Glasgow Urban Design Panel

24 April 2008

Forge Square, Shettleston

Architect: Robinson McIlwaine

The Panel thanked the Architects and Developer for their clear, concise and reasoned analysis of the Glasgow tenement in terms of urban design, scale, forms and materials.

The Panel were attracted to the ideas of repairing the urban fabric of Shettleston in a contemporary interpretation of the base, middle and top of a tenement by the use of workspace on the ground floor, double height windows to the centre and the set back reinterpretation of the roofs with their chimneys.

The ideas of being able to conceal the car parking below landscaped decks were attractive but the Panel would have preferred to have seen more cross sections through the site to be sure that this aspect was fully worked out.

The Panel assumed that the proposed external wall materials were natural stone and zinc and were concerned that the proposed precast concrete panels for the external walls may in reality have an industrial aesthetic and not appear to be residential or domestic. Considerable concern was expressed about water running down the double height windows onto the slim precast concrete floor panel or the full height panels below causing staining without very careful detailing to shed the water clear of the façade.

The Panel is aware of the disturbing crime profile of Shettleston and urge the Architects/Developer to consult Strathclyde Police Architectural Liaison Team. Notwithstanding the crime profile for the site the Panel advise the Architects to learn from experience across the city which demonstrates that the back closes or gardens should be private and only available to the residents of the development. This should be achieved by secure close doors and security fencing or walls to the spaces between buildings.

The Panel commented on the high architectural ambition for the project which they wish to encourage but urge the Architects/Developer to reconsider the following:

- access and security to interior courtyards
- daylight to the smaller courtyard
- to maximise the use of natural materials
- landscaping to the deck over the car park

The Panel welcome the Architects/Developer to Glasgow and look forward to the evolution of this project.