

8 Pages submitted by Fax and E-mail

25th August 2005

Chair and Members of the Town Planning Board
c/o The Secretary of the Town Planning Board
15th Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road,
North Point, Hong Kong

Fax: (852) 2877 0245 or 2522 8426
Email: tpbpd@pland.gov.hk
Email: ritalau@hplb.gov.hk
Email: bckfung@pland.gov.hk

URGENT: Re: Application No. A/H25/5 to the Town Planning Board regarding the area between Phase I and Phase II of the HKCEC, Wanchai, Hong Kong for an Exhibition Hall

Honourable Chair and Members of the Town Planning Board,

Harbour Business Forum sent a letter to the Town Planning Board dated 26 July 2005 regarding the above. Item 6 of the letter highlighted our concern for some technical issues that the proposal has upon the waterfront and the surrounding areas. In examination of this point Harbour Business Forum have procured an independent critique of the TDC's Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) completed by one of our members, a traffic consultancy firm, which we enclose for your perusal.

The report highlights shortcomings and questionable assumptions which the original TIA has made and which we believe should be examined further. We draw particular attention to items 1.3, 2.4, 2.9 and 3.3. Irrespective of the critique, we note that the proposed traffic management measures as proposed by TDC are not capable of being translated into an enforceable lease condition. As a result, we do not believe that Government has any effective way to ensure compliance should permission be granted.

We would like to request that the report be tabled in the Metro Planning Committee meeting tomorrow to assist members of the committee in their consideration of this case.

Yours sincerely,
Harbour Business Forum



Mr. Andrew Long
Chairman, Executive Committee

Encl. Critique on the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre Atrium Link Extension – Traffic Impact Assessment

**Critique on the
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
Atrium Link Extension – Traffic Impact Assessment**

Issued on August 2005

Prepared by: Mr Chin Kim Meng, Member of Harbour Business Forum

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 This is a Critique on the Traffic Impact Assessment report prepared in June 2005 for the proposed Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre Atrium Link Extension (“TIA”).

Exhibitions at the HKCEC

- 1.2 According to the information from Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) website, in the fiscal year 2003/04 (1 July 2003 - 30 June 2004), a total of 1,890 events were held at the HKCEC. These events included 95 major exhibitions (occupying 1,819 m² area or above), of which 67 were recurrent events whereas 24 were new events.
- 1.3 For the major exhibitions, goods vehicles would deliver goods to the HKCEC one or two days before the start of the event and pick up the goods at the end of the event. With the limited loading/unloading and marshalling area provided within the HKCEC, the goods vehicles waiting to deliver or pick-up would normally occupy the road carriageways outside HKCEC. Hence, gridlock condition is often observed along major roads in Wan Chai North including Harbour Road, Fleming Road, Convention Avenue and Tonnochy Road, when exhibition events are held at the HKCEC.
- 1.4 In addition, during the events, large numbers of taxis, coach and cars are attracted to the HKCEC.

2.0 REVIEW OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES BY HKCEC

Traffic Management Measures

2.1 In view of the aforesaid traffic problems, the TIA Report on the HKCEC Atrium Link Extension stated that numerous traffic management measures were implemented during the move-in and move-out phases of the exhibitions. These measures were adopted to minimize the impact to the surrounding road network which included the following:

- 1) Partial/full closure of Expo Drive / Expo Drive East / Expo Drive Central;
- 2) Off-site vehicle marshalling area;
- 3) Time management;
- 4) Central forwarder;
- 5) Charter Phase 2 car park for loading/unloading;
- 6) Additional move-out day; and
- 7) Avoid Friday move-out.

