

Glasgow Urban Design Panel

Feedback Report

Date: 31st October 2019

Project: City Centre SDF

Planning Status: Consultation

Presentation by: GCC Forward Planning – Fiona Campbell

Panel Consensus

- The panel welcomed an informative and clear presentation.
- The presentation was understandably 'academic', and the panel felt that it would benefit from a more 'compelling story telling' and communication plan.
- The aspiration to create a more vibrant, connected, liveable and resilient Glasgow was warmly welcomed. Central to this vision the panel questioned strategies for public space their funding and maintenance? Panel felt a more holistic approach to new and existing public space should be considered to ensure the aspirations are sustainable, especially linked to the densification aspirations.
- There is a lack of understanding of how the aspirations both translate and encourage 'real development' and there is an opportunity to reach out to organisations such as New London Architecture in order to help 'commercialise the vision' and encourage investment.
- Could there be a more ambitious/forward-thinking medium of presenting the content which would be more appealing and engaging to a wider audience. GCC could use the lack of resource available internally to its advantage by adopting a lighter touch which could be supported by links to academic research.
- Is there an opportunity to change the culture of planning to be more outward as opposed to inward looking to place more emphasis on the process as opposed to the final document, therefore becoming more upfront and transparent about how their vision for the city. Turning planning 'inside out' may help to provide better engagement with the public, encourage more involvement with external consultants/stakeholders and help to attract investment.
- There is a collection of different aspirations which appear overwhelming and without a structure of priority. A series of some short-term goals could also help to generate public interest which could be existing and provocative.

- There is no evidence of precedent studies which have been used to inform the aspirations and some study trips as a team could help to provide an in depth understanding of how other places have achieved success with similar aspirations.
- Could there be a clearer approach to safeguarding heritage which sets out what is important without being too prescriptive.
- The ultimate objective should be improving wellbeing and the way that people are able to live and enjoy their lives in the City Centre.

Panel Recommendations

- A major story telling / public relations / communications exercise is advised to better communicate and promote the City Plan vision, initiatives being taken and the timescales to the wider community. The prospect of all of this good work being inaccessible and academic would be a missed opportunity. Building capacity around direction of travel and encouraging inward investment and positive messages regionally and internationally is key to the Development Framework's success.
- In summary, establish an overarching vision/narrative along with clear objectives which will help to frame all of the aspirations and at the same time promote Glasgow City Centre as an attractive place for investment.
- The vision should more imaginatively promote Glasgow City Centre as an attractive and exciting place to live and work and which is 'open for business'.
- A critical element the panel felt was missed in the SDF was a fundamental and complementary Schools Estate vision to be read in conjunction with the core urban regeneration plans.
- Consider the 'culture of planning' and the 'GCC planning offer' to become more transparent and engaging for the public, visitors to the city, investors and Schools and HE/FE education.
- Review examples of successful cities to understand how they have achieved success with similar aspirations; i.e. in sharing the excitement of their proposals.
- A detailed point was made that a more accurate and sophisticated 'Spatial Plan Diagram' requires to be prepared by GCC to better capture the new thinking that is being promoted in the Glasgow Development Plan. The current diagram being referenced is outdated and illustrates a spatial arrangement that reinforces a schism between City Centre and the Outer Urban / Suburban Communities 'Places'.
- The City Centre SDF should further emphasise commitment and measures taken to reinforce sustainable 'compact city' ambitions.

- Consider a strategy with a more ambitious, more holistic approach to the funding and maintenance of proposed public space to ensure that the aspirations are sustainable. Review the aspirations and develop a structure of priority supported with some short-term goals.
- GCC should leverage to a greater extent the potential of their 'virtual city model asset' and consider a large-scale physical model as a tool to promote engagement.
- Extra ordinary additional resources should be directed by Scottish Government and GCC to promote criticality of Glasgow SDF as a national priority and social economic imperative.
- Greater clarity is required to explain how the SDF, the 'Districts Work', the 'Avenues Projects', the recommendations made by the Connectivity Commission, the TRA initiatives, and City Deal projects etc. are related and how they join up to create a comprehensive City Plan.
- Reinforce within the SDF how aspects of heritage are dealt with within the city centre.
- Greater emphasis on 'Wellbeing and Happiness'