

LCQ14: Pick-up/drop-off points for non-franchised buses in Tai Po District

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Liu Chun-san, in the Legislative Council today (June 5):

Question:

It is learnt that many housing courts in Tai Po are served by residents' services operated by non-franchised buses (commonly known as "residents' buses"). However, some members of the industry have indicated that the residents' buses of some new housing courts are unable to pick up or drop off passengers near the MTR Tai Po Market Station, and their pick-up/drop-off points are designated at locations near Nam Wan Road or Tai Po Hui Market. Even residents' buses which are allowed to pick up or drop off passengers on Tat Wan Road outside Exit A2 of Tai Po Market Station are often unable to do so due to serious illegal parking at the location and the large number of vehicles using that section of the road. In addition, many residents of Tai Po housing courts have expressed the hope that residents' buses can set up pick-up/drop-off points at Tai Po Centre or Tai Po Mega Mall. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the routes of the residents' buses and employees' services operated by non-franchised buses (commonly known as "employees' buses") which are currently allowed to use (i) Tat Wan Road outside Exit A2 of Tai Po Market Station, (ii) the bus lay-by at Exit B of Tai Po Market Station, (iii) Wan Tau Street opposite to Tai Po Complex, and (iv) the layby at Nam Wan Road near Uptown Plaza bus stop as their pick-up/drop-off points, and the respective dates on which the Transport Department approved their use of such pick-up/drop-off points;

(2) whether it has assessed the maximum capacity of the pick-up/drop-off points at Exits A and B of Tai Po Market Station, and whether the number of vehicles at such pick-up/drop-off points currently exceeds their capacity;

(3) as there are three lanes with taxi stands outside Exit B of Tai Po Market Station, whether the authorities have compiled statistics on the daily vehicular flow on these three lanes, and whether they have examined the impact of opening part of one of these lanes to residents' buses to pick up and drop off passengers on the vehicular flow in Tai Po District;

(4) whether it will review and change the pick-up/drop-off points in the vicinity of Tai Po Market Station for residents' buses in Tai Po District and for employees' buses travelling to and from Tai Po Industrial Estate; and

(5) whether it will consider allowing residents' buses to pick up and drop off passengers near Tai Po Centre, so as to facilitate residents' access to shopping venues in the district and their transfer to other modes of transport?

Reply:

President,

Our reply to the question raised by the Hon Dominic Lee is as follows:

(1) Residents' Services (RS) and Employees' Services (ES) currently operating on routes with stops at the lay-bys outside Exit A2 on Tat Wan Road and Exit B of Tai Po Market Station, Wan Tau Street near Tai Po Complex, Nam Wan Road near Uptown Plaza bus stop, as well as the respective date of approved service commencement, are detailed below:

Residents' Services

Route	Destinations	Stopping Place	Commencement Date
-------	--------------	----------------	-------------------

NR50	Trackside Villas, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)	Non-restricted Section of Tat Wan Road, outside Tai Po Market Station	April 15, 1991
NR59	Classical Gardens, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		September 18, 1995
NR502	Savanna Garden, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		June 1, 1996
NR508	The Paragon, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		June 15, 1999
NR509	Forest Hill, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		February 12, 1999
NR510	The Paramount, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		June 15, 1999
NR511	Tycoon Place, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		June 15, 1999
NR512	Deerhill Bay, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		July 15, 1999
NR513	Richwood Park, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		June 1, 2000
NR516	Grand Palisades, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		September 1, 2000
NR517	Chateau Royale, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		August 15, 2000
NR519	Casa Marina, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		September 25, 2000
NR527	Constellation Cove, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		March 31, 2003
NR528	JC Castle, Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)		August 1, 2003
NR529	The Beverly Hills Tai Po – Tai Po Market Station (Circular)	June 1, 2010	
NR530	Providence Bay – Tai Po Market (Circular)	Wan Tau Street near Tai Po Complex	June 7, 2013
NR534	Mayfair by the Sea – Tai Po Market (Circular)		May 1, 2016

NR538	The Regent, Tai Po – Wan Tau Tong, Tai Po (Circular)	Wan Tau Street near Tai Po complex/Nam Wan Road near Uptown Plaza bus stop	April 13, 2021
-------	--	--	----------------

Employees' Services

Employer	Destination	Stopping Place	Commencement Date
CSL Mobile Limited	Yau Tak Industrial Building, 21 San On Street, Tuen Mun	Nam Wan Road outside Uptown Plaza	December 11, 2023

(2) and (3) The lay-bys located at Exits A2 and B of Tai Po Market Station are currently 50 meters and 25 meters in length respectively. Based on the Transport Department (TD)'s records, the utilisation rate of the said locations is relatively high during peak hours on weekday mornings and afternoons, with the two lay-bys utilised at capacity during the busiest period.

At present, there are three traffic lanes outside Exit B of Tai Po Market Station. The first and second lanes closest to the said exit are designated as prohibited zone for all motor vehicles except taxis, of which the first lane is a New Territories Taxi Stand. The second lane serves not only as a taxi passenger drop-off zone but also as the exit lane for taxis leaving the taxi stand; whereas the third lane furthest from Exit B consists of an Urban Taxi Stand and the pick-up/drop-off zone for other vehicles.

There are constant queue of waiting taxis and pick-up/drop-off activity on the first and third traffic lanes at most hours. In view of the taxis' usage of the second traffic lane, it is determined upon TD's assessment that the said location is not an appropriate pick-up/drop-off point for RS, to avoid obstruction to the operation of taxis.

(4) and (5) RS is operated as a supplementary service for specified groups of residents primarily during peak hours and where regular public transport does not provide adequate services, especially as feeder services to railway stations and major public transport interchanges (PTIs), to relieve the peak-hour demand for regular public transport services. When processing applications for RS, the TD takes into consideration the adequacy of existing or planned public transport services in meeting the residents' demand, as well as whether the proposed routes function as feeder between the nearby railway stations or PTIs, overlap with existing public transport services or interfere with the traffic by travelling along and stopping at busy sections of the roads.

In view of the heavy traffic brought by the large number of non-franchised buses (NFBs) and other vehicles stopping at the pick-up/drop-off points at Exits A2 and B of Tai Po Market Station, the TD would consider upon

receipt of NFB service renewal applications to divert NFB services with stopping points at the said locations to nearby places, with regards to the aforesaid factors, in order to reduce the heavy traffic on roads surrounding Tai Po Market Station.

Passengers who wish to travel to Tai Po Central from Tai Po Market Station or nearby area may take KMB Route No. 71A (Tai Po Market Station – Tai Po (Fu Heng)) or MTR Route No. K12 (Tai Po Market Station – Eightland Gardens). The TD encourages the public to make good use of existing public transport network to avoid duplication of transport resources, so as to relieve traffic congestion and reduce roadside air pollution.