

(Translation)

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee
7th Term of Wan Chai District Council
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Date: 4 June 2024 (Tuesday)

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Venue: District Council Conference Room, Wan Chai District Office, 21/F Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road, Hong Kong

Present

Vice-chairperson

Mr SUN Tao-hung, Stanley, JP

Arrival

3:03 p.m.

Departure

4:00 p.m.

Members

Mr NG Chak-sum, Sam

3:03 p.m.

4:00 p.m.

Mr LEE Man-lung, Joey, MH

3:03 p.m.

4:00 p.m.

Ms LEE Pik-yee, Peggy, MH

3:03 p.m.

4:00 p.m.

Dr CHOW Kam-wai, BBS, MH

3:03 p.m.

4:00 p.m.

Mr LAM Wai-man, Anson

3:03 p.m.

4:00 p.m.

Ms MOK Ruby

3:03 p.m.

4:00 p.m.

Mr MUK Ka-chun

3:03 p.m.

4:00 p.m.

Representatives of Core Government Departments

Mr CHEUNG Ho-yat, Steven

Assistant District Officer (Wan Chai),
Home Affairs Department

Mr MOK Chan, Charles

Chief Estate Officer/Hong Kong East (District Lands
Offices), Lands Department

Ms CHENG Siu-ping, Jessica

Principal Estate Officer/Hong Kong East/Land Control
and Lease Enforcement (District Lands Office, Hong
Kong East), Lands Department

Mr LI Wing-yip, Foreaf

District Operations Officer (Wan Chai),
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr AU YEUNG Leung

Officer-in-charge, District Traffic Team (Wan Chai),
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr CHEUNG Man-chung, Tim	District Engineer/Wan Chai, Highways Department
Miss TANG Ka-yuet, Annie	Engineer/Wan Chai 1, Transport Department
Mr CHAN Quan-wai, Aaron	Engineer/Wan Chai 2, Transport Department
Mr WONG Chun-man, Edmond	Engineer/Wan Chai 3, Transport Department
Mr WONG Pak-lim	Engineer/Special Duties, Transport Department
Miss LEUNG Hoi-kei, Christina	Senior Transport Officer/Wan Chai, Transport Department

Representatives of Other Government Departments and Organisations

Mr CHIU Chi-keung	Chief Inspector of Police (Enforcement & Control Division) (Traffic HK Island), Hong Kong Police Force
Mr NG Samuel	Director (Operations), Travel Industry Authority
Mr CHENG Mark	Senior Investigator (Inspection & Investigation), Travel Industry Authority
Mr CHUNG Kavis	Manager (Inspection & Finance), Travel Industry Authority
Mr CHOI Gary	Manager (Inspection), Travel Industry Authority

Absent with Apology

Mr LAM Wai-kong, MH

Secretary

Miss YAU Tim-yi, Chloe Executive Officer (District Council) 4,
Wan Chai District Office, Home Affairs Department

Opening Remarks

The Vice-chairperson welcomed Members and representatives of government departments to the 3rd meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee of the 7th Wan Chai District Council.

2. The Vice-chairperson stated that Mr LAM Wai-kong, Chairperson of the Committee, was unable to attend this meeting as he was attending a meeting of a government-appointed advisory body, and a consent would be given to his application for absence in accordance with the Wan Chai District Council Standing Orders.

Item 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee of the Wan Chai District Council

3. The Vice-chairperson said that the Secretariat had not received any proposed amendments from Members before this meeting.

4. With a motion moved by Dr CHOW Kam-wai and seconded by Mr LAM Wai-man, Anson, the minutes of the 2nd meeting were confirmed.

