

Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

For discussion
on 29 February 2016

TFHK/01/2016

Temporary On-street Metered Parking for Coaches At Hoi Yu Street, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong

PURPOSE

This paper summarises the findings of the review conducted on and the recommended way forward for the interim and temporary measure of using a vacant Government land at Hoi Yu Street for laagering point of coaches.

BACKGROUND

2. The traffic congestion and safety issues arising from travel coaches and their dropping-off and picking-up of visitors along Java Road, hence blocking the road and pedestrian pavement, attracted a huge number of complaints from EDC Members, local residents and different sectors of the community in the past years. It also caused nuisance to and, at its peak, tension in the community.

3. Police's enforcement alone could not resolve the issue. Hence, to put in place substantial solutions (including interim ones), the EDC supported the Administration's proposal of setting up one-hour parking meters at the location after a thorough discussion and deliberation at its committees' meetings in April 2015. The EDC also decided that it was only an interim and temporary measure which would be reviewed in 6 months' time after commencement of service.

REVIEW

4. In response to the community's grave concern on the deteriorating traffic condition along Java Road, the temporary measure has been implemented since 29 September 2015. It has been warmly welcomed and well-received by local residents and the travel trade. Since its implementation, the Transport Department (TD) and the Police noted that the traffic condition at Java Road has improved, especially during the evening peak hours (i.e. 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.) on weekdays. According to the recent survey, the average evening peak-hour journey time through the section of Java Road between

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North Point Road and Tin Chiu Street of approximately 670m long is less than 3 minutes, and a generally smooth traffic was observed during evening peak hours after the commencement of the temporary measure.

5. The local community highly welcomes the temporary measure and considers it effective in relieving the traffic problems at Java Road caused by travel coaches (see **Annexes 1, 2 and 3**). The local community has expressed a strong wish to have this temporary measure extended as a continuous relief to the traffic problems. With such a laagering point in proximity, travel coaches need not wander around in the neighbourhood or illegally park on roadside while waiting. This has not only eased the traffic problems at Java Road, but also helped prevent the spread of nuisance to the neighbouring areas.

6. The travel trade has responded positively to the temporary measure as well. At a meeting between an EDC member, operators of the Victoria Harbour cruises, representatives of travel coach drivers and TD, these operators committed to continuing to use the temporary metered parking as laagering point. They considered that the temporary measure has been effective, not only in improving the traffic condition at Java Road, but also in easing community tensions and meeting their operational needs. They hence asked for continuing the present measure until the permanent coach parking place at the ex-North Point Estate site is ready for use.

7. The traffic condition at Java Road has improved since the temporary measure was put in place. It is considered an effective laagering point to relieve the traffic problems caused by travel coaches and their dropping-off and picking-up of visitors. Both local residents and the travel trade welcome the temporary measure, and have shown support for its extension.

8. Apart from the above, TD forecasts a busier traffic at Java Road upon commencement of service of the new public transport interchange (PTI) at the ex-North Point Estate site (scheduled in early 2016). 12 bus routes will be rerouted through the section of Java Road between Shu Kuk Street and Tin Chiu Street to enter the new PTI. Under this arrangement, around 50 buses will pass through the said section of Java Road per hour during the evening peak. In the meantime, the area has continued to attract quite a number of Mainland tours on a daily basis (i.e. there were 119,115 Mainland tours visiting Hong Kong in 2015, according to the information from the Travel Industry

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Council of Hong Kong). The local community has continued to show concern over the traffic problems caused by these travel coaches. The discussion of the Area Committees on the subject is attached at **Annexes 4 and 5**.

EASTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

9. At the joint meeting of the Traffic and Transport Committee and the Culture, Leisure and Community Building and Services Committee of the EDC on 2 February 2016, the majority of Members generally supported in principle the extension of the temporary measure for 7 months after a thorough discussion and deliberation (see **Annex 6**). The EDC also decided that it was only an interim and temporary measure which will be reviewed in 7 months' time after extension.

10. The EDC also had an in-depth discussion on the future use of the location. Members noted that, while the Administration is following up on the proposal to expand the adjacent pet garden under the district minor works programme, subject to the availability of fund, it is estimated that only beyond the end of this District Council term can EDC consider, under the established mechanism and subject to funding availability, whether to commence the works for the pet garden. Members also took note that the site of the on-street metered parking is currently vacant with no alternative use.

