



Proposed South-East Asia Japan Cable System
擬鋪設的東南亞日本海底光纜系統

Proposed Gazetting

South-East Asia Japan Cable System -

Sha Shek Tan in Chung Hom Kok ("The Reclamation Scheme")

1. Purpose

China Telecom (Hong Kong) International Limited ("CTHKI") has obtained the relevant Environmental Permit and planning permission for the Reclamation Scheme and applied to the Government for the grant of licence for the laying of the South-East Asia Japan Cable System ("SJC"). Lands Department has been arranging/has arranged the gazetting under the Foreshore and Sea-bed (Reclamations) Ordinance (Cap. 127) ("the Ordinance") and no adverse comments have been received during departmental circulation. The proposal is now submitted for Members' comments (including Southern District Council, Sai Kung District Council and Island District Council).

2. Background of the Reclamation Scheme

CTHKI proposes to install the SJC which will span approximately 8,900 km in length and link Hong Kong to Brunei, Mainland China, Japan, the Philippines and Singapore. The total length of the Hong Kong Segment of the SJC in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") waters is approximately 37 km.

3. Environmental Impact

In March to June 2011, CTHKI assessed the potential project impacts on water quality, marine ecology and fisheries and recommended appropriate mitigation measures to minimize these impacts. The Environmental Permit EP-423/2011 was granted by the Director of Environmental Protection on 24 October 2011.

The consultant of CTHKI recommended the following mitigation measures to minimize the impacts on water quality, marine ecology and fisheries:

- a) Water quality protection measures (such as prevention of leakage from construction equipment and stockpiles will be covered to reduce the amount of runoff of materials entering the marine water) will be incorporated as part of good working practices;
- b) A water quality monitoring programme will be conducted to ensure that no adverse impacts will occur on water quality, marine organisms and fisheries;

- c) Marine works within 500 metres from St. Stephen's Beach will not be carried out during peak bathing season from July to September, as requested by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department;
- d) A marine mammal exclusion zone within a radius of 250 m around the cable installation works will be implemented near Po Toi area where previous sightings of finless porpoises were recorded; and
- e) Mitigation measures to possible disturbance and dispersion to seabed sediment during the cable laying process including using direct burial technique to lay and bury the cable simultaneously to minimize the disturbance to seabed, and limiting the cable laying speed to 800 metres per hour.

4. Licence and Gazetting under the Ordinance

Lands Department has been processing the proposed licence, namely Licence No. SH-217, for the construction of submarine cable system, to comply with the permit conditions as required in the Environmental Permit EP-423/2011, and the visual and safety measures as specified in the Planning Application and Landscape Plan approved by the Planning Department.

The Reclamation Scheme has been circulated among relevant Government departments and no adverse comments have been received. Departmental comments have been considered and have been addressed in the design and future construction works as appropriate. Lands Department considered that before approval could be given on the grant of the licence, CTHKI has to obtain the authorization of the Reclamation Scheme from the Chief Executive in Council under the Ordinance.

The gazette is now under processing by the Lands Department. There will be statutory objection period of 60 days from the first date of gazettal.

5. Proposed Submarine Cable

a) Dimension of the Proposed Submarine Cable

Diameter of approximately 38 mm and its total length within HKSAR waters is about 37 km. From shore end to 150 metres away, the cable will be encased in cast-iron articulated pipe of approximately 160 mm.

b) Method of Construction

Shore end: by excavation of a trench of a width up to 2 metres and depth of about 2 metres.

Near shore up to 150 metres from shore end: by divers using jet probes to sink the cable into sediment at a depth of 1 to 3 metres

Offshore from 150 metres from shore end: by direct burial techniques using a cable burial tool which simultaneously lay and bury the cable in a trench of width up to 0.5 metre and burial depth of 3 to 5 metres.

c) Period of Construction

The Reclamation Scheme is tentatively scheduled to start in April/May 2012 and finish in August 2012.

6. Conclusion

Various technical aspects regarding the design and construction of the Reclamation Scheme have been thoroughly studied, and the engineering, environmental and public safety aspects have also been examined to the satisfaction of relevant Government departments.

As recommended by Lands Department, comments on the Reclamation Scheme shall be sought from the relevant District Councils before the end of the public objection period under the Ordinance. In addition, under Section 6 of the Ordinance, any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and sea-bed may, by notice in writing delivered to the Director of Lands before the expiration of such time begin not less than 2 months as shall be specified in the notice, object to the proposed reclamation.

Atkins China Limited

Environmental and permitting consultant of CTHKI

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