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23 January 2009

Mr S. T. CHENG
 The Chairman
 The Incorporated Owners of Marina Cove
 Office of the I.O. of Marina Cove (next to the Gate 3)
 Marina Cove
 Sai Kung, N.T.

Dear Mr CHENG,

Stage 1 Improvement Works of Hiram's Highway

Thank you for your letter of 14 July, 9 August and 22 October 2008 and your letter of 14 July 2008 to the Secretary for Transport and Housing, expressing your views on Phase 4 of Stage 1 Improvement of Hiram's Highway (Stage 1 improvement works). We would like to provide our replies as follows. Also, due to the time required for investigating your views in greater details and for coordination with the concerned Government departments, we are sorry that we did not reply to you in a shorter time.

We have been maintaining close liaison with the Sai Kung District Council (SKDC) and the local community for Stage 1 improvement works. Meetings have also been held with members of the local community (including the representatives of Marina Cove) to explain the need for and the particulars of the works project. As we pointed out on various occasions, there is a need to widen the section of the Hiram's Highway covered in the works project to a dual carriageway so as to relieve traffic congestion on the section near Marina Cove (the Marina Cove Section) and improve the safety condition of the section near Hiram's Villas (the Hiram's Villas Section).

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The Need for Stage 1 Improvement Works

The major purpose of widening the Marina Cove Section is to relieve the existing and anticipated traffic congestion. According to an on-site traffic survey in 2006, the traffic flow at this section already exceeded its capacity during the morning/afternoon peaks from Monday to Friday and the afternoon peak on weekends. A supplementary survey conducted in August 2008 gave the same result. The relevant traffic volume to capacity¹ (v/c) ratios are set out in Enclosure 1 for reference. At present, traffic congestion frequently occurs during the aforesaid peak hours on the Marina Cove Section. The Transport Department (TD) has been receiving complaints of traffic congestion from members of the public from time to time. With the proposed developments in Sai Kung in line with the approved Outline Zoning Plans concerned being implemented in stages, the local population is expected to increase. Based on Government's projection, the population in the Sai Kung and Clear Water Bay areas is expected to rise from 64 000 in 2006 to about 79 000 in 2016. Traffic congestion on the Marina Cove Section will deteriorate further if we do not expand its capacity. In 2016, the traffic volume on the Marina Cove Section will exceed its capacity to a greater extent, resulting in more serious congestion.

Our proposal of widening the Marina Cove Section to a dual two-lane carriageway is in line with Sai Kung's development needs, which includes land uses designated for tourism, recreation and rural development. The horizontal road alignment of the Marina Cove Section, traffic movements at road junctions, pedestrian crossing facilities as well as the local access to Ho Chung will also be improved to further enhance road safety thereof.

As for the Hiram's Villas Section, a new two-lane downhill carriageway is proposed under the project to improve road safety. Upon completion of the works, traffic traveling in opposite directions on this road section will be separated by a central divider. The merging of traffic from Tseung Kwan O and Kowloon respectively near Hiram's Villas will also be improved. The above improvement will match the design of the existing dual two-lane carriageway of New Hiram's Highway between Mok Tse Che and the Nam Pin Wai roundabout, so as to rationalise traffic flow and enhance safety.

Stage 1 improvement works will also provide lay-bys to facilitate loading and unloading activities. This will better serve the residents nearby. In addition, the widened road will make it easier for traffic diversion in case of emergency.

We need to point out that after the traffic accident at the Nam Pin Wai roundabout in May 2008, TD has arranged to partially narrow the width of the two traffic lanes at New Hiram's Highway's downhill section. The measure aims to reduce the vehicle speed at this downhill section and two-lane traffic is still maintained. To facilitate the road improvement works (which include adding a traffic island to separate the roundabout and the bus station thereat to improve road safety) carried out by HyD, the number of traffic lanes of the road section near the Nam Pin Wai roundabout has been reduced from two to one temporarily. The section will resume to two-lane traffic after the completion of the improvement works which is expected to be in April 2009.