Item 2: Summary of Major Temporary Traffic Arrangements in Wan Chai District
(Traffic and Transport Committee Paper No. 12/2024)

5. The Vice-chairperson invited representatives of the Transport Department (TD) to introduce Paper No. 12/2024.

6. Miss LEUNG Hoi-kei, Christina, Senior Transport Officer/Wan Chai of TD, introduced the paper.

7. There being no questions from Members, the Vice-chairperson invited Members to note the above paper.

Item 3: Major Small-scale Traffic Improvement Works Completed, Underway or being Planned in Wan Chai District by Transport Department/ Highways Department in the Past Two Months and their Schedules
(Traffic and Transport Committee Paper No. 13/2024)

8. The Vice-chairperson invited representatives of TD to introduce Paper No. 13/2024.

9. Mr WONG Chun-man, Edmond, Engineer/Wan Chai 3 of TD, introduced the paper.

10. There being no questions from Members, the Vice-chairperson invited Members to note the above paper.

Item 4: Summary of Traffic and Transport Works in Wan Chai District
(Traffic and Transport Committee Paper No. 14/2024)

11. The Vice-chairperson invited the representative of the Highways Department (HyD) to introduce Paper No. 14/2024.

12. Mr CHEUNG Man-chung, Tim, District Engineer/Wan Chai of HyD, introduced the paper.

13. Members had the following comments and questions:

- (i) Asphalt and concrete of the road surface in the vicinity of Jardine's Lookout and Tai Hang Road had recently been washed away by rainwater, resulting in potholes. Members requested HyD to reinstate the affected road sections as soon as possible;
- (ii) HyD's standing arrangements for pothole repair after the rainy season;
- (iii) The progress of HyD's contractors on the inspection and maintenance works for public pavements in the district;
- (iv) Requested HyD to inspect and repair the following locations where the road surface was uneven:
 - Depressed drain cover at the intersection outside Hennessy Road gas station;
 - Depressed drain cover near the traffic light outside the C C Wu Building;
 - Depressed drain cover near Kwong Tak Mansion on Hennessy Road; and
 - Depressed pavement outside the entrance to 10 Bowrington Road;
- (v) There had been an accumulation of construction waste on the road surface near Kwan Chart Tower, and it was known that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) had referred the case to HyD for follow-up on 27 May 2024, but such waste had not yet been removed, and the Department was requested to deal with the case as soon as possible; and
- (vi) The unevenness of the road surface at Thomson Road near the Wan Chai 88 Hotel was serious. Members had called 1823 to reflect the problem, but 1823 responded that the part of the road concerned was a private road section, and did not respond as to whether the government would discuss with the owner on maintenance matters. Members asked HyD to assist in following up the matter.

14. Mr CHEUNG Man-chung, Tim, District Engineer/Wan Chai of HyD, responded as follows:

- (i) HyD noted the problem of potholes on the road surface at Jardine's Lookout and Tai Hang Road and would refer them to the maintenance section for follow-up action;
- (ii) If the damage might pose immediate danger to road users, HyD would carry out immediate road maintenance works and would not wait until the rainy season ended. If there was no immediate danger, HyD would also plan the relevant repair works based on the traffic conditions at the scene, the impact on road users and the complexity of the repair processes involved, and would carry out full-scale re-surfacing works if necessary;
- (iii) To ensure the safety of road users, HyD had put in place a well-established road inspection mechanism. Routine inspections were carried out by maintenance works contractors for trunk roads once a week and for other roads once every one to six months. The road inspection teams were also required to carry out detailed inspections of various types of roads every six months to collect information on the surface and structural conditions of the roads, which would provide information for the planning of medium to long term maintenance works as a precautionary measure. Maintenance works would be carried out under the supervision of HyD to ensure that the contractors concerned were properly discharging their duties. HyD had also put in place measures for the quality of inspections, such as setting relevant professional requirements on the establishment of inspection teams to ensure effective execution of inspections. In addition, there were guidelines on the recording of inspections so that the wear and tear of road surfaces could be accurately recorded and graded for repair to facilitate more effective prioritization of road maintenance; and
- (iv) HyD had earlier assessed the road surface problem at Thomson Road and found that there was no immediate danger and had referred it to the Lands Department for follow-up. In general, HyD would not enter private premises for maintenance unless there was immediate danger; and
- (v) HyD noted the problem of accumulation of construction waste in the vicinity of Kwan Chart Tower and would coordinate with the relevant sections to tackle the problem as soon as possible.