RECOMMENDATION

11. The temporary measure of using the vacant Government land at Hoi Yu Street for laagering point of coaches by setting up on-street metered parking is well-received by the community and is considered effective. In light of the local community's continued concern over the traffic problems caused by travel coaches of Mainland tours visiting Hong Kong and in anticipation of a busier traffic at Java Road as a result of the rerouting of buses, the Administration will extend the temporary measure for 7 months up to 31 October 2016, as supported by the EDC, covering the upcoming Labour Day and National Day holidays. Having agreed to closely monitor the effectiveness of this temporary measure and review again after 7 months, the EDC reckons that further short-term extension after 7 months may well be necessary. As a long-term measure, a permanent coach parking place at the ex-North Point Estate site is

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scheduled to open in late 2017 tentatively, according to the latest redevelopment schedule of ex-North Point Estate site, so as to alleviate the traffic problems caused by travel coaches. It can accommodate up to 30 coaches at one time.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Letter from the North Point Kai-fong Welfare Advancement Association

Annex 2 – Letter from North Point Residents' Association

Annex 3 – Letter from The Coordination and Promotion of Eastern District

Annex 4 – Extract of Notes of 7th Meeting of 2014-16 North Point East Area Committee on 1 December 2015

Annex 5 – Extract of Notes of 7th Meeting of 2014-16 North Point West Area Committee on 8 December 2015

Annex 6 – Extract of Summary of TTC Meeting on 2 February 2016

**Eastern District Office
Home Affairs Department
February 2016**

The North Point Kai-Fong Welfare Advancement Association

210 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong
Tel.: 2561 0592, 2561 0848 Fax.: 2561 4587

6th February, 2016

The Chairman
Harbourfront Commission

c/o Secretariat of the Harbourfront Commission
17/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices
2 Tim Mei Avenue
Tamar, Hong Kong

Dear Mr. Brooke,

Seeking Support for Resolution of the Eastern Council Council:

To Extend the Temporary Coach Parking at Vacant Land at Hoi Yu Street as Relief to Traffic Problems at Java Road, North Point Arising from Illegal Parking of Travel Coaches

Since, in recent years, travel coaches carrying tourists for cruise tours and dinner at restaurants on Java Road have often chosen to park along two sides of the road, causing severe traffic congestion there. This situation not only hinders local residents' taking public transportation (e.g. minibus, bus and taxi etc.) on Java Road, but also causes road safety problems and puts the safety of local residents, the elderly, teenagers and children visiting our Association at risk. All committee members of this association consider it necessary to resolve the issue in a timely manner. In this regard, I, on behalf of the Association, sent a letter to Ms. Anne Teng, JP, District Officer (Eastern) on 16th July 2015, requesting the problem of road blocking at Java Road by illegal parking of travel coaches be resolved. I sent another letter on 17th September 2015 to Mr. Brooke, Chairman of the Harbourfront Commission, requesting the Commission to support the Eastern District Council's resolution to set up a temporary coach parking at a vacant land at Hoi Yu Street for resolving the traffic problems arising from illegal parking of travel coaches along Java Road.

The Association would like to thank Ms. Anne Teng, JP, District Officer (Eastern) and Members of the Eastern District Council for their support of, and the Chairman and

Members of the Harbourfront Commission for their recognising the need of, setting up a temporary coach parking at a vacant land at Hoi Yu Street harbourfront for six months from September 2015 to relieve the traffic problems at Java Road, North Point arising from illegal parking of travel coaches. Since its commencement of service, the temporary coach parking at Hoi Yu Street has provided a laager point for travel coaches; and it was observed to be an effective measure to improve the traffic condition at Java Road. Time flies and the six-month trial period is about to expire. Opining that travel coaches need more time to adapt to this arrangement, the Association wrote to District Officer (Eastern) and Members of the Easter District Council, requested the temporary coach parking at Hoi Yu Street be extended for 1 more year, aiming to continue improving the existing traffic condition. It is also hoped to allow for sufficient time for the relevant departments to liaise with various parties on enhancing the necessary ancillary facilities regarding the operation of harbour cruises, thereby mitigating the traffic congestion problem and addressing the traffic safety risks imposed on local residents.

The Association appreciates the tremendous effort Chairman Brooke and Members of the Harbourfront Commission have put on the planning, development and management of the harbourfront, which benefit the community at large. In this regard, I am writing again to seek for your support for the aforementioned resolution of the Eastern District Council, i.e. "To Extend the Temporary Coach Parking at Vacant Land at Hoi Yu Street as Relief to Traffic Problems at Java Road, North Point Arising from Illegal Parking of Travel Coaches". Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

(MA Wai-hung)

Chairman

The North Point Kai-fong Welfare Advancement Association

c.c.

Ms Anne Teng, JP, the District Officer of the Eastern District

North Point Residents' Association

Flat A, Seabright Plaza, 23 Shell Street, North Point, Hong Kong

Tel: 2234 6262 Fax: 2234 6202

16 February 2016

Mr Nicholas Brooke

Chairman of the Harbourfront Commission

Dear Mr Brooke,

Traffic Problems at Java Road

Java Road is the core zone and transportation hub of North Point. Due to the increase of the number of harbour cruise tours, many coaches travel and park in the on Java Road, narrowing the road. Passengers are forced to board and alight at the road, which is very dangerous. The rise in the number of tourists causes inconvenience to nearby shops and residents and the daily life of the residents is greatly affected.

