

**B. REPORTS ISSUED ON PROJECTS PRESENTED AT THE
DESIGN REVIEW MEETING ON TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2006**



Architecture+DesignScotland
Aitearachd is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

**REPORT ON: Glasgow City Council – Beith Street – Superstore/Student
Accommodation/Leisure Facilities/Private Housing – GCC Reference: 05/03143/DC**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A planning application has been submitted for a mixed use development on a site fronting onto Beith Street, located on the north bank of the River Kelvin, and close to Partick Cross.

1.2 Although an outline application, the applicant seeks to discharge reserved matters over the majority of the scheme, effectively amounting to a detailed planning submission for the store and student accommodation.

1.3 The proposal divides into two parts, with a supermarket and student facilities over the majority of the site, and housing zoned for adjacent land to the west bordering the railway embankment that defines the western boundary.

1.4 A previous planning consent for a smaller supermarket on the site has lapsed.

1.5 This project was considered at a Design Review Panel on 7 February 2006, at A+DS' offices, Edinburgh.

2.0 OBSERVATIONS

2.1 The Panel supported the aspiration for a mixed use development including a supermarket in this inner city location. The vision of a departure from the normal 'edge of settlement' supermarket model that also concealed the car parking was particularly commended. It was generally felt that the combination of the brief and the particular qualities of the site offered potential for an extremely interesting design solution that could integrate successfully with its context.

2.2 The Panel were disappointed that an integrated mixed-use development had not been achieved. Individual uses were separated out and the different elements had not been used to mutual benefit. For example, residential or other uses might have been wrapped around the blank facades of the supermarket to enliven the frontages to the streets and reduce the bulk of the development.

2.3 The development was not permeable, and it was felt that the unrelenting wall and mass of the development would dominate Beith Street.

2.4 The scale of the building and the consistent ten metre high plinth above which buildings protrude differed from the urban character of the area, and would likely have a detrimental effect on neighbouring uses.

2.5 The stand-alone student accommodation was remote from and contributed little to the street scene, and the quality of experience of the deck courts was questioned.

2.6 The Panel commented on the poor quality of the public realm and the hostile environment that was being proposed, and noted how unwelcoming the pedestrian experience would be for anyone passing along either Beith Street or the west of the building. The river-side walkway would be particularly hostile and potentially dangerous.

2.7 As the river is a precious asset it seemed curious that the store blocked this off, yet the suggested housing layout for the adjacent site allowed views to the railway embankment. The handing of the proposal was discussed as a means by which the store could screen the embankment and an attractive, permeable and inviting residential environment could be created along the river edge.

2.8 The impact of highways considerations, such as the positioning and size of the roundabout and the need to retain the road linking under the railway to the west in its present location was also discussed. The Council was requested to work in partnership on this aspect of the proposal to unlock the potential of the site.

2.9 The Panel felt there was a fundamental flaw with the existing scheme that minor alterations could not correct. Problems appeared to stem from the application of an overly large retail footprint on a single level, and it was suggested that there was scope to reduce the store footprint by splitting retail uses onto separate levels.

2.10 The Panel noted that the wider area was undergoing change, and the proposal should be considered in that changing context. This was particularly relevant in relation to the opportunity for creating high quality pedestrian links to Glasgow Harbour and the new Museum of Transport.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 A+DS is grateful to the Project Team for their presentation and to the various Partners for their contributions.

3.2 A+DS supports the aspiration for an integrated mixed-use development incorporating a supermarket and concealed car parking in this inner city location, and believes there is potential for an interesting design solution.

3.3 A+DS does not support the proposal in its current form. It does not provide a truly integrated mixed-use development, it fails to make a positive contribution to the streetscape, and it would result in a substandard public realm with a particularly poor riverside walkway. This amounts to a systemic failure of placemaking.

3.4 The Project Team are urged to reconsider the layout and work in partnership with Glasgow City Council to improve the quality of the public realm.

3.6 A+DS looks forward to reviewing the proposals at a more advanced stage.

4.0 APPENDIX

Presented to A+DS Design Review Panel on 7 February 2006, at A+DS' offices, Edinburgh.

Design Review Panel: Brian Evans (Chair), Alison Blamire, John Irvine, Rob Joiner, Jill Malvenan, Ric Russell.

Project Team: Lindsay Manson and Hina Hirani, Ian Burke Associates, Edinburgh; Alasdair Laurenson, DPP, Glasgow; Steve Douglas, Tesco Stores Ltd.

Partners: Ranald MacInnes, Historic Scotland; Elaine Murray, Jim Patrick and Gerry Grams, Development and Regeneration Services, Glasgow City Council