Glasgow Urban Design Panel **6th March 2008**

Proposal:	**Proposed Housing Development**
Status:	Pre-Application
Agent:	Detail
Address:	Kirklee Gate, Kelvinside
Presented by:	Gordon Russell and Douglas Thomson of Detail

The panel thanked the architects for the presentation of their proposal for the new office development and welcomed the informative handout that had been produced.

Existing Site: The architects described the vacant, triangular site immediately adjacent to the River Kelvin – ' a vast conduit of green'. The site had previously been the Kirklee goods-yard bounded by 3 railways lines next to a disused rail bridge. There were no major adjacent roads, some surrounding new build 90's tenement-style brick buildings and a few low-rise out-buildings around the site.
The architect's highlighted that the Glasgow City Plan states that existing historic transport routes should not be obstructed and therefore a way-leave through the site had been established to allow for any future transport links.

Building Use: The architects noted that their brief was to provide high-end housing for sale. Seven large 4-Bed flats with associated under-croft parking were proposed. Each flat occupied a full building storey.

The Panel considered a residential building to be an appropriate use of the site. However, the particular nature of the amenity deck and the parking arrangement could be further investigation and development (see Site strategy below).

Site Strategy/Orientation: The architects proposed that a circular tower sit on the headland to the River Kelvin. This could act as a strong element visible in and around the site. The architects presented a series of images of the building from key viewpoints to illustrate their strategy. Vehicular parking was accommodated at ground level below a landscaped amenity deck.

The panel welcomed the investigation that had been carried out by the architects with regards to views and visual impact. The creation of a tower on the river's headland was considered to be a novel yet appropriate approach to the restricted site. The orientation of living spaces towards the southern views was also welcomed. However, the Panel suggested that the building orientation and massing should be maximised to include sustainable elements. The Panel also stressed that the planted southern façade and landscaping to the amenity deck could be further exploited and would require specialist input with regards to species, growth and maintenance.

Access: The architects noted that the main vehicular and pedestrian access into the site would be via an existing access road and past associated garages. The architects also confirmed that there were no public rights of way along the River Kelvin on the proposed site and the existing way leave across the site had been maintained.

The Panel accepted the proposed access strategy into the site and considered the re-use of the existing access road to be an appropriate response. However, the Panel suggested that the wider local access issues could be considered in more detail, particularly the pedestrian journey between local amenities and the site. The Panel also suggested that the bridge and associated way-leave could be further exploited. Whilst the improvements to he bridge were out-with the bounds of the project programme it was suggested that the new development could initiate some

discussion regarding improvements to the bridge and pedestrian movement around and through the site.

Massing: The architect highlighted that the tower form allowed one 4-Bed flat per storey. The circular form made reference to historic Scottish fortifications and created a visual anchor to the river's headland.

The Panel welcomed the clear interpretation of the project brief and programme and the strong, bold building form. The building's height was considered to be quite low relative to its width and the Panel felt that the tower could be either smaller in plan or taller in height. The Panel suggested that the floor plan be re-considered whilst questioning the need for so many sanitary facilities within one house/floor level. The Panel also noted some conflict between the circular plan and the faceted southern elevation, most particularly to the uppermost storeys.

Elevational treatment: A series of 3-D models were presented which indicated large, open south-facing terraces and solid timber-clad areas to the north.

The Panel welcomed the clear and distinct expression of southerly and northerly facades. It was felt however that there should be further investigation of the cladding material to the northern façade. Concern was raised regarding the weathering and durability of timber cladding. The Panel suggested that the architects be bolder in this respect and investigate alternative, cladding materials which might offer a warmth of colour but more robust finish. The southern elevation relied on the balustrades to emphasise the circular form and the Panel suggested that this element would require particular attention to detail to achieve the lightness displayed in the presentation images.

Conclusion:

The Panel supports the proposal in principle on the basis that the following issues be further considered and addressed:

1. Colour and materiality of the rear elevational treatment be further investigated
2. A clearer outline of sustainable objectives and further development of landscaping/planting to balconies/amenity deck
3. Further development of floor plans relative to reduce width relative to height.
4. Relationship between local amenities, pedestrian access and bridge/'way-leave' to be further considered.