15. There being no further questions from Members, the Vice-chairperson announced that discussion on the agenda was concluded and invited Members to note the above paper.

Item 5: Traffic Congestion at Stubbs Road Lookout Caused by Tour Group Vehicles

16. The Vice-chairperson welcomed the following persons to the meeting and invited representatives of relevant organizations/departments to give briefings:

Travel Industry Authority

Director of Operations	Mr NG Samuel
Senior Investigator (Inspection & Investigation)	Mr CHENG Mark
Manager (Inspection & Finance)	Ms CHUNG Kavis
Manager (Inspection)	Mr CHOI Gary

Hong Kong Police Force

Chief Inspector of Police (Enforcement & Control Division) (Traffic HK Island)	Mr CHIU Chi-keung
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17. The Vice-chairperson said that during the last meeting, Members raised the issue of inviting the Travel Industry Authority (TIA) and relevant government departments to attend this meeting to discuss the traffic congestion problem at the Stubbs Road Lookout (the Lookout) caused by tour group vehicles. The Secretariat forwarded the written responses from the TIA, TD and the Police Force to Members on 24 May.

18. Mr NG Samuel, Director of Operations, TIA, reported on the traffic congestion at the Lookout and the improvement measures, as summarized below:

- (i) The Lookout was a must-visit location for Mainland inbound tours to the Peak and was a popular tourist attraction for Mainland tourists. Statistics showed that in the past six months, there were an average of 174 Mainland inbound tours to Hong Kong every day, with about 32 to 33 people in each tour, of which 150 tours went to the Lookout;
- (ii) The road section was a dual two-lane carriageway and the parking space at the Lookout was limited, with a maximum capacity of 5 to 6 tour group vehicles. Therefore, in the past, many drivers of tour group vehicles, in order to satisfy the requests of tourists and travel agents, had resorted to some malpractices, such as

trying to squeeze into the Lookout which was already full of tour group vehicles, or driving slowly along Stubbs Road to wait for a vacant parking space at the Lookout;

- (iii) To address the above situation, TIA and the Police conducted joint operations there every week. In addition, TIA had been communicating with travel agents, tourist guides and drivers through various channels, requesting them not to block traffic and to spread out their visits as far as possible, so as to avoid going to the Lookout during the peak hours from 1pm to 3pm all at once;
- (iv) Members suggested that tour group vehicles should be required to leave the Lookout immediately upon arrival and return to the Lookout 10 to 15 minutes later to pick up tourists. After on-site observation and assessment by the Police and TIA, it was found that frequent entry and exit of vehicles would instead cause confusion easily, aggravate the congestion conditions of the roads in that area, and increase the chance of traffic accidents. Therefore, the current practice of TIA and the Police was to require the tour group vehicles to stay at the scene for 5 to 10 minutes, so that the tourists could get on the vehicles and leave immediately after taking photographs, so as to avoid causing traffic congestion; and
- (v) As the contract between the travel agents and the tour groups specified that the destination of the trip should be the Peak, not the Lookout, if any tour group vehicle deliberately drove at a slow speed or forced its way into the Lookout, causing traffic congestion and affecting other road users, law enforcement officers could ticket the drivers who did not comply with the relevant instructions and require them to drive the tour group vehicle away from the Lookout.

