

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON ARCHITECTURE & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

MINUTES

Meeting: "Lets Talk about the New Architecture Policy"
At Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 28th March 2012 @ 6.00pm

Our Ref: EM ML R10- Minutes 2012-03-28

PRESENT

David Adams	University of Glasgow
Neil Baxter	RIAS
Bill Black	Richard Murphy Architect
John Bury	City of Edinburgh Council
Malcolm Cooper	RIAS
Barbara Cummins	Historic Scotland
Audrey Dakin	Scottish Historic Buildings Trust
Arnie Dunn	RIAS
Linda Fabiani MSP	Scottish Government
Neil Forrester	Smith Scott Mullan Associates
Malcolm Fraser	Malcom Fraser Architects
John Gerrard	
Ian Gilzean	Scottish Government
Aileen Grant	Dundas and Wilson
Laura Gutierrez	Impact Arts
Cliff Hague	BEFS
Jack Hugh	RIAS
Jonathan Hughes	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Sholto Humphries	RIAS
Alan M Jones	Queens University Belfast
John Knight	NTBCC
Pat Lally	RIAS
Isobel Leckie	Causeway Development Trust
Euan Leitch	The Cockburn Association
Jim MacDonald	Architecture & Design Scotland
Drew Mackie	Drew Mackie Associates
Ingval Maxwell	Consultant on Training and Education in Architectural
Conservation	
Deborah Mays	RIAS
Craig McLaren	RTPI
Frazer McNaughton	SNH
David Melhuish	Scottish Property Federation
Cllr. Elaine Morris	City of Edinburgh Council
Paul Morsley	Turley Associates
Eugene Mullan	RIAS
Diana Murray	RCAHMS

Caroline Owen	GVA Grimley
Ann Packard	RSA "MCICH" Network
John Pelan	Scottish Civic Trust
Janet Pope	Ironside Farrar
Doug Read	Dignan Read Dewar
Alistair Scott	Smith Scott Mullan Associates
Alan Seath	RPS
Drew Smith MSP	Scottish Parliament
Clare Sorensen	RCAHMS
Fiona Stirling	Scottish Natural Heritage
Susie Stirling	Architecture & Place Division, Scottish Government
Craig Stirrat	Fife Housing Association
Dave Thompson	DPT Urban Design
Sarah Troughton	HHAS
Jamie Troughton	NMOS
Natalie McFadyen-White	Impact Arts
Crichton Wood	Crichton Wood Architects
David Wood	Planning Aid for Scotland
Luke Wormald	Historic Scotland

APOLOGIES

Sarah Boyack	Scottish Parliament
June Edgar	
Patricia Ferguson MSP	Scottish Parliament
Keith Gowenlock	WSP Group
Laura Hoskins	COSLA
Fiona Hyslop MSP	Scottish Government
Keith Irving	Living Streets Scotland
Angus Kerr	Scottish Civic Trust
Mike Mackenzie	Scottish Parliament
John H McLaren	J+F Johnston Ltd
Richard Murphy	Richard Murphy Architect
Kevin Murray	Kevin Murray Associates
Graham Ross	Austin-Smith Lord
Richard Slipper	GVA Grimley
Steve Tolson	Ogilvie Group Developments
Gordon Watson	Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park

1.0 WELCOME

- Drew Smith MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2.0 INTRODUCTION TO MEETING THEME – Drew Smith MSP

- In 2001 Scotland became the first country in the UK to adopt a formal policy on architecture and

a renewed statement was published with broad cross party group support in 2007.

- On 10th November 2011 Fiona Hyslop the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs hosted a debate on the “Importance of Architecture and Place-making to Scotland’s Economy”.
- As part of that debate she announced her intention to develop a new Architecture Policy statement and to engage with a wide range of organisations as part of this process. This meeting forms the first discussion on this Policy.
- We will hear first from Ian Gilzean on the proposals for the new policy and then from Alan Jones and Daphne Thisson who will bring a wider European perspective to the topic.

