

Comments by Bill Barron, PhD,
To
Legislative Council Panel On Planning, Lands and works
Subcommittee to Review Planning for Central Waterfront 7 May 2007

The document distributed for this meeting describes P2 as 'a *duel-two lane local distributor road*, suggesting a minor addition to area roadways. In fact, it will be 6 lanes wide at points, run nearly 2 kilometers, will border the entire Central waterfront, and used by thousands of vehicles per hour at peak times.

From the drawing provided, it appears that much and perhaps most of the waterfront park will be within about 30 to 35 meters of this major road and no part of the park will be more than about 65 meters away.

Unless the CWB *permanently and completely eliminates the chronic traffic congestion in the area*, P2 will be heavily used not only by the new commercial developments in the area, but also will be a tempting surface by-pass around any congestion on the adjacent through-routes.

To prevent the new Central Harbour Park from becoming a noisy and polluted place due to it's proximity to P2, several steps must be taken.

First, government must ensure that access to P2 is sufficiently inconvenient and restricted so that it does not become a preferred detour around any residual congestion on Harcourt and Gloucester Roads.

Second, the road itself must have sufficient traffic signals and these be timed so to keep traffic moving slowly enough to minimize disturbance the park and further reducing its attractiveness to discretionary traffic.

In closing, once again the administration has failed to show the Tamar development in the context of the planned 2.6 million square feet of other new commercial office/retail space on the reclamation, plus Tamar, plus the adjacent groundscraper and another building (almost 1, million sq ft) in front of IFC II. The combined effect of all this development will make P2 a heavily used roadway, negatively impacting the waterfront park.

This council, the public and the press should be asking for such information now so they we know what the administration is proposing with regard to massive additions to the density of Central/Wan Chai very close to the harbour.

The main points are summarized below in bullet points.

Summary of main points

- ✓ ***P2 will be 4-6 lanes, run for nearly 2 kilometers, border the entire central waterfront park and have heavy traffic.***
 - ***Much of the new park will be within about 30-35 meters of the roadway and no part more than about 65 meters away.***
 - This is quite close to a busy road for pleasant leisure activities.

- ✓ Unless the CWB completely and permanently eliminates congestion on Harcourt/Gloucester Rds., P2 will be a tempting surface by-pass with resulting further heavy traffic, noise and pollution for users of the park.

- ✓ To minimize disturbance to the waterfront park, there should be several traffic lights timed so that average road speeds are slow. This will help keep down noise and, by making use of the road less appealing to some users, thereby cut down on traffic volume and pollution.
 - Access to P2 should also be kept to a minimum to make it less appealing as a surface by-pass around any remaining or further congestion on Harcourt and Gloucester roads.

- ✓ Government has been misleading the public by failing to show the Tamar development (and its plans for P2) in the context of its plans to greatly increase the *overall building density in Central and Wan Chai very close to the harbour*,
 - Including 2.6 million sq. ft of new commercial office and retail space **on** the reclamation, **plus** Tamar, **plus** the groundscraper (about the size of IFC II), **plus** another building (of nearly 1 million ft²) in front of IFC II. Cumulatively, such develop will greatly add to density close to the waterfront and traffic on P2.

- ✓ ***These radical develop plans deserve much more public scrutiny and comment.***
 - Without that, we will only be left to lament afterward the facts on the ground as we have had to with the various 'wall effects' government planning has created and continues to allow (as may be seen in most of the short listed designs for Tamar).