



Room 924, 9th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong
Tel : 2848 2606 Fax : 2530 5264
香港中環花園道美利大廈 9 樓 924 室 • 電話 : 2848 2606 傳真機 : 2530 5264

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(ACE Paper 29/97)
for advice

Report of the EIA Subcommittee

The Subcommittee considered two Environmental Impact Assessment reports at its meeting on 5 May 1997.

Widening of Tolo Highway and Traffic Surveillance and Information System Environmental Impact Assessment (ACE EIA Paper 10/97)

2. The proposed project aims to widen the Tolo Highway alignment bordered by the Island House Interchange at Tai Po and Ma Liu Shui Interchange at Sha Tin to cope with increasing traffic flow resulting from local development and cross-border traffic. About 140 m of existing southbound carriageway will be reconstructed and lowered to achieve adequate headroom clearance under the existing Laboratory Bridge. The footpath/cycle track (immediately to the east of the road) will be narrowed to 4.4 m and follows a path slightly offset towards the campus of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

3. The EIA study predicted that construction noise levels would be within the established standards. During operation, however, traffic noise exceedances at most of the identified noise facades are expected. To reduce traffic noise impact, friction course on the whole road widening section would be adopted, and vertical barriers and canopies of various heights would be installed at road curb and central median. Future residential and institutional uses at Pak Shek Kok area would have to adopt self-protective layouts including setback and building orientation.

4. To alleviate air quality impacts arising from vehicle emissions at the KCRC Hostel building and the Marine Science Laboratory, modification of ventilation system at the Laboratory and minor modification to the noise barriers in front of the KCRC Hostel have been recommended respectively.

5. The EIA also identified that the feeding areas for herons and egrets along the coastline of the Tolo Highway would be temporarily affected. To minimise ecological impacts, tidal flushing under the Tai Hang Bridge would be maintained and the landscaping areas would be revegetated to replace lost plantations. Additional nesting habitat with bamboo planting would be created near the Tai Hang Bridge Mangrove to provide a colonial nest site for herons and egrets.

6. Construction activities may have adverse impacts on the water quality of Tolo Harbour due to silty site runoff, dredging and reclamation activities. The EIA recommended that the effluent should be controlled by the provision of treatment and control system. Silt traps have been recommended as sufficient measures to minimise sedimentation and contamination of highway runoff during operation. In addition, silt curtains would be adopted during dredging and reclamation activities to minimise water quality impacts.

7. Members, except one, were satisfied with the report. The Member was not content with the mitigation arrangements for air quality impacts and was not prepared to endorse the report.

8. On the understanding that Option II in the EIA report is the preferred options, the Subcommittee recommended endorsement of the EIA report with the following conditions:

- (a) the EM&A Manual should be strictly followed; and
- (b) native species be used during revegetation.

**Highway between Shap Pat Heung Interchange and Pok Oi Interchange -
Pok Oi Flyover & Remaining Works Environmental Impact Assessment
(ACE EIA Paper 11/97)**

9. The Pok Oi Interchange is reaching its maximum traffic capacity. When the Route 3 Country Park Section opens in August 1998, all traffic to and from Route 3 and Yuen Long and Tuen Mun will pass through the Pok Oi Interchange at grade. This will severely overload the Interchange and cause serious traffic congestion. A highway is proposed between Pok Oi Interchange and Shap Pak Heung Interchange to relieve the situation.

10. The project will be implemented in two stages. The first stage, scheduled for completion in late 1998, involves the construction of a dual two-lane flyover at Pok Oi Interchange with two single two-lane temporary slip roads linking Route 3 Country Park Section to Yuen Long Highway. The second stage will commence in 1999 and be completed by 2002. It involves the construction of a trunk road between Pok Oi Interchange flyover and Shap Pat Heung Interchange and the removal of the two temporary slip roads.

11. Traffic noise was identified as the major concern of this project. Noise mitigation measures including low noise road surfacing materials on the whole length of the flyover and the trunk road and road side noise barriers with absorptive materials have been recommended. With the mitigation measures in place, the noise levels at existing nearby NSRs would be lowered by 2.5 to 3 dB(A).

12. The Subcommittee was content with the report and recommended endorsement on the following conditions:

- (a) HyD to consider stating in the contract that on-site waste would be government property to prevent illegal dumping; and
- (b) native species should be used for vegetation.

Advice Sought

13. Members are invited to consider the recommendations of the EIA Subcommittee:

- (a) endorsement of the environmental impact assessment report of the Widening of Tolo Highway and Traffic Surveillance and Information System (para 8 refers);
- (b) endorsement of the environmental impact assessment report of the Highway between Shap Pat Heung Interchange and Pok Oi Interchange - Pok Oi Flyover & Remaining Works (para 12 refers).

Planning, Environment and Lands Branch
May 1997