3.0 THE MINISTERS PERSPECTIVE - Ian Gilzean - Chief Architect to Scottish Government on behalf of Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary.

3.1 Introduction

Drew introduced Ian as follows:

- Ian has been with the government since 1999 most recently as Head of Architecture and Place Division. Prior to this he worked with Scottish Arts Council, and the private sector. He has been involved in Architectural education for 20 years, particularly at Strathclyde University. He was involved in the original Architecture Policy 2001.

3.2 Presentation – Ian Gilzean

- The Cabinet Secretary has made architecture one of her six key priority areas within an overarching vision for culture and the Creative Industries.
- The Cabinet Secretary’s vision is of a Scotland that is renowned at home and abroad as a creative nation with a rich heritage, contributing to the world as a modern dynamic country. A country which celebrates and supports an enlightened attitude towards architecture.
- As you will be aware the Cabinet Secretary has made a commitment to bring forward a new policy statement on architecture and place during a Parliamentary debate in November last year.
- Ian’s presentation aims to provide an overview of where the government is with that commitment outlining the next stages in the process of developing the policy and the thinking behind that.
- What came across very strongly in the Parliamentary debate - from all sides of the political spectrum - was recognition of the vital contribution that Scotland’s buildings and places can make to our economic development; to our cultural identity; to the delivery of sustainable development and to community cohesion.
- The cross-party support for the proposal to update previous architecture policies is welcome and the debate was a starting point for the process of refreshing what has been an especially significant policy area for us – because Scotland was the first country in the UK to adopt a formal policy on architecture in 2001.
- It is now five years since the last architecture policy statement was published in 2007 by the previous administration and the government feel that the time is right to review that policy in light

of changed circumstances and there are a number other of reasons for doing so at this time.

- **Firstly - Economic Recovery** A new policy statement on architecture and placemaking need to address the change in economic circumstances which has had a dramatic impact on the design and construction sector. It will place greater emphasis on the contribution of architecture and urban design to growing the economy and it will highlight the ability of design to deliver better quality, greater efficiency and harness the benefits of preventative spend.
- **Secondly**, The questions around Scotland's **constitutional future** also have an influence on how we are seen by the rest of the world and there is a great deal of interest in Scottish affairs because of the significance of the forthcoming referendum.
- **Thirdly – the Policy Landscape** There have been significant changes in related policy areas since the last architecture statement, including the Cities Review, a new Housing Strategy, a Regeneration Strategy and the next steps in Planning Reform announced by the Minister for Local Government and Planning in parliament today.
- **Fourthly, Reviewing current initiatives and building on progress** The government will take stock of the initiatives and linked design policies which have been brought forward over the past four to five years. These include the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative (SSCI) and the associated design charrette programme. Scotland's Housing Expo held in Inverness in 2010 was also a significant milestone in this period. "Designing Streets" – a crucial design policy was introduced in March 2010 and they will review how this policy is bedding down.

The consultation is intended to be a broad ranging and positive discussion that seeks views on a future vision for architecture in Scotland, rather than requesting comments on a draft policy document. The recent programme of charrettes supported by the Government is an indication of the value of undertaking an open, participatory process and the architecture policy consultation seeks to reflect this.

Ian noted that the issues he touched on tonight can be expressed in terms of four key themes which we have decided will underpin the consultation framework, these are:-

- helping to determine the sort of place that Scotland can be in the future;
 - helping to grow the economy;
 - factoring the built environment and design into a wider policy agenda and ensuring public and private sector buy-in; and
 - recognising the cultural value of architecture, urbanism and heritage.
- The government want the consultation to be wide-ranging and open for creative ideas to come forward. They want to know what our priorities are and how we can work together to improve Scotland's built environment.

4.0 ALAN M JONES RIBA FRSA FHEA - President elect Royal Society Ulster Architects, Senior teaching Fellow & Director of Education (Architecture) Queen's University Belfast.

4.1 Introduction

Drew introduced Alan as follows:

- Alan is a chartered architect who has been practising for over twenty years. He has composed and delivered a number of papers at international conferences on architectural knowledge and the relationship with government, the construction industry and research. He has been a judge of a number of architectural design awards and education awards including the Andrew Doolan prize. He is an expert advisor on design to the Northern Irish Ministerial Advisory Group.

4.2 Presentation

- Alan started his presentation with an analogy of a pond with leaves floating on it. Each leaf is a different policy – infrastructure, procurement, education, health, investment, finance and architecture. Each is an entity in itself – and unless linked – the breeze and winds will push each slightly differently – and only if they are linked will they tend to go in the same direction.

This was his way of explaining how an architecture policy, unless linked in aspiration and action to other policies will be ineffectual and without teeth and context.

- To many architecture relates to our culture, our society, our well being and our economic success. It is not optional. It is not a frill that is forgotten when times are tough. It is up to the politicians and government to appreciate it – and up to architects and design commissions to communicate its value. The evidence has to be presented to decision makers how well designed and constructed architecture increases societal pride and well being, more tourists come to our cities, companies are more attracted to locate here rather than there, patients in hospitals recover faster, school children play less truant and results are higher, those in offices take fewer sick days and productivity increases – and one hopes politicians and governments have more pride and make better decisions. Architecture needs to be communicated through evidence.
- Architectural policies and their linkages to other policies are part of the desire to move away from one world to another – away from a world of late and partially informed decisions, of wasteful procurement costs that would better spent on the project, of expertise excluded from projects, that are delivered at break neck speed with compressed design periods, and a short term perspective on costs rather than long term whole life costings.
- Alan highlighted the importance of the government leading by example noting the following:
 - in promoting architectural quality by developing procurement and contracting policies for state funded projects,
 - in further establishing in-house architectural services in the local authorities;
 - in evaluating whole-life costing of buildings;
 - and in encouraging the participation of practices of all scales in procurement processes.
 - Actions under this section also reflect the role of the State as a custodian of older and historic buildings; promoting best practice in sustainable use and maintenance of its own building stock, including documentation and publication; and evaluating
- Alan assumed that Scotland has the desire to, or feels the need to, exert its cultural identity, sense of self and to create the best possible environment for its citizens. Quality does not necessarily mean more money – it does mean more careful and smarter thinking – and the time to do so.

5.0 DAPHNE THISSEN HON FRIAS - Cultural attaché, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

5.1 Introduction

Drew introduced Daphne as follows:

- Daphne was appointed Cultural Attache at the Press and Culture Department of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in 2000. She is currently Deputy Head of the Press and Culture Department.
- Her remit on behalf of the Embassy includes initiating and developing cultural relations between the UK and the Netherlands, setting up cultural partnerships, team management, international policy development, strategy development, international grant assessment and advice. She acts as an ambassador for Dutch culture through public presentations and networking.
- Since 2008 Daphne has combined her work for the Embassy with that of her own highly successful practice, The Partnership Builder. This management and leadership development firm specialises in soft skills, networking and relationship management training, creating tailor-made coaching and training programmes.

5.2 Presentation

- Daphne explained that later this year, the Dutch government will present details of its new policy for the field of architecture. It can be expected the new policy will in part reflect the ideas formulated by the Dutch Council for Culture in its recent advice 'Forced Choices, Advice on Structural Savings in Culture 2013-2016'.
- This document makes note of the fact that 'architecture organisations are together responsible to make sure that everybody involved in the planning of public spaces, is aware of their cultural responsibility'.
- With 'everybody' they mean local governments, managing organisations, corporate financiers, housing co-ops, corporate developers, private buyers, builders and supply industries.
- The policy document goes further by mentioning that Architectuur Lokaal, historically a development organisation that should also take on the role as trainer of architectural patrons, local and national government, corporations, developers and anybody else working in the architectural field.
- Alongside this wider role for Architectuur Lokaal, the Dutch State will also be setting up a new 'Foundation for the Creative Industries' out of which AL will be funding the various activities.
- This new 'Foundation for the Creative Industries' is the accumulation of several years of Dutch cultural policies focusing on The Netherlands as an important global centre of the creative industries (Architecture, Design and New Media), hereby underlining the goal to strengthen the ability of culture to be less subsidy dependent as well as strengthen the collective innovative skills in The Netherlands.
- Daphne particularly highlighted Tools for Better Architectural Patronage. Two weeks ago the Dutch Council for Culture presented 'Good Patronage' a response to a question by the Secretary