2.2 Comments on some of the above-mentioned traffic management measures are given in the following paragraphs:

Partial/full closure of Expo Drive / Expo Drive East / Expo Drive Central

2.3 At present, there is insufficient marshalling area provided at the existing HKCEC. Hence, most of the major exhibitions held at HKCEC require partial closure of Expo Drive / Expo Drive East / Expo Drive Central for goods vehicle stacking, in order to facilitate the loading/unloading before and after the exhibitions. Although this measure can reduce goods vehicle queues along the east-west through roads such as Convention Avenue, Hung Hing Road and Harbour Road, it still require the use of public roads and the involvement of the Hong Kong Police to maintain order. It is obvious that the design of the HKCEC Phases 1 and 2 had not taken into consideration the need for goods vehicles to queue prior to conducting their loading / unloading activities.

2.4 The TIA Report suggested that there are some 1,010m of carriageway is available to serve this purpose but about half of this 1,010m, especially along the kerbside of Expo Drive East, is always occupied by tour coaches and/or private cars throughout the day for pick-up/drop-off tourists. It appears that the public roads have to be used to facilitate these events and to remedy a design flaw, ie, the lack of queueing for goods vehicle.

Off-site vehicle marshalling area

2.5 At present, the Tamar Site, which is located only 1km from HKCEC, is used as a marshalling area in order to minimise traffic congestion during the critical phases (move-in and move-out) of some exhibitions.

2.6 The long-term off-site marshalling areas have been identified and these are the vacant land owned by the Trade Development Council (TDC) in the Tseung Kwan O Industrial Area. However, these sites are at least 17km away from HKCEC, which is 17 times longer than the Tamar Site. Details of these sites are shown in Figure 2.1.

