

22 April 2008

CB(1)1350/07-08(01)

Panel on Development
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central, Hong Kong
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Re: Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront (22 April 2008)

Honorable Chair and Members,

Latest design concepts extend the dead zone

The design concepts prepared for Stage 2 of the Urban Design Study for the Central Harbourfront fail to take into account the lessons learned from the International Design Competition. The proposals aggravate the problem of North Central and North Wanchai – a virtual dead zone after work hours, and especially at street level.

The design concepts are materially identical and offer only a handful very large scale monotonous land uses. The proposed pedestrian experience is a street level dominated by tunnels, transport interchanges, drop offs and terminuses similar to Exchange Square, a deserted park with a choice of tiles and grass, or an exclusive elevated private/public space and passage through retail malls.

The new design for Tamar, with the buildings and open space broken up and moved around, sets an example of what is needed for the entire Central Waterfront: breaking up and redistributing the oversized plots. This will result in a mix of passive open space and smaller scale active uses to create a vibrant experience. In addition, from museums to markets, aquariums to bars, pavilions and a tram on the waterfront, core attractions need to be agreed to ensure a diverse experience for all age groups.

P2 can be built without delay – with Queen's Pier in the original location

Point 23 of the paper **CB(1)1273/07-08(05)** issued by the Development Bureau states that *the re-assembly works of Queen's Pier in the original location will involve the realignment of Road P2 northwards. The realignment requires gazetting of the amendment to Road P2 and inevitably considerable delays to the completion of Road P2.*

This statement wrongly suggests that there will be unacceptable delay in resolving traffic congestion.

P2 can be built immediately as planned. Once the procedure for amending the alignment is completed, P2 can be changed. The construction of Queen's Pier will have to wait till the work has been completed to realign P2. With this sequence, there is no delay in the provision of new vehicular capacity to reduce the traffic in the area.

Completion of Tamar and the New Central Waterfront will be delayed by six years

Failure to schedule and implement the advance underground works for essential infrastructure will result in the repeated digging up of Tamar, the New Central Waterfront, P2 and other roads.

This lack of advance works will significantly increase the complexity and cost of the Central Wanchai Bypass, the Airport Railway Extended Overrun Tunnel, the Northern Island Line Tunnel, the Tamar Station, and the underground link between the Tamar and Admiralty Stations.

Unless adequate and timely advance works commence now, these large scale construction projects will severely limit the enjoyment for residents and visitors of Hong Kong's new waterfront till 2020.

Herewith we so submit for your consideration and we look forward to an opportunity to be heard on this issue.



Paul Zimmerman
Founding Member
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