

**Report Title:** Haymarket Interchange, Edinburgh  
**Issue Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> November 2007  
**Client/Developer:** City of Edinburgh Council  
**Lead Designer:** Halcrow / Aedas Architects  
**Local Authority:** City of Edinburgh Council  
**Location:** Edinburgh  
**Planning Ref.:** Public Consultation  
**Details:** Proposals for development of a multi-modal transport 'hub' at Haymarket, Edinburgh



## INTRODUCTION

This report relates to a study into how the Haymarket area can be developed as a multi-modal transport 'hub'. A+DS was updated on the project at a meeting on 9 October 2007, and was advised of the recommendation to proceed with Option A from the initial options appraisal.

This meeting followed on from a restricted report, issued in July 2007, which commented on three design options presented to an A+DS Design Review panel on 19 June 2007 as part of a public consultation exercise.

## A+DS VIEWS

### 1. Introduction

1.1 In our report dated July 2007 we stated that the three options lacked vision, and we encouraged a more ambitious approach that demonstrated creative urban thinking. We noted that the City Council has a responsibility to guide the development of the Haymarket, and urged them, along with other key stakeholders, to consider the Haymarket Interchange proposals as part of a bigger exercise to create a lasting legacy for the wider area.

1.2 We considered that the proposed redevelopment of Haymarket Interchange, and the volume of other development anticipated in and around it, provided a unique opportunity for the City to co-ordinate and bring about a major urban intervention of a quality befitting a European capital city and gateway to a World Heritage Site.

1.3 We believed that none of the three options addressed the potential of the opportunity provided. All three proposals demonstrated a lack of civic ambition, and appeared to have been driven by a transport, rather than place making, agenda.

1.4 We welcomed the fact that the project team had been involved in discussion with the developers of adjacent sites and other key stakeholders, but were disappointed that these discussions had not led to the integrated approach to place making that was required.

1.5 We called for a spatial strategy to underpin the development of this area, stitching together this study with proposals for the former Morrison Street Goods Yard and demonstrating how development would be shaped to the west of Haymarket. Such a strategy should integrate City initiatives such as the tram and the skyline strategy, and reveal the most appropriate location for tall built form when considered in the context of the area as a whole.

### 2. Design development

2.1 As the designs have not altered our previous concerns still apply. We do not consider the preferred design to be ambitious enough. It does not address the opportunity to deliver a major civic space, nor does it successfully resolve the various elements with which it deals; the manner in which the tram is integrated is of particular concern.

2.2 We recognise the complexities surrounding a project of this nature. However, an approach is apparent that fails to integrate or balance transportation with urban issues, resulting in a compromised approach to civic placemaking. A holistic approach is essential to ensure that the design for the wider Haymarket area does not end up as a series of residual solutions. We recommend that the City takes a stronger lead in advancing the wider masterplanning and placemaking considerations.

2.3 We are conscious of efforts to co-ordinate this design with that for the adjacent Morrison Street site. However, the level of co-ordination appears to be as to how the proposals can match up rather than any fundamental re-examination of the most appropriate location for tall buildings, civic facilities, tram stops, or how exemplar public spaces can be achieved. A more detailed and thorough analysis could yet reveal opportunities that are of greater mutual benefit for everyone involved.

2.4 Whilst recognising the pragmatic considerations and the timescale that this project is working within, we urge that a solution is proposed that integrates with the wider area to provoke and promote the best possible scheme for the capital city.

## **CONCLUSION**

This is a project of national significance, and we do not support the recommended option. We urge everyone associated with the project to reconsider the approach that has been adopted to ensure that the best possible solution is delivered, that is not simply based on transport issues but which is an appropriate response in this internationally important location.

This is a complex project and we recommend that there should be more joined-up thinking by all stakeholders, with a strong lead provided by the City Council to set out a clear vision for the future of this project in the context of the wider area.

We welcome the opportunity to maintain an involvement with the project and are keen to assist in whatever way we can to ensure the best possible solution. We wish to be kept informed of progress and look forward to seeing how the designs for this and other associated projects develop.

**Report issued:** 12 November 2007