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\$1m to meet study cost

By SARAH MONKS

China Light and Power Company will meet up to \$1 million of the cost of an environmental study on overhead power lines for the new Castle Peak power station.

The proposed transmission system will involve stringing cables six in a row across pylons spaced 360 metres apart standing between about 21 metres and 47 metres high.

China Light has agreed to pay up to \$1 million of the cost of environment consultants engaged by the Government.

Studies are also being made on other environmental aspects of the power station's construction and operation.

China Light's new power station is at Tap Shek Kok in the extreme west of the New Territories.

Meanwhile, environmental studies are being carried out on Hongkong's second proposed - and controversial - new power station, on Lamma Island. Hongkong Electric Co is preparing an environmental report and so is the Conservancy Association.

China Light's transmission system will carry 400,000 volt (400 kV) power lines - bigger than the present 132,000 volt lines used by the company - from Tap Shek Kok to main substations on the edge of urban and industrial areas.

"Naturally, the alternative of underground cables over the whole route has been considered," a China Light spokesman said yesterday.

"But Hongkong, like Britain and other countries, has had to face the fact that

the cost of underground cables over such a difficult and long route would be prohibitive.

"Apart from cost an underground cable for the main transmission system would create its own environmental problems," the spokesman said.

"Safety consideration would require a wide reserve on either side of the cable which would create much greater problems in connection with the use of New Territories land than an overhead system.

"The route will be most carefully planned in consultation with the Government's Consultant Landscape Architects and with full consideration for the need to avoid as far as possible intrusion into

development areas or country parks.

"Where the line has to pass through part of a country park because there is no alternative, every effort will be made to minimise the visual impact," the spokesman said.

"The New Territories Administration is also being consulted on the overhead line route."

The new power plant will have a total generating capacity of 1,400 megawatts by about 1985. An initial 350 megawatts will be needed in three years.

The plant is likely to be fuelled initially by coal and can also be fuelled by oil.

The Castle Peak station is to be built and operated by the Kowloon Electricity Supply Company, a new company formed by Eastern Energy Ltd and China Light.