

LCQ16: Ancillary transport facilities for Kai Tak Development Area

Following is a question by the Hon Vincent Cheng and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Mr Lam Sai-hung, in the Legislative Council today (July 17):

Question:

It has been reported that the large-scale sports facilities in the Kai Tak Development Area (KTDA) will commence trial operation in early next year. Meanwhile, major sports competitions or events, as well as competitions of the 15th National Games (National Games), will be held in the area one after another. However, there are views that KTDA obviously lacks sufficient roads for pedestrian and vehicular access and relevant ancillary transport facilities at present, and the Central Kowloon Route (CKR) and the Trunk Road T2 linking the area with nearby areas will take time to complete. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as the completion of CKR is expected to be no earlier than 2025 [according to the authorities' latest estimate, of the restraints on the construction works that have to be overcome to expedite the completion; whether the authorities will make arrangements to enable the early completion of the works, so as to provide spectators with convenient access routes by vehicles and tie in with the staging of the National Games; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) of the authorities' contingency plans in place to ensure that the additional vehicular traffic during the staging of major competitions or the National Games in KTDA will not cause traffic congestion in the surrounding areas;

(3) as the Government plans to develop the Kai Tak Smart and Green Mass Transit System which will be connected to the Kai Tak Sports Park, but the alignment of the system will not be extended to Kwun Tong, of the authorities' evaluation of the effectiveness of the said system in diverting the passenger and vehicular flows accessing the large-scale sports facilities in KTDA after its completion;

(4) as the authorities have proposed in recent years the implementation of a "multi-modal" Environmentally Friendly Linkage System (EFLS) in place of the EFLS for Kowloon East, and the Chief Executive has announced in his 2023 Policy Address the implementation of smart and green mass transit in KTDA, of the current work progress of the authorities in introducing the multi-modal EFLS; before the completion of the smart and green mass transit, whether the authorities have considered devising public transport routes (including bus, minibus and other public transport) that run via or provide direct access to the large-scale sports facilities in KTDA; and

(5) of the respective numbers of additional parking spaces for tourist coaches and private cars in KTDA in the future?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted the Development Bureau, Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, Highways Department and Transport Department (TD), my reply to the various parts of the question raised by the Hon Vincent Cheng is as follows:

(1) The Central Kowloon Route (CKR) is about 4.7 kilometres (km) in length, linking Yau Ma Tei Interchange of West Kowloon with Kowloon Bay and Kai Tak Development Area (KTDA) of East Kowloon. It consists mainly of about 3.9 km of tunnels, most of which are constructed deep in rock stratum.

The overall progress of the CKR project is satisfactory. Most of the structural works for the tunnels, slip roads and tunnel buildings have been completed while the associated electrical and mechanical works are in full swing. The remaining main works include the tunnel works of about 300-metre section between Ferry Street and Shanghai Street beneath the Gascoigne Road Flyover. The need to minimise the impact on traffic, environment and residents in the vicinity during the construction period, coupled with the uncertainties in the underground environment, pose a number of engineering challenges. The project team continues to actively take measures to overcome the challenges encountered and catch up with the works progress, with a view to commissioning in 2025 as scheduled. The exact date is yet to be confirmed.

We will continue to closely monitor the works progress with a view to facilitating the early commissioning of the CKR, so that it can serve its traffic diversion function and alleviate the traffic load of other major roads in the area.

(2) and (3) When large-scale events are to be held at the Kai Tak Sports Park (KTSP) in the future, the Government will closely liaise with Kai Tak Sports Park Limited and public transport operators in advance to make necessary preparations and arrangements, depending on the scale of the events and the needs of the visitors. Crowd dispersal from the KTSP will mainly rely on mass transit system. Where necessary, the Government and public transport operators will deploy contingency measures such as strengthening railway services and arranging special bus services to meet the additional transport demand during the event period.

As for the 15th National Games (NG), the TD will work closely with the Steering Committee under the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Organising Committee of the 15th NG, its Coordinating Committees and the National Games Coordination Office (Hong Kong), provide traffic and transport related inputs to assist them in co-ordinating with other relevant parties and ensure smooth traffic arrangements for the NG.

The proposed Smart and Green Mass Transit System in Kai Tak will have a station near the KTSP, connecting with the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in the

former runway area of Kai Tak and the MTR Kai Tak Station. Its design and operation arrangement will be subject to the transit system to be adopted eventually. The Transport and Logistics Bureau will closely liaise with the Police and the operator of the KTSP with a view to catering for the crowd dispersal arrangement at the KTSP upon commissioning of the System.

(4) The Government is taking forward various initiatives of the "multi-model" Environmentally Friendly Linkage System. Among them, the elevated landscaped pedestrian deck to enhance connectivity near the MTR Kwun Tong Station commenced construction in 2022 and is targeted for completion by end 2025. The GreenWay network for shared-use by pedestrians and cyclists will dovetail with the implementation programmes of the open space and infrastructure projects in the KTDA. The first phase of the GreenWay network, about 7.5 km long, is expected to be commissioned by phases in 2024 the earliest. As regards the traveller facilities linking up the former Kai Tak Runway Area, the Kowloon Bay Action Area and the Kwun Tong Action Area, including the pedestrian cum cyclist bridge with travelators across Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter and elevated travelators at Wai Yip Street and Sheung Yee Road, the study and detailed design of these projects are in progress as planned.

Moreover, the TD has been planning appropriate public transport services in advance to meet passenger needs taking into account the latest situation of the infrastructure facilities and developments in the KTDA. Located at the heart of the KTDA, the KTSP is served by a range of diversified, efficient and convenient public transport services in the vicinity. Among them, the MTR Kai Tak Station and Sung Wong Toi Station, which are connected to the Tuen Ma Line railway service, are about 10 to 15 minutes' walk from the KTSP. The nearby bus stops at Shing Kai Road have different bus routes providing services including those to and from various districts in Kowloon as well as eastern Hong Kong Island, while the bus stops at Prince Edward Road East also have a number of bus routes connecting to various districts in Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories.

The TD will continue to closely monitor the development of the area, with a view to adjusting or enhancing the local public transport services when necessary to meet passengers' demand.

(5) According to plan, it is expected that there will be an addition of about 1 000 private car parking spaces and about 70 coach parking spaces made available for public use in the KTDA from now to 2025 to meet the parking demand in the area.