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¹ Volume to capacity (v/c) ratio is an indicator which reflects the performance of a road. A v/c ratio equal to or less than 1.0 means that a road has sufficient capacity to cope with the volume of vehicular traffic under consideration and the resultant traffic will flow smoothly. A v/c ratio above 1.0 indicates the onset of congestion; that above 1.2 indicates more serious congestion with traffic speed deteriorating progressively with further increase in traffic.

We have consulted the Traffic and Transport Committee of the SKDC, the Sai Kung Rural Committee and the Sai Kung Area Committee on Stage 1 improvement works and received their general support. Members recognise the importance of carrying out the proposed road works.

Interface of Stage 1 and Stage 2 Improvement Works

We note that you doubted the need for carrying out Stage 1 improvement works before a concrete scheme for Stage 2 (i.e. the section of Hiram's Highway between Marina Cove and Sai Kung Town) is available. On this, we explained at the meeting with you on 20 June 2008, that it is Government's plan to improve Hiram's Highway in stages. In formulating the improvement plans, we have taken into account factors of individual road sections such as current traffic flow patterns, road safety condition, traffic flow demand and urgency of improvement of individual road sections, environmental impact, the availability of land for individual road sections, and cost effectiveness. As the road sections covered in Stage 1 and Stage 2 differ in these respects, each road section has been examined individually under the improvement plans. Although Stage 1 and Stage 2 need to match each other to bring about an overall improvement to Hiram's Highway, there is no need to adopt the same improvement scheme under the two Stages. According to the assessment of TD and our department, regardless of what improvement option eventually chosen for Stage 2, the alignment and widening works of Stage 1 will not be affected.

To address your concern that a bottleneck will possibly appear near the northern gate of Marina Cove if the scheme proposed for Stage 2 is not a dual two-lane carriageway, we will consider under Stage 2 potential traffic problems at the connection point between Stage 1 and Stage 2 improvement works. We propose to extend the road widening by about 250 meters under Stage 1 to Pak Wai, where a roundabout will also be provided. This arrangement will be able to streamline the merging of traffic and provide sufficient space for vehicles using the road. Traffic queues of northbound vehicles heading for Sai Kung Town are not expected to extend from the roundabout at Pak Wai to the northern gate of Marina Cove, causing no adverse impact on traffic at the access to Marina Cove before the completion of Stage 2. In addition, the roundabout will facilitate u-turning activities of vehicles and be conducive to meeting the various improvement concepts under Stage 2.

In October 2007, we commenced an investigation study for Stage 2 improvement works. The study confirmed the need to increase the traffic capacity of the section of Hiram's Highway between Marina Cove and Sai Kung Town to cope with the increase in traffic volume arising from future developments. We also held two public forums in February and July 2008 to gather public views. We understand that although members of the local community have different views on the improvement concepts, it is generally agreed that there is a need for the improvement works. We are now developing various options and carrying out detailed assessments on the options regarding cost, programme, environmental impact, sustainability, and land requirements. We will present the improvement options together with the findings of the detailed assessments, when available, to SKDC. Our present plan is to commence the Stage 2 works by end 2011 for completion in end 2014.

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Environmental Protection

We attach great importance to the impact of the works on the environment. For Stage 1 improvement works, we are now undertaking environmental impact studies and will work out appropriate mitigation measures, including the installation of noise barriers, in line with the study results.

Other comments on Stage 1 Improvement Works

Regarding your other comments on Stage 1 improvement works at the meetings with us, please find our responses at **Enclosure 2**.

We and the concerned Government departments will continue to keep in close contact with you and the local community on this project. For your reference, we would like to provide the Chinese version of the above as attached.

If you want to have any further information, please feel free to contact our project engineer Mr. M. H. Tam at 3188 3325.

