

Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Subcommittee to Review the Planning for the Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site) – 7 May 2007

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Design and Alignment of Road P2

In the first paragraph of a November 2005 document titled “Facts on Road P2”, the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau described P2 as a dual-two lane *local road* (our emphasis) which would provide access to and connection between the Central and Wanchai reclamation areas.

In paragraph 2 of the same document, the P2 had become a *road network* which would form an integral part of the five-phase Central and Wanchai reclamations and which was required *to support developments in the completed CRI and CRII sections* (again our emphasis). In a recent paper prepared by the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau and Civil Engineering and Development Department for the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works its purpose was said to be “to alleviate the traffic congestion in the Central Reclamation Phase 1 Area” and provide “great relief” to the various junctions in Central. However, in the documents circulated for today’s meeting, it has again become a dual two lane local distributor road. Just what is P2?

We believe that many people in Hong Kong appreciate that a surface distributor road will be required now that the sheer extent of the Central reclamation is becoming a reality; otherwise it will not be possible to service this large new area of waterfront land. However, what they cannot understand and seriously object to is both its proposed width, given that we are to have the Central Wanchai Bypass in the future, and the fact that its alignment was gazetted without due consideration for the heritage aspects of the Star Ferry/Queen’s Pier area.

We understand that P2 has been allocated a land reserve capable of taking a far wider thoroughfare (some 40 metres) and recent plans and perspectives have shown a road of a width similar in places to the existing six to eight lane Connaught Road/Gloucester Road. To us this indicates that its purpose is in fact to alleviate traffic congestion and provide relief to traffic conditions in Central – not the

description included in today's documents. If this is the case, what is the Central Wanchai Bypass for?

According to the Transport Planning Design Manual a dual carriageway local distributor road in the urban areas requires a minimum carriageway width of 6.75 metres and even a 2 lane trunk road or expressway only requires a minimum of 7.3 metres. This surely means that P2 could be a great deal narrower than now seems to be the case even allowing for greening along both sides and a central reservation wide enough for a reasonable standard of landscaping. If it is built any wider, and the alignment is too direct, it will become a "rat run" from Central to Wanchai, particularly for taxis, where at grade crossing is dangerous and pedestrians seeking access to the waterfront will feel pressured and uncomfortable.

We would request that the road should be as narrow as is compatible with its use as a local distributor road and that its alignment be such that it does not encourage high levels of through traffic. Such traffic should be directed to the Central Wanchai Bypass which should be implemented as soon as possible so that there is no excuse to over-provide P2.