tree conservation and pollution to nearby stream course. In this regard, the project proponent assured Members that all mitigation measures recommended in the EIA Report would be incorporated into the lease conditions for developers to comply with. After deliberation, Members agreed to recommend ACE to endorse the EIA Report without condition.

Feasibility Study for Castle Peak Road Improvement between Ka Loon Tsuen and Yau Kom Tau - Environmental Impact Assessment

13. To cope with the future traffic growth by 2011, Highways Department (HyD) proposed that the section of the Castle Peak Road between Ka Loon Tsuen and Yau Kom Tau be widened from a single 2-lane carriageway to a dual 2-lane carriageway.

The EIA Study

14. The EIA Study has identified operational traffic noise as the major impact to the surrounding areas. If unmitigated, the maximum predicted traffic noise would be as high as 82dB(A), affecting about 4,900 dwellings along that section of the Castle Peak Road. The Study has recommended that direct mitigation measures, in the form of noise barriers and partial enclosure, be implemented at various locations along that section of the Castle Peak Road. Where direct mitigation measures are not practicable, it recommended that acoustic insulation and air-conditioning be offered to affected NSRs. It was estimated that around 2,320 dwellings would be eligible to indirect mitigation measures.

EIA Subcommittee's Views and Recommendations

15. Initially, Members were concerned about the impact of the project to the environment, as there would be loss of rocky and sandy shores, seabed, intertidal areas and woodland. They also had reservations on the practicality of the proposed noise mitigation measures and the effectiveness of the project in resolving the traffic problem there. Having considered the project proponent's written responses, which were tabled at the EIA Subcommittee meeting held on 7 April 1997, all except two Members who were present at the meeting agreed that the Subcommittee should recommend ACE to endorse the captioned report without condition.

Environmental Impact Assessment for Hiram's Highway Improvement between Nam Wai and Ho Chung and Upgrading of Local Access Roads

16. To enhance the safety of the Hiram's Highway between Nam Wai and Ho Chung and improve the road network, HyD planned to realign and widen that section of the Hiram's Highway and upgrade the local access roads.

The EIA Study

17. The EIA Study has shown that the current traffic noise level at most of the existing dwellings along the Hiram's Highway has already exceeded HKPSG's limits of 70dB(A). With the erection of noise barriers of differing heights at various locations, the noise level at most of these dwellings would fall within the HKPSG's limits. As regards the noise level at future developments, it could be mitigated through careful dispositioning of building layout and provision of good quality windows and air-conditioners.

EIA Subcommittee's Views and Recommendations

18. Initially, some Members expressed concern about the visual and ecological impact of the project and the practicability of the proposal for transplanting 108 trees. Having considered the written responses from the project proponent, which were tabled at the EIA Subcommittee meeting held on 7 April 1997, Members agreed to recommend ACE to endorse the captioned report without condition.

Sha Tin New Town Stage II Road D15 Linking Lok Shun Path and Tai Po Road : Environmental Impact Assessment

19. To alleviate the traffic congestion at Fo Tan Industrial Area and Fo Tan Interchange, HyD planned to construct Road D15 which will link Lok Shun Path with Tai Po Road.

The EIA Study

20. The EIA Study has identified traffic noise as the key impact of the proposed project to the surrounding area and recommended that noise barriers be erected.

21. The Study recommended the revegetation of slopes and the carrying out of landscaping works inside village and along footpaths to compensate for the loss of vegetation as a result of the project.

EIA Subcommittee's Views and Recommendations

22. Members had reservations on the effectiveness of the proposed project in alleviating the traffic congestion in Fo Tan area. They requested the project proponent to explain what alternatives had been considered and why they had not been selected.

23. The project proponent's written response was being considered by Members. EIA Subcommittee Chairman would report verbally at the ACE meeting on 21 April 1997 the Subcommittee's recommendation as regards this report.

ADVICE SOUGHT

24. Members are requested to advise whether the six EIA reports concerned should be endorsed.

Planning, Environment and Lands Branch
April 1997