Yours sincerely,



(CHU Shun-wah)
for Director of Highways



Encl.

c.c.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------|---|
| Secretary for Transport and Housing | 21368017 | (Attn: Mr. Kevin Lai |) |
| Commissioner for Transport | 23813799 | (Attn: Mr. Ambrose Cheong |) |
| District Officer (Sai Kung) | 27929440 | (Attn: Mr. Peter Chan |) |
| Director of Planning | | (Attn: Mr. Alfred Lau |) |
| Director of Environmental Protection | | (Attn: Mr. Donald Wong |) |

Internal

- AD/D 27145216
- DPM/MW(2)
- CHE/NTE

Enclosure 1

Stage 1 Improvement Works of Hiram's Highway
Traffic Capacity Assessment

Road Section	Year	Volume to Capacity (V/C) Ratio		
		Weekday		Weekend
		AM	PM	PM
(a) between Nam Pin Wai roundabout and Ho Chung Road	2006	1.28	1.10	1.29
	2008	1.19	1.14	1.47
	2016	1.64	1.86	1.62
(b) between Ho Chung Road and Marina Cove southern gate	2006	1.22	1.05	1.23
	2008	1.12	1.08	1.42
	2016	1.51	1.69	1.59
(c) between Marina Cove southern and northern gates	2006	1.14	1.00	1.19
	2008	1.06	1.06	1.32
	2016	1.46	1.61	1.52
(d) between Marina Cove northern gate and Pak Wai	2007	<i>1.10</i>	<i>0.99</i>	<i>1.18</i>
	2008	1.13	1.03	1.33
	2016	1.44	1.57	1.51

Note:

The road section in (d) was added in 2007 and the v/c ratios in italics are the results of the traffic survey conducted in 2007.

Comments from the Incorporated Owners of Marina Cove	Response from the Highways Department
Vehicles should not be banned from taking right turns to Marina Cove at the southern gate.	Under the present scheme, signalised control will be provided at the road junction at the southern gate. Vehicles could thus enter/leave Marina Cove from any direction.
Vehicles should not be banned from leaving Marina Cove and taking right turns to the Sai Kung-bound carriageway at the northern gate.	Under the present scheme, no signalised control will be provided at the northern gate in order to maintain a smooth flow of traffic on Hiram's Highway. Therefore, from the road safety point of view, it is not appropriate to allow right-turning movements at the northern gate. Nevertheless, vehicles from Marina Cove can still enter the Sai Kung-bound carriageway via the southern gate. Also, right-turning movements from the Sai Kung-bound carriageway to enter Marina Cove at the northern gate will still be allowed.
A footbridge should be constructed at the bus stop outside the shopping mall of Marina Cove.	Under the present scheme, a signalised pedestrian crossing will be provided by the Highways Department at the southern gate. This will provide a safe and convenient crossing facility which is preferred to a footbridge.
Additional lay-bys next to and opposite to the northern gate should be installed.	Additional lay-bys will be provided near the northern gate.
The proposed Luk Mei Tsuen Road junction should be relocated away from the southern gate.	The road junction will be shifted southward.

檔號：(CTK7) in HCW/1/2005/CON

西貢公路改善工程（第一期）

謝謝貴法團二零零八年七月十四日、八月九日及十月二十二日的來信以及七月十四日致運輸及房屋局局長的信件，表達對西貢公路改善工程（第一期第四階段）（下稱第一期改善工程）的意見。本署現作出回覆如下。再者，由於本署需要時間詳細研究貴法團的意見，及和有關政府部門進行聯繫，很抱歉本署未有於更短時間內作出回覆。

本署一直就第一期改善工程與區議會和地區人士保持緊密的聯繫，並有和包括貴法團代表在內的地區人士進行會面，詳細解釋工程計劃的需要和細節。正如本署在不同場合中指出，工程計劃涉及西貢公路路段有需要擴闊為雙程分隔車道，以紓緩匡湖居附近路段（匡湖居段）的交通擠塞情況，以及改善嘉林別墅附近路段（嘉林別墅段）的安全。

進行第一期改善工程的需要

擴闊匡湖居段的主要原因，是要紓緩現時和預期的交通擠塞情況。根據二零零六年實地進行的交通調查，該路段的交通流量在周一至周五上／下午繁忙時間和周末下午繁忙時間已超出其交通容量。在二零零八年八月進行的補充交通調查亦得出相同的結果。隨文的附件一說明了有關的行車量／容車量比率¹，以供參考。事實上，匡湖居段在上述繁忙時間經常出現車輛擠塞情況，而運輸署亦不時接獲公眾對車輛擠塞的投訴。根據西貢區內的分區計劃大

