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25 June 2004

Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Chairman, Panel on Economic Services
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central
Hong Kong

Transport Link in Tsim Sha Tsui East

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to present the captioned project to the Panel on Economic Services on 24 May 2004. I am writing to let you know that we will not be able to submit the proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee on 23 June 2004 as scheduled.

We have previously obtained support for this project from the Yau Tsim Mong District Council, the Town Planning Board, and various stakeholders including the Star Ferry Company Ltd (Star Ferry). Unfortunately, the recent developments with the KCRC's South Kowloon Link (KSL) has injected a completely new dimension to this subject. I would like to explain the situation.

Star Ferry originally expressed support for the relocation of the public transport interchange (PTI) outside their pier as they believed that there would be a station for the KSL on Canton Road. However, the recent gazettal of the KSL project showed that this station might not be developed. The Star Ferry therefore objected to KSL's gazettal and withdrew their previous support for the relocation of the PTI on grounds that the lack of access to the mass transport system would significantly affect patronage and thus the viability of Star Ferry.

/We ...

We have since discussed with Star Ferry's senior management to urge them to reconsider their position. In particular, we emphasised that the relocation of the bus terminus should not seriously affect their patronage because of all the traffic arrangements and measures to be adopted. On the other hand, the development of this prime site into a piazza will greatly enhance the attraction of Tsim Sha Tsui, and the new PTI will revitalise Tsim Sha Tsui East. As we were unable to convince Star Ferry, the Administration has decided to defer submission of the new transport link proposal to the Legislative Council.

This is a most disappointing turn of events and one that will put back the PTI project programme and the improvements to the Star Ferry concourse. We will review the situation after the alignment of the KSL has been finalized.

Thank you again for your support for this project.

(Eva Cheng)
Commissioner for Tourism

c.c.

Mrs Selina Chow, Chairman, Hong Kong Tourism Board

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