

Glasgow Urban Design Panel

Feedback Report

Date: 14th August 2019

Project: Beith Street

Planning Status: Pre-Application Stage

Presentation by: Holmes Miller (Architect)

Panel Consensus

- The proposed architectural diagram for the Beith Street development does not realise its full urban potential by blocking pedestrian views and access south east towards the River Kelvin. The planned building blocks that are organised perpendicular to the River are linked by a one storey lobby effectively compromising any visual or physical connection being made across the depth of the site, a quality that the panel considered would help to significantly improve the design.

- The linking retail and lobby plinth / frontage was felt to be an unnecessary addition to the design appearing institutional and ultimately unconvincing in its commercial viability and design proportions.

- Proposals give little back to the street and the river and monopolised the site for private use.

- There was no transition in scale or in the ordering of the architectural language from the base to the top of the towers to help ground the blocks and relate them back to any contextual datums.

- The panel recognised that it was not possible in this instance to fulfil the ambitions of the Local Development Plan to extend the Kelvin Walkway through this site due to the access points being cut-off at either end by other developments.

- There was a lost opportunity for the design in privatising all of the site area and sterilising the potential to activate the River at any point in perpetuity.

- The panel felt all spaces between the block being private would result in them being underutilised and even unattractive to residents due to the extent of overlooking and formality.

- The form of the towers was over simple and could be modulated through the provision of balconies, recesses and bays helping provide greater amenity, aspect & daylight for the large number of single-aspect flats.
- The panel felt there was an opportunity for the townscape architecture to be more decisive and contribute to the location's distinctiveness.
- The panel felt that the plinth / colonnade at ground floor presented an opportunity to be more playful and could actively engage with the street edge through hosting different functions such as a gym, café etc.
- The panel felt that the overall massing and height of the project should be more purposeful, with this explored with a degree of rigour to ensure the proposal sits comfortably amongst the neighbouring buildings.
- The panel felt the overarching ambition for a high-density development was positive, however the project required to create good environments around it, and as such the density and scale of the development should not be to the detriment of the environment the development creates.
- The panel felt the external spaces to the West and to the street edge at the centre of the development felt left-over and could be more integral to the development.

Panel Recommendations

- Consider removing the retail / lobby plinth onto Beith Street
- Consider a more generous approach to the design of thresholds between public and private space.
- Consider a more sophisticated architectural diagram that improves the relationship between Beith Street and the river.
- Further exploration into the overall massing of the project to give the blocks human scale, hierarchy and legibility given the significant contribution the towers will make to the townscape / skyline in this location.
- Exploration into the architectural language to further develop the scale of detail to the development and stratification of the blocks as these stretch from ground to sky.
- Greater 'holistic' integration of the landscape architecture strategy into the overall development including the 'residual / left over' public spaces

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- Exploration into the relationship between density / massing and the environment the blocks create to ensure the correct balance is achieved.
- Investigation into technical solutions at an early stage to ensure proposed soft-landscaping can be accommodated on the deck over the car park.