¹ 行車量與容車量的比率是顯示道路交通情況的指標。行車量與容車量的比率若相等於或低於 1.0，表示道路的容車量足以應付預期的交通量，行車暢順。行車量與容車量的比率高於 1.0，表示交通開始輕微擠塞；高於 1.2 則表示擠塞情況愈趨嚴重，車輛數目如進一步增加，車速會逐漸減慢。

綱圖，西貢區內的擬議發展將會逐步落實，當地人口亦預計會隨着這些發展有所增加。基於政府的人口預測，西貢和清水灣地區的人口預計會由二零零六年的約 64 000 人增加至二零一六年的約 79 000 人。因此，若不增加匡湖居段的交通容量，路段的交通擠塞問題將會隨發展進一步惡化。到二零一六年，匡湖居段的行車量將更大程度超越交通容量，造成比現時更為嚴重的擠塞問題。

本署建議將匡湖居段擴闊為雙程分隔車道，將能夠更配合西貢的發展需要，主要包括旅遊、康樂及鄉郊發展等土地用途。此外，當局亦可透過改善匡湖居段道路的水平線向、路口的交通流動情況、輔助行人過路的設施和前往蟻涌的區內道路，以進一步提升該處的道路安全。

至於嘉林別墅段，工程計劃建議提供新的雙線下坡行車道，以改善道路安全。在工程完成後，設於此路段的中央分隔欄，會分隔朝相反方向行走的車輛。此外，現時分別來自將軍澳和九龍的車輛在嘉林別墅附近合流，此情況亦會因工程而有所改善。以上的改善會配合現時位於莫遮嶺和南邊圍迴旋處之間的新西貢公路的雙程分隔車道設計，以理順車流和提升道路安全。

第一期改善工程還可以提供路旁停車處以方便上落客，因此更能利便道路沿途地區的居民。此外，緊急事故發生時，擴闊後的路面也能較容易實施交通改道。

本署需要指出，二零零八年五月，南邊圍迴旋處發生交通意外後，運輸署安排將新西貢公路下山路段的兩條行車線闊度局部收窄，用以使車輛的下山速度減慢，而有關路段仍維持雙線行車。至於近南邊圍迴旋處的道路，為配合本署正在進行的道路改善工程（其中包括加建安全島，分隔迴旋處和該處的巴士站，以改善道路安全），該段的行車線的數目暫時由兩條減至一條。有關的道路改善工程預計在二零零九年四月完成，屆時該路段將恢復雙線行車。

本署已就第一期改善工程諮詢西貢區議會交通及運輸委員會、西貢鄉事委員會和西貢分區委員會，並且獲得普遍支持。委員均認同進行改善工程的重要性。

第一期改善工程和第二期改善工程的銜接問題

本署注意到貴法團質疑在第二期改善工程（即由匡湖居至西貢市的一段西貢公路）未有具體的改善計劃前，是否有需要進行第一期改善工程。有關這個問題，本署曾在二零零八年六月二十日與貴法團的會議上解釋過，政府的計劃是分階段改善西貢公路。本署在制訂西貢公路的改善計劃時，是因應個別路段現時交通流動模式、道路安全狀況、交通流量需求和需要改善的迫切性等因素，再加上環境影響、個別路段的土地可用性和成本效益等作考慮。由於第一期和第二期工程所包含的路段在上述的因素中有著不同的特性，因此在研究改善計劃時已分開作檢視。雖然兩期改善工程需要互相配合，為西貢公路帶來整體的改善，但所採納的改善計劃則沒有需要一致。而根據運輸署及本署的評估，無論第二期改善工程最後採用哪一套改善方案，第一期改善工程的道路走線和擴闊工程都不會受影響。

