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St James Quarter Consultation
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17 March, 2008

Dear Sir / Madam

'St James Quarter' proposals from Henderson Global Investors / Allan Murray Architects / BDP

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals. We have reviewed the consultation pack (January 2008) in some detail, and our comments relate to the proposals contained in that document.

We wish to offer the following comments:

1. We welcome the attention given to walking routes through the area, and wish to see proposals of this sort incorporated in the final proposals. The current development is badly flawed in two respects. Firstly, the development provides an obstacle to walking routes, forcing those on foot to detour round the area. Secondly, the poor state of design and maintenance of pavements and public spaces around the area (e.g. the dreadful set of road entrances into the centre on Leith Street, and the barrier to pedestrian movement provided by the entrance to Elder Street). As such, we consider this aspect of the proposals to be very welcome.
2. We welcome most of the general principles set out in the 'Transport and Infrastructure Strategy' (p.32); in particular, we welcome the recognition that walking is the main mode of transport for access to the Centre, and the encouragement given towards providing better access by sustainable transport modes (walking, cycling and public transport).
3. The transport proposals are however generally vague and inspecific. We would have expected to have seen more on this topic given the sensitive nature, in transport terms, of the development's location. For example, while there is recognition of the location's proximity to Waverley Station and stops on the forthcoming tram network, there is almost no treatment of how the proposals will fit in with bus services.
4. It is very unclear what is proposed in terms of the volume of car parking. We note that page 32 says that the proposals will "Mak[e] a positive contribution towards the overall city centre parking supply". Is this a euphemism for increased levels of car

parking at the site? If so, we would not be able to support the proposals. We note that The City of Edinburgh Council has recently reported that *"just opposite the St James centre the 1040 space Greenside car park nearly always has plenty of spaces"* (City of Edinburgh Council (2008): *CentrePulse Annual Report 2007*). As such, it would be deeply unsatisfactory for the 'St James Quarter' proposals to propose an increase in car parking provision.

5. Finally, it is also very unclear what proposals are being made with respect to entrances to car parking. We note the reference to this matter on p.32, but look forward to receiving further clarification on this matter. It is important that the treatment of this matter receives attention, as we are concerned that the welcome attention to pedestrian movement in and around the site within the proposals could be negated by poor design of car parking entrances (such as that currently present on Leith Street) given the disruption they can cause to pedestrian movement.

I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of these comments. I look forward to receiving a copy of the planning applications once they are published.

Yours sincerely,



Colin Howden
Director, TRANSform Scotland