of State for Culture on how to improve and enhance architectural patronage in the sectors mentioned earlier as follows:

- The State as Leading Customer
- Professionalising of the Commissioning Structure
- Public - Creative Partnerships
- The State as Matchmaker

The State as Leading Customer

- The idea is that the national Government will play a leading role in collaborating with local authorities and the 'National Buildings Service' (Rijksgebouwendienst, owner of all national Government buildings).
- The focus will be on re-use and re-dedication of empty national buildings or disused national spaces.

Professionalising of the Commissioning Structure

Main objectives:

- State needs to formulate open commissions/questions in order to stimulate creativity,
- State to stimulate working practices in which the environment surrounding a new building project is top of the list,
- State to stimulate the formulation of a 'values list' in which aesthetics are being combined with functionality and sustainability,
- Create a research arm at the Stimulerings Fonds voor Architectuur. This sector wide institute, looking into building for health organisations, schools, public spaces in local areas etc.
- State to offer permanent and up-to-date professional development for boards and other one-off commissioners.

Public – Creative Partnerships

- State to experiment with different forms of commissioning thereby stimulating collaboration with the creative sector, science and possible commercial partners,
- State to stimulate a wider choice in commissioning formats, depending on the type of commission,
- Judging Committees need to be made up of architects, city planners, historians and sustainability experts. It is preferable that these committees are involved in the commissioning process from the very beginning,
- State to create channels for talent development, for instance by introducing wild cards with commissioning calls,
- State to research the potential of working with innovation vouchers.

The State as Matchmaker

- State to encourage professional organisations to take part in the 'matchmaking process' in order to advise on, and improve, the selection process of professional services within a commission,

- State to encourage international matchmaking,
- The Stimulerings Fonds voor Architectuur, the sector wide institute, should provide practical, contextual and advisory support for international collaborations,
- State to use the commissioning calendar for a wider purpose, for instance to enhance the creative industries.

6.0 DISCUSSION OF THE TOPIC

- There was a significant discussion involving a number of people providing a range of comment from different backgrounds.

7.0 KEY POINTS

- The following are the key points of the meeting which will inform this early stage of the consultation process:
 - Current procurement procedures need to be amended if the Architecture Policy is to have any actual influence.
 - Principles of the policy must be embedded in other government policy, health education etc
 - Clear definition of the scale of building/place to which the policy applies.
 - Coherent fit with other key policy documents, such as Designing Places and Designing Streets
 - Ensuring that politicians appreciate importance of the policy and are champions for good architecture.
 - Ensuring officials within the public organisations having a clear understanding of the policy.
 - Scottish Government and Local Authorities leading by example.
 - Inclusion of a mechanism for undertaking and disseminating research and evidence which highlights the benefits of good design.
 - Inclusion of a long term basis for the assessment of design quality.
 - Support and training for good patrons.
 - Opportunity to develop and support young architectural talent.
 - Actively promote the policy within the client and construction industry.
 - Actions to increase the level of interest in architecture within Scotland to encourage debate on the topic.
 - Includes a clear action plan for the initial 3 – 5 years with an appropriate review programme.

8.0 CLOSE OF THE MEETING

- Drew Smith thanked the speakers for their excellent contributions and everyone for attending the meeting.

Post Meeting Note: - Thanks to the RIAS who provided wine for the evening.

9.0 NEXT MEETING

- To be held on Wednesday 23 May 2012, the topic is “The Value of Good Design”.