

## Stalling on harbour

The bureaucratic diatribe by Robin Ip Man-mai, deputy secretary (planning and lands) (November 5) confirms the fall of his bureau in public esteem. His illogical and inaccurate attack on Christine Loh Kung-wai's article about harbour issues indicates how far the bureau is from understanding the public passion for a better quality environment and harbourfront.

He does not mention the frustration of non-government members of the Harbourfront Enhancement Committee with the lack of action and the continuous battle against the bureaucrats, who want to stop every good idea. Check the minutes on the website. The HEC is a classic case of stalling public action by creating a bureaucratic control system.

Mr Ip quotes the legal process for the outdated approved plan for the Central reclamation as a reason for not changing it. The Town Planning Board legally changes plans each month and could change this one just as easily, but the bureau will not let it happen. The legitimacy of the plan is not based on process, but whether it supports public aspirations. To refuse to change it for this indefensible reason only increases public opposition to the administration.

The board's decisions in relation to Central and Oil Street conflict with the bureau's promise of an open and transparent process under the new

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Planning Ordinance. Instead of using this new open process, they duck behind the cover of an administrative alternative to avoid public involvement.

What will it take before legislative and district councillors and harbour activists lead a public march from Oil Street to Tamar to really make the point?

**NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED**