Consider Jalan Panggung for MRT

EVER since the announcement of Kuala Lumpur's first MRT project, the landowners of Jalan Sultan have been concerned about what the future holds.

Jalan Sultan was selected over Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock and Jalan Maharajalela for the MRT alignment as it meets the criteria of servicing both fixed points of Pasar Seni station and Warisan Merdeka development.

As the discontent in Chinatown continues, there is perhaps a third alternative — through Jalan Panggung — that may satisfy both sides of the debate.

This alignment would allow an equally good integration of services with the LRT, where the MRT station will stretch across the grounds of the traffic police towards Jalan Panggung. As this land is generally open-air spaces for vehicles, there is ample space for the police station to be redeveloped for its needs and promote a more efficient use of city land.

The location is well-positioned for higher density redevelopment as an extension of the cluster of commercial towers across the road in Kampung Attap. The development can incorporate the demolished Pasarama Kota, Plaza Warisan and Plaza UO to reach Jalan Sultan.

The new location also places the MRT station in closer proximity to the Kuala Lumpur KTM Komuter station and allows a greater integration of services.

Thus, not only does the new alignment avoid the need to tunnel through Jalan Sultan, it allows the MRT to be accessible to more users.

Following Jalan Panggung, the MRT can possibly reach the Warisan Merdeka development by skirting the Chin Woo Stadium. Along the way is a Sikh temple which need not be acquired. The only building that is clearly above the route is the Bangunan Tunas Utama in Jalan Petaling and an amicable solution is attainable. This alignment will also allow the MRT to follow a smoother curve from the Merdeka station to the Bukit Bintang station.

The Jalan Panggung route not only meets the criteria for the final alignment but also provides greater benefits. The merits of this alignment warrants a second look at the MRT project.

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