



2 April 2007

**Architecture+DesignScotland**  
Aithearracht is Dealbhadh na h-Alba

Aileen Grant  
Dundas & Wilson  
Saltire Court  
20 Castle Terrace  
EDINBURGH  
EH1 2EN

Bakehouse Close  
146 Canongate  
Edinburgh EH8 8DD UK

www.ads.org.uk  
info@ads.org.uk

T [REDACTED]  
F +44 (0)131 556 6633

Architecture and Design Scotland is incorporated under the Companies Act 1986 as a private limited company. Company No. SC267873

Dear Ms Grant

**Edinburgh - Tram Project - City of Edinburgh Council / Transport Initiatives  
Edinburgh (tie) / Dundas & Wilson / System Design Services (SDS) – A+DS Design  
Review – Tuesday 20 March 2007**

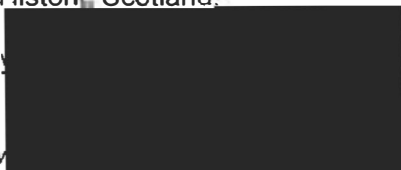
Thank you and your colleagues Trudi Craggs of Dundas and Wilson, and Jason Chandler and Scott Ney of System Design Services (SDS) for attending the Design Review meeting on 20 March 2007 at A+DS' office in Edinburgh, when designs for the above project were presented and discussed. We hope you found all the arrangements satisfactory both prior to and during the day. Any comments you may have on the process would be appreciated.

A report detailing the views of A+DS on the project is enclosed. Please note that it is our intention to post this report on the A+DS website shortly.

A+DS aims to raise the quality of new development so that high standards of design are the rule, not the exception. Design Review offers independent expert advice on the quality of design for selected projects, and Ministers attach great importance to the Design Review process. The development industry, as well as decision makers on planning applications and appeals, must demonstrate what account has been taken of the views of A+DS in coming to a view on how to proceed.

A letter in similar terms has been sent to Ian Spence at the City of Edinburgh Council, and copied to Historic Scotland.

Yours sincerely



Angela Williams  
Head of Design Review

Encl.



## **INTRODUCTION**

This report relates to designs for the tram network for Edinburgh. The project was presented to an A+DS Design Review panel on 20 March 2007.

The project was presented on behalf of tie by Trudi Craggs and Aileen Grant of Dundas and Wilson, and Jason Chandler and Scott Ney of System Design Services (SDS).

The meeting was also attended by Ian Spence, the Tram Planning Design Manager from City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), and Andrew Martindale from Historic Scotland.

Panel Members were Ric Russell (Chair), Karen Cadell, Eelco Hooftman, Ali Mangera, Andrew Pinkerton and Brian Veitch. Andrew Pinkerton left before the end of the presentation and discussion.

A+DS staff present were Eric Dawson, Kate Francey, Steve Malone, and Angela Williams.

Eelco Hooftman declared that his practice, Grossmax, was part of a consortium that had responded to a proposal to provide urban design advice to CEC in connection with the tram project. Brian Veitch declared that his practice, Arup Scotland, had been involved in early studies for the tram system and its route. These declarations were noted in advance of the session and all parties agreed there was no conflict of interest relative to what was being discussed.

No A+DS Advisory Board Members other than those who sat on the Panel have taken any part in formulating A+DS' views.

## **A+DS VIEWS**

### **1. Design vision**

1.1 We support the project but feel it has not taken full advantage of the tremendous opportunity it offers. We recognise that some aspects of the design are well advanced and that, amongst other things, the Tram Design Manual has been published and the Tram Design Working Group has been in operation. Despite this, the project lacks design vision. It appears to be dictated by technical engineering requirements, and financial considerations seem to be hindering greater design opportunities.

1.2 There is little evidence that options have been explored for different elements in various locations, and we question how it is possible to assess design quality when there is a lack of such information. The scale of the project merits the development of prototypes and mock ups, along with other visual imagery, to enable considered analysis of design proposals.

1.3 The project is fundamental to the future development of the city. We recommend that the City conceive it in tandem with other strategic exercises that consider the spatial

vision for future growth, what form this might take, and the appropriate density of development along the route of the tram.

## **2. Wider context**

2.1 The installation of the tram system can be a catalyst to change the city for the better, provided it is not considered as a project in isolation. A holistic approach needs to be taken to co-ordinate and integrate it with wider initiatives. For example, where presently the tram lies between masterplan areas it should be conceived as the opportunity to develop the public realm, and stitch different areas together. We encourage the Council to better integrate the tram installation into a wider urban design or public realm strategy.

2.2 There does not appear to be a townscape analysis of the consequences of a reduced number of buses or how the tram integrates with the bus system. Further work is also required to develop the vision for major transport interchanges.

## **3. Public realm**

3.1 It is not presently clear how the tram installation will be integrated with, or instigate, an improved public realm. A project of this magnitude demands a significant budget for associated public realm works.

3.2 We recognise the need to develop technical solutions but are concerned that townscape implications have not received adequate attention, and that information being issued for pricing is not sufficiently advanced. Engineering models developed for raised and / or offset platforms and substations surrounded by chain link fences may satisfy basic requirements but are unlikely to be as resolved as they should be to take account of various contextual issues.

3.3 Although urban design has been an integral part there has been an imbalance in the project that has favoured engineering considerations. We welcome the appointment of a Tram Planning Design Manager, and of urban designers to advise on public realm issues.

3.4 Unique or iconic structures would contribute to the character and personality of the tram and enhance the experience for tourists, visitors and other users. There is an opportunity for the individual design of tram stops, or the introduction of art works, as is the case in other cities.

## **CONCLUSION**

We thank the presenters for attending. We are keen to ensure that the project is as successful as it should be. We recognise there are engineering and budgetary constraints but are concerned at the lack of design vision. We believe the opportunity still exists within the process for design to feature more prominently in the development of the proposals. The appointment of design consultants to advise on the integration of the tram network with the wider public realm presents the possibility to widen the design vision and address our concerns.

We look forward to seeing the project again.

**Report issued:** 2 April 2006