

LCQ6: Improvement to pedestrian facilities in Sha Tin District

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (April 27):

Question:

Under the "Hillside Escalator Links and Elevator Systems" (HEL) and the Universal Accessibility (UA) Programme, the Government has taken forward certain projects in Sha Tin District to improve the pedestrian facilities there. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the latest design, implementation plan, latest progress and anticipated completion date of the lift retrofitting items at the following locations under the UA Programme: (i) the footbridge across Tai Chung Kiu Road near Belair Gardens, (ii) the pedestrian subway under the section of Tai Chung Kiu Road adjacent to Fo Tan Road and Sha Tin Road, and (iii) the lift and pedestrian walkway system between Saddle Ridge Garden and Sai Sha Road; as some residents in the district have relayed that they have been waiting for the completion of such facilities for a long time and are concerned that the epidemic may affect the progress of the works, whether the Government will take measures to ensure that such items can be completed as scheduled; if not, of the reasons for that;

(2) whether it will consider retrofitting lifts at the location connecting Hin Tai Street and Hin Tin Street, and including the works in the UA Programme, with a view to making it more convenient for members of the public to travel; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) of the details (including the design and construction schedule) of the HEL project proposed to be taken forward to link up Sha Tin Tau Road with the footway near Greenview Garden; and

(4) whether it will consider retrofitting barrier-free access facilities comprising short staircases and ramps at the location linking up the exit of Lung Yiu House of Kam Lung Court with Ma On Shan Family Medicine Centre, and including the works in the UA Programme, with a view to making it more convenient for residents to attend follow-up medical appointments and travel; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

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

(1) In respect of the footbridge across Tai Chung Kiu Road near Belair Gardens (Structure No.: ST03), the Highways Department (HyD) will retrofit a

total of two lifts, one each at its exits near Shing Mun River and Belair Gardens respectively, under the Third Phase of the Universal Accessibility Programme. As for the subway across Tai Chung Kiu Road near Fo Tan Road and Sha Tin Road (Structure No.: NS35), a total of two lifts will be retrofitted, one each at its exits near Shing Mun River and Sha Tin Road respectively. The proposed design of these two projects has been endorsed by the Traffic and Transport Committee (TTC) of the Sha Tin District Council (STDC) in April 2020.

The lift retrofitting works contracts of Footbridge ST03 and Subway NS35 commenced in April 2021. The contractors concerned are currently taking forward relevant works such as ground investigation, boring, relocation of trees and diversion of underground utilities for the two projects, which are expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2023 and the second quarter of 2024 respectively.

The proposed lift and pedestrian walkway system between Saddle Ridge Garden and Sai Sha Road is one of the hillside escalator links and elevator systems (HEL) projects to be implemented. The proposed works mainly include the construction of a lift tower with two lifts at Sai Sha Road, as well as a covered elevated pedestrian link connecting the lift tower at Sai Sha Road and Saddle Ridge Garden. The proposed works design has been endorsed by the TTC of the STDC in April 2020. Pursuant to the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370), the works and its authorisation notice were gazetted in March 2021 and June 2021 respectively. To commence the construction works as soon as possible, the HyD initiated parallel tendering for its construction works contracts in March 2022. The Government plans to seek funding approval for the project from the Legislative Council within this year, which is targeted for completion in about three years.

To reduce the impact of the epidemic on the works progress, HyD's project teams have been implementing a series of prevention and control measures according to the guidelines issued by the Centre for Health Protection, encouraging all construction site personnel to get vaccinated and arranging for them regular rapid antigen tests. Starting from March 14, 2022, the Vaccine Pass arrangement has been fully implemented in all of the sites, in that all construction workers, site personnel and visitors entering the project site must have received COVID-19 vaccination. In addition, the contractors will provide suitable protective gears. For upcoming works projects, the HyD will also incorporate suitable clauses in the contracts, requiring contractors, their agents and subcontractors to follow the Vaccine Pass arrangement; and contractors to provide site personnel with adequate protective gears to reduce the impact of the epidemic. As for the supply of construction materials during the epidemic, HyD's project teams have been working with the contractors to review the construction procedures and material supplies, and will re-sequence construction procedures and identify alternative materials where appropriate to minimise the impact of the epidemic on the lift retrofitting works.

(2) Regarding the lift retrofitting works at the location connecting Hin Tai Street and Hin Tin Street as proposed in the question to make it more convenient for members of the public to travel, the Government will consider

the proposal under the scope of HEL. At present, the Transport Department and the HyD are taking forward the priority projects selected for implementation under the revised assessment mechanism for HEL. Depending on factors such as the progress of the priority projects and the resources available for allocation, the Government will assess the new proposal mentioned in the question according to the relevant assessment mechanism and follow up as appropriate in due course.

(3) The proposed HEL project to link up Sha Tin Tau Road with the footway near Greenview Garden mentioned in the question has been included as one of the proposed projects for priority implementation under the revised assessment mechanism for HEL. The HyD is embarking on relevant work such as technical feasibility studies, ground investigation, preliminary and detailed design, and will report on the details of the project in due course.

(4) It is understood that the proposed retrofitting of barrier-free access (BFA) facilities at the location linking up the exit of Lung Yiu House of Kam Lung Court with Ma On Shan Family Medicine Centre mentioned in the question involves retrofitting BFA facilities comprising short staircases and ramps at the staircase connecting the area outside Lung Yiu House of Kam Lung Court and the Sai Sha Road footpath to facilitate access by residents. According to the information provided by the Lands Department, the location of the staircase concerned falls entirely within the area of a Home Ownership Scheme estate of which private property rights are involved. Pursuant to the established mechanism, proposals of retrofitting such facilities at walkways or footways which fall entirely within private development/land (including Kam Lung Court) could be left to the owners of these properties for consideration.