I would like to thank the Commission for listening to public views and supporting the Eastern District Council (EDC) in using the open space at Hoi Yu Street as a temporary coach parking place so as to improve traffic congestion. The measure has started to deliver results after its implementation. It is known that the EDC discussed the temporary coach parking place at Hoi Yu Street a few days ago and expressed support for the extension of its service period to October this year. We strongly support the Government and EDC in implementing the temporary measure to solve the traffic problems at Java Road. The measure can help make better use of remaining land and settle

community problems.

Therefore, we write to your Commission again and hope that your Commission will continue to support the Government in using the temporary coach parking place at Hoi Yu Street to alleviate the traffic problems in the area. Thank you for your attention.

For any enquiries or replies, please call the undersigned at 5660 8116.

Yours sincerely,

LI Lee
Chairperson
North Point Residents' Association

c.c.

Ms Anne Teng, JP, District Officer (Eastern)

The Coordination and Promotion of Eastern District

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Tel: 2566 4315 / 2566 4316 Fax: 2566 3721

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Dear Mr. Brooke

Traffic Congestion and Pedestrian Safety

We wrote to the Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island ("the Task Force") on 17th Sept 2015 to express our concerns over the traffic congestion caused by the overwhelming number of coach buses carrying tourists to North Point Pier for boat trip or catering service.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the Task Force for supporting the Government's setting up of temporary on-street metered coach parking at Hoi Yu Street to alleviate the congestion caused by lingering coach buses. Since the implementation of the measures months ago, congestion at the area has been mitigated.

Since the term of the temporary measure is approaching its end and the new coach bus parking at North Point Pier has yet to commence, in view of the local needs, we hope that you could kindly support the Government's continuous provision of the temporary coach park at Hoi Yu Street, Quarry Bay, so as to sustain the betterment of the traffic condition at the area.

Yours sincerely,

The Coordination and Promotion of Eastern District

c.c.

District Officer (Eastern)

**Extract of Notes of the 7th Meeting of
the 2014-16 North Point East Area Committee
on 1 December 2015**

Departments

(IV) Follow-up Items

(6) Traffic Problems at Java Road

35. Station Sargent CHAU Po-kwong reported that 34 Police complaints against illegal parking were received from 1 September to 31 October, and the Police issued 56 fixed penalty tickets.

36. Station Sargent CHAU Po-kwong added that the temporary on-street metered parking for travel coaches at Hoi Yu Street was open for use from 29 September onwards. The Police also stepped up their patrolling accordingly, hoping to improve the traffic condition around Java Road more effectively.

37. Member noted that, after being directed by the Police to leave Java Road, some travel coaches were found parking along Marble Road instead of the temporary on-street metered parking for travel coaches at Hoi Yu Street. Member also observed occasional private car parking in the temporary on-street metered parking for travel coaches at Hoi Yu Street.

38. The Chairman said that local residents considered it necessary to remain watchful on the traffic problems caused by travel coaches' illegal parking, and asked the Police to step up enforcement effort.

39. ...

40. Station Sargent CHAU Po-kwong responded that the Police would continue to monitor the road condition at

Marble Road during school start time and dismissal time, and would step up patrolling and enforcement effort. In addition, if any breach of traffic legislation was found in the temporary on-street metered parking for travel coaches at Hoi Yu Street, the Police would take strict enforcement action.

**Extract of Notes of the 7th Meeting of
the 2014-16 North Point West Area Committee
on 8 December 2015**

Departments

V. Follow-up Items

(3) Problems caused by Tourists in North Point

(Please refer to para.s 23-25 of the notes of the previous meeting)

24. Representative of the Police reported that, in response to the traffic congestion caused by illegal parking of travel coaches and private cars, the Police issued 64 fixed penalty tickets in the proximity of Java Road and Shu Kuk Street from September to November, 20 at the section of Electric Road between Fuk Yuen Street and Tin Chong Street, and 365 at City Garden Road.

25. Member expressed concern over the traffic congestion problems at Electric Road and Java Road. Representative of the Police responded that, as there are many restaurants nearby, the Police would strengthen enforcement during lunch hours and school start time and dismissal time; and would direct travel coaches to stay in the temporary parking place at Hoi Yu Street.

**Extract of Summary of Meeting of
Eastern District Council Traffic and Transport Committee
on 2 February 2016**

- VI. Request to Improve Illegal Parking of Coach Buses in North Point:
Reviewing the Effectiveness of Temporary Coach Parking Place at
Hoi Yu Street, Quarry Bay
(Traffic and Transport Committee Paper No. 5/16)

Having thoroughly discussed and deliberated on the effectiveness of the subject temporary measure and the long term use of the land at Hoi Yu Street, the Members generally supported in principle the recommendation of extending the temporary measure for 7 months (up to 31 October 2016) to relieve the traffic problem at Java Road. The Committee invited departments to note the views and comments of Members and to follow up on the issue accordingly (including consultation with relevant policy bureaux and advisory bodies). The Committee also decided that relevant departments would review the effectiveness of the temporary measure before expiry of the 7-month extension period. The Committee agreed to include this issue as one of its follow-up items.