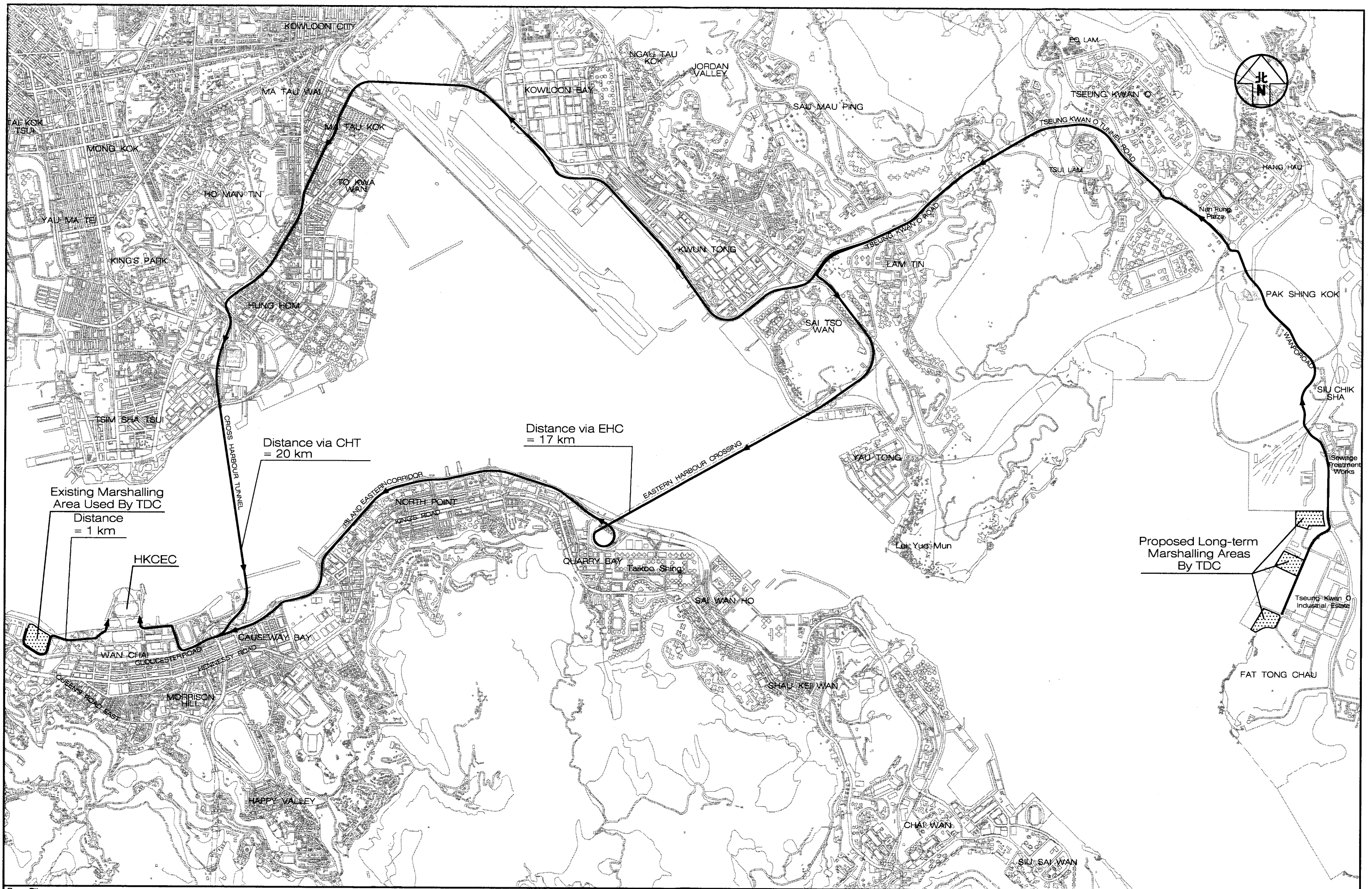


Figure Title

POSSIBLE ROUTES FROM EXISTING MARSHALLING AREA AT TAMAR AND THE PROPOSED LONG TERM MARSHALLING AREAS IN TSEUNG KWAN O INDUSTRIAL AREA

Figure No. 2.1

Scale in A3 1 : 30,000

Date 19 AUG 2005

- 2.7 It is believed that the management of goods vehicle movement from the marshalling areas in Tseung Kwan O to HKCEC will be extremely difficult because of the following reasons:
- (i) uncertainties on journey time because the route is long;
 - (ii) difficult to manage the goods vehicle due to availability of alternate routes eg, routes via the Cross Harbour Tunnel (CHT) or Eastern Harbour Tunnel (EHT), etc;
 - (iii) exhibitors are forced to pay higher transportation charges because all goods vehicles have to assemble in Tseung Kwan O, even if these goods vehicles originate from Wan Chai; and
 - (iv) different toll charges at the two likely used tunnels, CHT and EHC. EHC charges goods vehicles 50% more than CHT.
- 2.8 Since the marshalling areas in Tseung Kwan O are owned by TDC, it is questionable if TDC will permit the use of these marshalling areas for exhibition not organized by TDC. Hence, it is expected that goods vehicles from exhibitions not organized by TDC will continue to use the road carriageway around HKCEC for stacking purposes since there is insufficient queueing areas in the HKCEC.

Central Forwarder

- 2.9 The central forwarder is only an option provided to exhibitors during the move-out phase by TDC. With the time incentive promotion, only 30% of the exhibitors had used this service. The TIA Report suggested that TDC would further promote this service and had expected the use of this service will gradually increase, but there is no strong reason to prove this claim.
- 2.10 Furthermore this service is offered by Kerry Logistic through TDC, hence, the possibility of other major exhibition organisers, such as KenFair International Limited and Hong Kong Asia Exhibition (Holdings) Ltd., promoting this service to their exhibitors is unknown. Hence, the actual benefit of using central forwarder for traffic management is uncertain and it could only be useful for TDC organized exhibitions.

3.0 REVIEW OF THE TRAFFIC IMPACT DUE TO THE HKCEC ATRIUM LINK EXTENSION

Traffic Generation Rates

- 3.1 According to the TIA Report, the trip rates were calculated based on the associated traffic generation/attraction at the pick-up/ drop-off points and loading / unloading areas of the HKCEC Phases 1 and 2, as well as the Phase 2 car park. The survey was conducted for 3 phases: (i) move-in; (ii) during the show; and (iii) move-out. The findings indicated that the trip rates from “during the show” is most critical, hence, it was adopted for estimation in traffic generated for the proposed HKCEC Atrium Link Extension.
- 3.2 From the website of HKCEC and the official event websites, the number of expected / past visitors were recorded for some selected events and are given in Table 3.1 below.

