



<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>GLC 37: Maryhill Locks Masterplan – Phase 2</b>
<b>Details:</b>	<b>Proposed masterplan – Phase 2</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Maryhill, Glasgow</b>
<b>Use type:</b>	<b>Housing / Retail / Public Realm / Infrastructure</b>
<b>Client / Developer:</b>	<b>ISIS Waterside Regeneration / Glasgow Canal Regeneration Partnership</b>
<b>Lead Designer(s):</b>	<b>Hypostyle Architects / TGP Landscape Architects</b>
<b>Planning Authority:</b>	<b>Glasgow City Council</b>
<b>Planning Status and Ref:</b>	<b>10/00326/DC</b>
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## **Introduction**

This report relates to a planning application for Phase 2 of the masterplan for redevelopment of Maryhill Locks, Glasgow. The project, comprising approximately 130 housing units with associated plant and retail, was presented prior to the application being submitted at an A+DS Design Review meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2010 in Edinburgh.

A+DS commented on early options appraisals for alternative schemes for the overall masterplan at a Design Review meeting in June 2007, and again on designs at pre-application stage in February 2008, with restricted reports issued in July 2007 and March 2008 respectively. The overall masterplan was subsequently approved by Glasgow City Council on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2008. Our comments in this report pertain to the overall masterplan, as a guiding document for developing phases, as well as Phase 2 of the masterplan, which is the subject of the current planning application.

## **A+DS Views**

### **1 General comments**

1.1 We congratulate the project team for their success in the project being awarded SSCI status and support their high aspirations for the redevelopment of Maryhill Locks. We welcome the opportunity to comment on the developing designs and initial phases of the masterplan coming forward.

1.2 In commenting earlier on the overall masterplan we noted that the site benefited from a number of distinctive characteristics and welcomed the preparation of a landscape framework that recognised and integrated with the wider context. We felt that there was scope to consider further the treatment and use of private space, and the interface between public and private areas. We emphasised the importance of maintaining design quality throughout the project's implementation, through to

completion. Whilst we felt that the masterplan presented an image of homogeneity, and had the potential to act as an exemplar, we were concerned that a number of separate development parcels could result in a fragmented whole and we questioned how the masterplan would resolve such an issue.

1.3 Although we commend the design team for the current phase for the way in which they have responded architecturally to the masterplan, and the difficulties presented by the topography of the site and other constraints, we feel that there are issues raised by these proposals that begin to question the integrity and workability of the overall masterplan and the approach that is being taken to its delivery.

## **2 Landscape, streetscape and public realm**

2.1 In earlier reports we stressed the importance of developing the overall masterplan in relation to a landscape framework, and suggested that more consideration needed to be given to the relationship between public and private space. Integration with surrounding communities and the quality of the public realm would be critical to ensuring the project's success. These remain critical issues, and the challenge faced by the current design team in developing these aspects of the designs suggests that the overall masterplan needs to be re-visited and developed in these respects.

2.2 At the moment we find the layout for Phase 2 overly complex and feel there is a lack of clarity between pedestrian routes, of which there are many, and the hierarchy of public spaces. There are a number of different types of 'hard' and 'soft' spaces being developed - the 'circus', backcourts, gateways, walkways, boulevards and streets, which could have implications for the development of design codes for future phases of development. A balanced approach is required to bring landscape and architecture together to define a spatial hierarchy for the site and we suggest that a simplified array of typologies would make the development of design codes more workable. We also suggest that some of the spaces between buildings could be simplified and reduced in scale.

2.3 We support the project team in their ambition for streets throughout the development to be designed to 'home zone' standard and encourage reference to the Scottish Government's forthcoming policy document 'Designing Streets' in this respect. We do have some issues with regards to the nature of the streets as proposed, and how they are being designed in relation to the architecture. More consideration of the quality and character of the streets as places, and how they work in section as well as plan, is required. The success of the scheme will depend on how well streets are considered as balanced compositions within the overall masterplan, how edges of the Masterplan area are kept activated and used and how interfaces between new and old and links to the Kelvin are achieved.

2.4 There are some unifying elements of the original masterplan that are being eroded. For instance, the continuity that was previously provided by the streets has been broken down by the introduction of cul-de-sacs and loss of tree-lined streets. A re-examination of the masterplan should ensure that such unifying features are either re-introduced or replaced.

## 2.5 Central circus

We have concerns with the design of the central circus as a place, and question its role within the whole masterplan. The fact that only a part of it is included in the current phase has not assisted in promoting the concept. We feel that more clarity is required in terms of how the buildings that surround it will support it, what the space will be used for, what precedents have been used in its design, and what policy would be used for managing and shaping its development.

2.6 It is important that, as phases of the masterplan develop, they become an integrated part of the Maryhill Locks and the city, rather than just stand alone pieces of development. The lessons learned from, and the character and identity being created in, the emerging designs for Phase 2 should inform the development of the next phases, and the re-assessment of the overall masterplan.

## 3 Architecture

3.1 We commend the design team for their ingenuity in resolving some of the three-dimensional issues presented by the topography of the site, which appears not to have been sufficiently addressed in the original masterplan. We find the proposed architecture interesting and well related to the topography and encourage a similar level of ingenuity to be carried through to the next phases of development.

3.2 We recognise that Phase 2 is being developed as a key gateway to the site, ahead of other areas of the masterplan, and that it will establish a base from which design coding may be developed for future phases.

3.3 We question the number of materials proposed and suggest that a simplified palette of materials could help create a more homogenous development and pull the whole masterplan together.

## 4 Sustainability / SSCI

4.1 The status of SSCI offers a significant opportunity for the project to set an exemplar as a sustainable community. We encourage the project team in their ambition for Maryhill Locks in this respect, and for aiming to achieve Eco Homes excellent. We support their efforts towards developing those aspects of sustainability already being addressed in the designs, for instance in the proposal for the first biomass heating plant for the city and in following sustainable construction and procurement methods.

4.2 The positioning and location of the extract flue of the proposed biomass plant offers an opportunity to express this element architecturally in some way, to celebrate, and make a statement of, this aspect of the proposals.

## Conclusion

We congratulate the project team for their success in the project being awarded SSCI status and support their high aspirations for the redevelopment of Maryhill Locks. We welcome the opportunity to comment on the developing designs and initial phases of the masterplan coming forward. Although we commend the design team for the way in which they have responded architecturally to the masterplan and the difficulties presented by the topography of the site and other constraints, we feel that there are

issues raised by these proposals that begin to question the integrity and workability of the overall masterplan. At the moment we find the masterplan for Phase 2 overly complex, particularly in relation to pedestrian networks and the hierarchy of public spaces. We suggest that the overall masterplan be re-examined following lessons learned from the development of Phase 2, to help guide the design of future phases and to create a more coherent and homogenous development.