

**Report Title:** 121-123 Princes Street Redevelopment  
**Issue Date:** 7 April 2009  
**Client/Developer:** Deramore Property  
**Lead Designer:** Archial Architects / Turley Associates  
**Local Authority:** City of Edinburgh Council  
**Location:** Edinburgh  
**Planning Ref:** 08/03230/FUL  
**Details:** Development of a prominent site on Princes Street which involves both demolition and retention of listed structures

## **Extract of letter sent to the City of Edinburgh Council**

### Introduction

We would refer you to our report issued on 18 December 2008 following a presentation to an A+DS Design Panel on 04 December 2008 (of previous proposals which were not at that stage finalised). We raised a number of issues and suggested that further development was required to produce a proposal of the quality worthy of its prominent site. We welcome the further work in the revised proposals now submitted, particularly on the external form and elevations, which appears to address a number of the issues highlighted. However there are some issues that have still not been fully addressed and, due to the sketch-like nature of the drawings and in particular on the elevations, it is not always possible to clearly establish what is proposed. The comments below are based on those in our previous report:

### A+DS Views

#### General Comments

We welcome the more considered and contemporary approach to the form and external elevations of the new section of building at 121-122 Princes Street, with the proposed stone front face being treated more as a piece along with the stone flanks in a three dimensional composition. We also welcome the resolution and clearer expression in the proposals of the different areas of the mixed use typology and the vertical circulation routes.

We also welcome the more generous and open internal route from the ground floor commercial area to the Lane and the more inviting 'shopfronts' to the rear public exits, although the hotel stair lobby area remains highly restricted. We note however that much of the rear facade remains occupied by services e.g. the electrical substation, and that the inability to relocate these will limit the capacity for the frontage to be opened up in the future. We would encourage the Council to be more pro-active in helping resolve these issues for developments of this type, to allow them to fit into the Council's own aspirations for re-activation of the Lane in an integrated way.

While acknowledging there have been some changes in the amount of existing fabric being retained internally, the issue of improving the approach to integration of new structure and spaces into existing historic buildings has not really been resolved. We welcome the retention of rooms at first and second floor level within 123 Princes Street, lending this area some of the character of the existing building. However other floors remain effectively 'cleared out' and a facade retention approach has been adopted on the rear elevation to the Lane. As the first of an anticipated series of future projects of this type on Princes Street, we still believe that a higher level of thought and resolution in this regard should be achieved.

### Conclusion

We re-iterate the importance of this project as a benchmark scheme for future developments, and support for the adoption of the mixed-use development as proposed. We would look for a route to be found whereby the remaining issues can be addressed, either at this stage or in future detail development.

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