TABLE 3.1 THE NUMBER OF VISITORS FOR THE SELECTED EVENTS

Exhibitions	Number of Visitors
1. Hong Kong Book Fair 2005	630,000 ⁽²⁾
2. Hong Kong Food Festival 2004 / Hong Kong Mega Showcase 2004	500,000 ⁽²⁾
3. 7 th Hong Kong Comics Festival / 2 nd Hong Kong Game Fair (2005)	400,000 expected ⁽¹⁾
4. Food Expo 2005	300,000 ⁽²⁾
5. Hong Kong Computer & Communication Festival 2004	240,000 ⁽²⁾
6. Oedo Japan Carnival 2005	200,000 expected ⁽¹⁾
7. The 13 th International Baby/Children Products Expo and 17 th Hong Kong Baby Crawling Contest	150,000 expected ⁽¹⁾
8. CitiHomex 2004	130,000 ⁽²⁾
9. Innovation Expo 2005	120,000 expected ⁽¹⁾
10. Ladies Extravaganza Expo 2005	100,000 expected ⁽¹⁾
11. Four Seas International Food Expo 2005	80,000 expected ⁽¹⁾
12. ITE HK 2004 – The 18 th International Travel Expo Hong Kong	65,000 ⁽²⁾
13. 13 th Hong Kong International Toys & Gifts Show / 12 th Asian Gifts, Premium & Household Products Show (2004)	64,000 ⁽²⁾
14. 3 rd Hong Kong Magic Festival (2005)	60,000 expected ⁽¹⁾
15. Hong Kong Gifts & Premium Fair 2005	54,000 ⁽²⁾
16. Hong Kong Electronic Fair 2004 – Autumn Edition*	53,000 ⁽²⁾

Source: HKCEC Website ⁽¹⁾

Official Exhibition Website ⁽²⁾

Event used in estimating the traffic generation due to the proposed HKCEC Atrium Link Extension*

- 3.3 The Hong Kong Electronic Fair 2004 attracted 53,000 visitors, which is the 16th largest in terms of the number of visitors, among other major exhibitions. From traffic engineering point of view, the future traffic generation by the proposed HKCEC Atrium Link Extension should be based on larger events, in order to ensure that the major exhibitions held at HKCEC will not continue to create severe traffic congestion problems in Wan Chai North.

Proposed Exhibition Space

- 3.4 According to Table 3.1 of the TIA Report, after the proposed HKCEC Atrium Link Extension has been built, the exhibition hall capacity will increase by no more than 19,400m² GFA. However, only 6,449m² GFA, which is only 35% of the proposed actual increase in GFA, was used in the estimation of traffic generation. Due to this assumption, it can be implied that either (i) 65% of the proposed HKCEC Atrium Link Extension GFA is non-usable, or (ii) the expected traffic generation could be 3 times higher. .

Proposed Ferry Shuttles to HKCEC Exhibitions from Tsim Sha Tsui

- 3.5 The predicted traffic generation due to the proposed HKCEC Atrium Link Extension, which is believed to be under-estimated, was further reduced by considering the effect of the proposed ferry service for the hotels in Tsim Sha Tsui to HKCEC. It is understood that the feasibility and detail arrangement is actively being reviewed, but the effectiveness of this measure in future is doubtful. This is because (i) the Organisers cannot place restriction on which hotels the participants should patronise; and (ii) few hotels are conveniently located to the ferry pier in Tsim Sha Tsui. In fact, some participants staying in hotels near the Kowloon Point ferry pier might already be using the Star Ferry service to Wan Chai Ferry Pier.
- 3.6 Hence, applying a reduction factor to take into account the proposed ferry shuttles to the traffic generation due to the proposed HKCEC Atrium Link Extension is not appropriate.