19. Members had the following comments and questions:

- (i) When tour group vehicles could not enter the Lookout, how would the law enforcement officers arrange for the departure of the vehicles on the spot, and whether the Police or TIA would deploy staff to handle the situation on the spot;
- (ii) A photo-taking time of 5 to 10 minutes might be too short for a 30-person tour group, making it difficult for the tour groups to comply with the existing requirements and would ultimately lead to difficulties in actual enforcement; and

- (iii) It was suggested that the Authority could consider setting up an advance-booking system for the visits and implementing a demerit point system for renewal of licenses for travel agents failing to comply with the requirements, while allowing the relevant government departments to co-ordinate the regulation, so as to ensure that tourists could complete the boarding and alighting procedures in an orderly manner and within the prescribed time, diverting the flow of people and solving the problem of traffic congestion in the process.

20. Mr NG Samuel, Director of Operations, TIA, responded as follows:

- (i) Since March this year, TIA and the Police had been conducting weekly joint operations at the Lookout. Apart from that, TIA had been communicating with stakeholders in the industry through regular meetings and focus groups, urging them to properly adjust and divert tour groups visiting the Lookout, and to follow the instructions of the law enforcement officers on the spot to assist tourists in boarding and alighting the vehicles safely and swiftly, so as to minimize the length of stay at the Lookout;
- (ii) According to the experience of previous joint operations, under normal circumstances, 5 to 10 minutes would be sufficient for boarding and alighting of tourists and taking of photographs. Occasionally, individual tours with a larger number of tourists or elderly people might require a longer stay;
- (iii) TIA regulated the conduct of travel agents and tourist guides in accordance with the Travel Industry Ordinance and the Directives for Licensees. Licensees might be subject to disciplinary actions, including the imposition of demerit points. TIA would explore the feasibility of introducing a demerit point system to regulate the non-compliance of tour group vehicles on Stubbs Road;
- (iv) The Directives for Licensees required licensed travel agents to register the tour group at least 24 hours before the expected arrival of the tour group in Hong Kong or the time the travel agent expected to obtain services for the tour group. Licensed travel agents must provide in the registration form the expected arrival time of the tour group in respect to the attractions they arranged for the tour group. Meanwhile, TIA would also consider the feasibility of the advance-booking system in due course; and

- (v) The entrance and exit of the Lookout were relatively narrow, and the on-site parking space could only accommodate six large tour group vehicles. It was still difficult to accommodate a large number of tourists at the same time in the Lookout. As such, TIA encouraged tour groups to explore other attractions instead of focusing on certain famous attractions.

21. Members continued to have the following comments and questions:

- (i) Members enquired about the frequency of joint operations conducted by the Police and TIA;
- (ii) It was suggested that the Police or TIA should deploy their staff to station at Stubbs Road on a permanent basis to divert traffic, and incidentally provide tourists with services such as guided tours and photo-taking, etc., so as to go along with the city-wide courtesy campaign launched by the government recently to promote hospitality;
- (iii) In the long run, the Police should consider installing cameras at the scene to monitor illegal parking and step up enforcement actions; and
- (iv) Whether there were tours who planned to visit the Peak in their itineraries originally but eventually chose to skip the Peak and visit the Lookout instead.

22. Mr LI Wing-yip, Foreaf, Police Operations Officer (Wan Chai District) of the Hong Kong Police Force, responded as follows:

- (i) The Police and the TIA had carried out traffic control measures on Stubbs Road before the pandemic to tackle the traffic congestion problem. Starting from this year's Lunar New Year, they had also been conducting joint operations for an average of four days a week;
- (ii) Although publicity, education and enforcement actions could temporarily relieve the traffic congestion on Stubbs Road, they could not solve the problem of traffic congestion from its root and divert the tour group vehicles; and
- (iii) In the long run, apart from considering the implementation of an advance-booking system, studies could also be conducted on the introduction of a parking fee system at the Lookout to restrict other vehicles from entering the Lookout

during certain specific periods of time at peak travel seasons.

