

Legislative Council Panel on Planning, Lands, and Works, Subcommittee to Review Planning for the Central Waterfront (including Tamar Site) Meeting 28 June 2007

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At the meeting held on 7 May, we commented on the design and alignment of P2 and our view that it should be restricted in width so as to limit both the volume and speed of traffic and that its alignment should be modified to allow the in-situ re-assembly of Queen's Pier. Our views have not changed and so we will not comment further on this topic today.

We would, however, like to comment on other aspects of the current planning proposals, on the assumption that the land uses indicated in the current OZP's remain materially unchanged:

1. The CDA(2) zone and the commercial site north of IFC2 including the ferry piers

In our view these two sites should be combined into one CDA zone with a height limit of a maximum of 50mPD except over the ferry piers 4, 5 and 6 where the height limit should be 20mPD. The GIC site to the west of the CDA(2) zone should also be restricted in height to 50mPD.

2. The Groundscraper

This should be re-planned in such a way that an at grade view corridor between Statue Square and the harbour can be maintained. The retail element could be contained in an underground shopping mall which would also provide all weather pedestrian access to the waterfront areas while the portion of the scheme that is closest to IFC, where large floor plate offices are planned for the financial community, should be a maximum of 10 storeys.

3. The Festival Market Site

This should be broken up into several smaller sites – as currently planned it would have a serious wall effect and block off this section of the waterfront from neighbouring areas to the south. Site coverage should be a maximum of 50% and the most appropriate uses would be waterfront related, small scale commercial and leisure uses in low rise buildings which are distributed across the site i.e. not all in one large block.

4. The G/IC(2) site and OU sites to the east of the Study area, near the Academy for Performing Arts

The G/IC(2) site should be subject to a 50% site coverage condition and a maximum height of five storeys while the OU sites should be subject to a 50% site coverage and be a single storey in height.

5. In addition we would like to see careful thought given not only to at grade pedestrian access but also to the layout of the waterfront open space so as to ensure that it becomes a series of inter-linked, welcoming and inter-active “places” where people, residents or visitors, choose to spend time, feel comfortable and bring their friends and family. It should not just be a pedestrian walkway where people have no inclination to stop and admire the harbour or sit and chat and take a drink or a meal. Ease and cheapness of management should not be the drivers but rather the pleasure and enjoyment of its users.

The overall objective, whether by changes to the OZP's or via the CRUD Study should be to reduce the volume of construction (7 million square feet is far too much), break it into smaller sites to allow for more diverse types of development and ensure that there are no high rise, large scale structures which block the harbour off from the rest of the city.