

7th May, 2006

Ref. CB1/PL/PLW

To : Clerk to Panel
(Attn : Ms Christina SHIU)
Legislative Council Secretariat
3rd floor, Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road, Central
Hong Kong
(Fax : 2121 0420)

Re : Panel on Planning, Lands and Works
Special meeting on 11th May, 2006

Whatever way one looks at Tamar & Central, they have to be taken together. To be spoken of in the same breath. This is the fourth time I have attended one of these panel meetings and each time it seems there is a new hoop put in place for concerned groups to jump through. Despite this it is the NGO's that are making the running and rising to meet the challenge of solving what has become a matter of public interest.

The latest alternative plan for the area put forward by Civic Exchange, Designing Hong Kong Harbour District & WWF is a much better option for this vast area than anything that has come before. Ideas are finally coalescing, this new plan retains what the Government wants but in a less grandiose way and it breaks this huge site up in to bite sized but interlinked pieces that will give the public the access they should have. It is also a plan that hopefully will not leave this important space as a dead area in the evening but allows it to be kept as a harbour focus for everybody. Traffic congestion and pollution are real enough problems but these can and should be resolved by extensions to MTR and the Tram system that the whole world identifies with Hong Kong.

The smaller parcels if planned effectively will give a chance for the creative development that we desperately need. This plan should be used as the platform for bringing the community fully into the picture. As a mature solution to a nagging problem the Government must not turn its back on these proposals.

Norman de Brackinghe