至於貴法團憂慮匡湖居北圍附近可能會因為第二期改善工程採用非雙程雙線的方案而成為樽頸，本署在研究第二期改善工程的改善計劃時會將兩期改善工程交接位置有可能出現的交通問題一併考慮。本署建議在第一期改善工程中把道路擴闊工程的範圍延長約 250 米至北圍，並在北圍設置一個迴旋處。此舉可改善交通合流情況和提供足夠的空間讓車輛使用，預計北行往西貢市方向的車龍不會由北圍迴旋處延伸至匡湖居北圍，因此在第二期改善工程完成前，不會對匡湖居出入通道造成不良影響。此外，迴旋處既可讓車輛掉頭，亦有助配合第二期改善工程的各個改善概念性方案。

至於第二期改善工程，本署已於二零零七年十月展開勘測研究，研究確定匡湖居至西貢市的一段西貢公路將要提升交通容量，以應付未來發展而帶來的交通增長。本署並且已分別在二零零八年二月及七月舉辦兩場公眾論壇，以蒐集公眾的意見。就本署所知，地區人士雖然對改善概念持不同意見，但普遍贊同有需要進行改善工程。本署目前正擬定多個改善方案，並詳細評估各個改善方案的成本、時間表、環境影響、可持續性和土地需求等細節。待詳細評估完成後，本署會向西貢區議會講解各個改善方案及其詳細評估結果，以徵詢區議員的意見。本署現正計劃在二零一一年年尾前開展第二期工程，並在二零一四年年尾完成。

保護環境

本署十分重視工程對環境的影響，現正為第一期改善工程進行有關的環境影響研究，並會根據研究結果，擬定適當的紓減措施，當中包括安裝隔音屏障。

有關第一期改善工程的其他意見

此外，就貴法團在與本署會面時提出對第一期改善工程的其他意見，本署已作出回應。有關的回應列於附件二。

本署和有關政府部門會繼續就該工程與貴法團和地區人士保持聯繫。

如貴法團需要進一步資料，請隨時聯絡本署工程師譚文興先生（電話：31883325）。

路政署

二零零九年一月二十三日

附件一

西貢公路改善工程(第一期)
交通容量評估

路段	年份	行車量/容車量比率		
		周一至周五		周末
		上午	下午	下午
(a) 介乎南邊圍迴旋處與蠔涌路	2006	1.28	1.10	1.29
	2008	1.19	1.14	1.47
	2016	1.64	1.86	1.62
(b) 介乎蠔涌路與匡湖居南閘	2006	1.22	1.05	1.23
	2008	1.12	1.08	1.42
	2016	1.51	1.69	1.59
(c) 介乎匡湖居南閘與北閘	2006	1.14	1.00	1.19
	2008	1.06	1.06	1.32
	2016	1.46	1.61	1.52
(d) 介乎匡湖居北閘與北圍	2007	<i>1.10</i>	<i>0.99</i>	<i>1.18</i>
	2008	1.13	1.03	1.33
	2016	1.44	1.57	1.51

註:

路段 (d) 於 2007 年加入。相關的行車量/容車量比率 (斜體) 為 2007 年所進行的交通調查的結果。

匡湖居業主立案法團的意見	路政署的回應
不應禁止車輛在南閘右轉入匡湖居。	根據現時計劃，南閘路口將設有燈控設施，因此車輛可從任何方向出入匡湖居。
不應禁止離開匡湖居的車輛從北閘右轉出往西貢市方向的行車道。	根據現時計劃，為了使西貢公路的交通更加暢通無阻，北閘將不會設置燈控設施。因此，從道路安全的角度而言，不適宜容許車輛從北閘右轉。不過，離開匡湖居的車輛仍然可以從南閘駛出往西貢市方向的行車道。此外，來自往西貢市方向行車道的車輛依然可以從北閘右轉入匡湖居。
應在匡湖居購物中心外面的巴士站興建行人天橋。	根據現時計劃，路政署會在南閘設置燈控行人過路處。這個方案所提供的過路設施既安全又方便，比行人天橋更為可取。
應在北閘旁邊和對面位置加設路旁停車處。	路政署會在北閘附近加設路旁停車處。
應把建議的鹿尾村路路口遷離南閘。	該路口將會向南遷置。