

Chief Executive in Council approves premium waivers for three pedestrian links and refinement measures

The Government announced today (January 5) that the Chief Executive in Council has approved premium waivers for three pedestrian links in Admiralty, Wan Chai and Causeway Bay under the Policy of Facilitating Provision of Pedestrian Links by Private Sector (the Policy) (location plans at Annex A).

All three applications have passed the four-test evaluation tool developed by the University of Hong Kong and received the support of the Land and Development Advisory Committee.

A spokesperson for the Development Bureau (DEVB) said that the proposed link in Admiralty would provide an all-weathered, barrier-free access between the harbourfront and hinterland enhancing the connectivity and walkability of the area. The proposed link in Wan Chai would provide an alternative routing with connection to the Admiralty MTR Station that is more pleasant than the existing rather vehicle-oriented route between Admiralty and Wan Chai. Together with other existing and planned pedestrian facilities in the area, the existing network can be further expanded enabling pedestrians to have a grade-separated walkway all the way from Queens Road East to Admiralty and Central.

Similarly, the proposed link in Causeway Bay could divert pedestrians away from existing busy at-grade roads such as Yun Ping Road, Hysan Avenue, Pennington Street and Leighton Road. It would be a more direct, safe and comfortable access from the Causeway Bay MTR Station to the hinterland, covering areas frequented by pedestrians.

As pre-requisite conditions of the Policy, applicants will be required to bear the design, construction, management and maintenance responsibilities and related costs of the approved links, and provide, as a norm, 24-hour barrier-free public access at such links. The applicants will also need to work on other issues related to the implementation of the pedestrian links such as their design, visual impact, gazettal and objection resolution, etc.

The spokesman added that while the Policy has been welcomed by the community as an effective measure to incentivise the private sector to do more to make the city more connected and walkable, there was room to improve the administration of and inject more flexibility into the Policy to better serve its intended purposes and expedite implementation of the approved links. With the Chief Executive in Council's endorsement, the DEVB would introduce refinement measures which would be applicable to applications being or to be processed by the DEVB. A summary of the key refinement measures is in Annex B.