23. Mr NG Samuel, Director of Operations, TIA, responded as follows:

- (i) The itineraries of Mainland inbound tours usually covered a visit to the Peak or the Lookout. However, given the limited number of parking spaces at the Peak and the high parking fees, some tours might skip the Peak and visit the Lookout instead to save time and costs;
- (ii) TIA had maintained close liaison with the Department of Culture and Tourism of Guangdong Province (DCTG), and had visited the DCTG on a number of occasions to exchange views. The DCTG had an advanced surveillance system which could provide real-time CCTV footage of various scenic spots, a practice which was worth emulating in Hong Kong; and
- (iii) Mainland scenic spots were generally large in size with ample parking spaces, making them very suitable for receiving large tour groups. In contrast, the Lookout was not originally designed to accommodate large tour groups. TIA was now actively exploring the introduction of an advance-booking system with a view to keep up with the Mainland.

24. There being no further questions from Members, the Vice-chairperson announced that the discussion on the agenda was concluded, invited Members to note the above paper, and asked the representatives of TIA and the Police to leave the meeting first.

Item 6: Any Other Business

25. Members had the following comments and questions:

- (i) The problem of illegal parking at Yiu Wa Street was serious, with vehicles illegally parked at the road bend at the junction of Matheson Street and Yiu Wa Street. Coupled with the frequent occurrence of double parking outside the Holiday Inn Express on Sharp Street East, traffic congestion was very common in the vicinity of Times Square. In order to improve the traffic situation, the Police was earnestly requested to step up enforcement in the area;
- (ii) At the junction of Matheson Street and Sharp Street East, there were two licensed hawkers operating stalls, resulting in a narrow pavement. The situation was

particularly inconvenient for pedestrians during rainy days. Some Members considered that the pavement should be widened to minimize the risk of pedestrians being hit by vehicles and to prevent accidents;

- (iii) The traffic flow and the vehicle speed at the junction of Tin Hau Temple Road and King's Road were high, despite that many students traveled across there to get to the Tin Hau MTR station. However, at present, the pedestrian crossing there was only marked with roadside signs and lacked pedestrian crossing traffic lights. It was suggested that yellow flashing beacons should be installed at the crossing to remind drivers to stop and give way to pedestrians. In addition, trucks often parked on King's Road near the Apple SOLO Mall in Tin Hau to unload goods, which blocked the sightline of the vehicles behind, forcing them to switch to the middle lane first and then back to the left lane, thus increasing the safety risk. Members suggested that a 12-hour "No stopping" restriction zone should be set up at the location to guide the trucks to unload their goods at the available location on Tung Lo Wan Road;
- (iv) The vehicle maintenance workshops at Kat On Street and Stone Nullah Lane had been occupying the roads persistently to carry out vehicle maintenance work, causing obstruction to traffic. The Police was urged to step up enforcement action;
- (v) It was proposed to install additional pedestrian crossing traffic lights or yellow flashing beacons at the junction of Fleming Road and Lockhart Road, i.e. the pedestrian crossing outside the Lap Tak Building and Tung Chiu Commercial Center, in order to safeguard the safety of pedestrians. If it is difficult to install additional traffic lights at the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Fleming Road and Lockhart Road, consideration could be given to installing railings at the pedestrian crossing to guide pedestrians to cross the road at the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Fleming Road and Hennessy Road;
- (vi) A serious traffic accident occurred recently at the junction of Sports Road and Morrison Hill Road in Happy Valley when a seven-passenger vehicle overturned. A number of major traffic accidents had occurred at this road section since the 1990s. In recent years, the Police had regularly prosecuted drivers for failing to comply with the "Stop" signs at this road section. However, there were still safety hazards in that area. For example, the "Stop" signs could easily be blocked by large trucks, making it impossible for the vehicles behind to see the sign. The

road section was a straight line and the speed of vehicles was usually high, thus increasing the risk of accidents. Members suggested that the "Stop" signs should be heightened and widened, and the lighting of the road section should be enhanced so that the signs could be seen more easily by drivers; and

- (vii) TD was requested to report on the latest progress of the opening up of the Pak Sha Road Pedestrian Precinct to vehicular traffic.

