

Press Release

CB(1)554/06-07(10)

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Preservation of old Star Ferry Pier clock tower not practicable

In response to suggestions in newspaper reports today (December 15) that the clock tower of old Star Ferry Pier could be preserved by shifting the alignment of the proposed Road P2 and underground facilities, the Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works), Mr Mak Chai-kwong, said the suggestions would involve major and fundamental changes that would not be practicable at this stage.

"Every component of the whole Central Reclamation Project has undergone detailed consideration and statutory consultation procedures before we arrived at the present design. At such an advanced stage, changing any part of the project would have a major impact on its progress.

"The clock tower is a relatively flimsy structure built on the ferry pier to form an integrated structure. We have to demolish the Star Ferry Pier, and by doing so, the structure of the clock tower could not be preserved," Mr Mak said.

Moreover, because the existing plan for the Road P2, the Extended Overrun Tunnel (EOT) of the Airport Railway and Man Yiu Street stormwater drain all run underneath or beside the Star Ferry Pier, the pier had to be demolished, he said.

He further explained that Road P2 was an extension of the existing Man Cheung Street, which lay beside the Airport Railway Station. The alignment of Man Cheung Street and Road P2 were decided after a thorough study. The starting point of Road P2 had to join Man Cheung Street. To suit road safety requirements, the alignment of Road P2 should not turn in a very sharp bend in order to avoid the Star Ferry Pier nearby.

"Secondly, to meet the future demand of rail transport, the EOT of the Airport Railway has to be extended by a total of 500 metres. The EOT is located under the old Star Ferry Pier. Given that the alignment of the EOT cannot be shifted sharply, the demolition of the Star Ferry Pier is inevitable.

"Thirdly, the existing drainage box culvert located at the waterfront of Man Yiu Street has to be extended to the new waterfront to continue its operation. As the level of the culvert clashes with that of the EOT, the culvert cannot be extended northwards and has to run eastwards along the southern side of the EOT. Moreover, the extent to which the culvert can be realigned to the south is constrained by the presence of the General Post Office and the cooling water mains and shaft. Therefore, there is no room to adjust the project," he said.

"In view of the above reasons, we consider that it is not appropriate to make any adjustment at this stage since such an adjustment will have major impact on the overall planning," Mr Mak said.

Ends/Friday, December 15, 2006
Issued at HKT 19:41

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