26. Miss TANG Ka-yuet, Annie, Engineer/Wan Chai 1, Mr. CHAN Quan-wai, Aaron, Engineer/Wan Chai 2, Mr WONG Chun-man, Edmond, Engineer/Wan Chai 3 and Mr WONG Pak-lim, Engineer/Special Duties of TD consolidated their responses as follows:

- (i) Regarding the width of the pavement at Matheson Street near Times Square, it was understood that the hawker in question held a fixed-pitch license and was under the purview of the FEHD. Considering the heavy traffic in the vicinity of Times Square, it was necessary to keep two traffic lanes on Matheson Street to maintain smooth traffic flow. This imposed great constraints on the widening of pavement. Therefore, when redeveloping or developing private properties, TD would advise the developers to move the lot boundaries or building structures backward so that the road or pavement could be widened to cope with the demand;
- (ii) Being a major trunk road, King's Road had a heavy daily vehicular flow and was heavily trafficked. At the upstream and downstream locations of the pedestrian crossings mentioned by Members, there were already two sets of pedestrian crossing traffic lights. Addition of "Zebra" crossings or traffic lights might hinder the flow of traffic further. After site inspections and studies, TD was, in addition to its earlier proposal of installing extra "Reduce speed now" signs, considering extending the existing broken and solid double white lines to further restrict vehicles turning from King's Road into Tin Hau Temple Road by forcing them to choose the left-turn lane earlier. This measure would help pedestrians to determine at an early stage whether the vehicles on King's Road were trying to turn left and enter Tin Hau Temple Road, thereby enhancing pedestrian safety. Regarding Members' suggestion of designating a 12-hour "no stopping" restriction zone, TD noted the suggestion and would study it together with the above improvement measures;

- (iii) Regarding the occupation of roads by vehicle maintenance workshops at Kat On Street and Stone Nullah Lane, TD considered that it would be more appropriate to deal with the problem through stepping up enforcement by the Police. TD would first have to balance the demand of the loading and unloading of passengers and goods for the road section concerned, and then examine whether additional no-stopping zones should be designated at locations where vehicular access was obstructed, while conducting necessary consultation;
- (iv) At present, there were already signalized crossings for pedestrians to travel across Fleming Road at the junction of Fleming Road and Hennessy Road. As the traffic at the crossroads of the junction of Fleming Road and Lockhart Road was very heavy, TD would review the site conditions in a timely manner to assess the feasibility of how to enhance the supporting traffic facilities there;
- (v) TD was planning to add extra transverse yellow bar markings at the junction of Morrison Hill Road and Sports Road to remind drivers to stop at the junction, and would work with HyD to finalize the arrangement. In addition, TD would review the size and location of the "Stop" signs, and reflect to the Lighting Division of HyD the situation of insufficient brightness of street lights; and
- (vi) According to the records of TD, since the full opening of Pak Sha Road for vehicular traffic in June last year, TD had not received any complaint about the removal of the pedestrian precinct. According to the traffic data observed and collected by TD, after the full opening of Pak Sha Road, there had been no significant difference in the total traffic flow to the Lee Gardens area from that before. During peak hours, the traffic flow on Kai Chiu Road and Lan Fong Road dropped significantly, while the traffic queues on Hysan Avenue and Yun Ping Road also shortened significantly during most of the hours. With the full opening of Pak Sha Road to divert traffic from some other road sections, the situation of insufficient road space to accommodate both vehicular traffic and pedestrians on Kai Chiu Road during peak hours on weekends and holidays had also been alleviated.

Item 7: Date of Next Meeting

27. The Vice-chairperson announced that the next meeting would be held on 30 July 2024 (Tuesday) at 3:00 pm.

28. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Wan Chai District Council Secretariat
July 2024