Glass Murray Architects
Denton Corker Marshall Group:
Architects in Association

This association brings a comprehensive professional capability to the immensely significant new Scottish Parliament project. The association combines the size and experience of two leading practices, combined with the skills and expertise of a renowned international architectural design group.

Project Directors: Gordon Murray and James Gibson - Scottish architects re-creating their respective practices - maintain a unique and durable long standing relationship originating as colleagues and fellow students at the University of Glasgow. Bringing together Scots from across the globe and combining a great knowledge of Scotland and history, this team is empowered to achieve a dynamic and fitting design which will satisfy the aspirations of the Scottish people.

Denton Corker Marshall Group

The Denton Corker Marshall Group was founded in Melbourne in 1972 and is now recognized as Australia's leading international architectural practice. James Gibson has been a director of the firm since 1992. The firm's founding Directors, John Denton, Bill Corker and Stuart Marshall were awarded the Australian Institute of Architects Gold Medal for 1996.

Denton Corker Marshall employs over 200 people. As well as in Melbourne and Sydney, the practice has offices in Hong Kong, Jakarta, Singapore, Hoi Chi Min City, London and Warsaw. It has gained a reputation for high levels of design and technical achievement and for the innovative and environmental qualities of their work. The firm has been a substantial number of design competitions. The partnership has been awarded several national awards from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects than any other practice.

Glass Murray Architects

Glass Murray Architects is one of Glasgow's longest established practices. Born in the tradition, the firm has consistently achieved recognition within the architectural community. The practice has established a reputation for the delivery of quality design and management to the highest standards of technical excellence. Specialisms in Urban Design, Regeneration and the refurbishment of Heritage and Listed Buildings.

Its design approach is controlled yet consistently creative, underpinning a critical philosophies of its responsibilities in the contemporary environment.

Glass Murray Architects has been ranked amongst the top architectural practices in Scotland, with an average of 25 projects completed annually.

Burton Beattie

Burton Beattie Scotland is part of the world's leading international consultant engineering practices, and a key member of our multi-disciplinary design team. Burton Beattie's design philosophy is based on an understanding of the physical, social and economic environment. They believe in the importance of their clients' business and the value of their engineering capability in the UK and around the world.

1 Stronaig Bay Irvine Glasgow
2 Govan Bridge Street Glasgow
3 Dowgate Place Edinburgh
4 Summerhall Edinburgh
5 Museum of Scotland Edinburgh
6 Scottish Parliament Edinburgh
7 Scottish Parliament Edinburgh
8 Scottish Parliament Edinburgh
Elevations/sections

Historic Context
In looking into the history of the area, the Canongate has traditionally been "secluded" from the City.

Historically it was not part of Edinburgh, but an important location of large houses and gardens, running down the hillside.

Canongate developed as a wall leading to Gilmour Cross and Wemyss Walk.

In viewing early drawings, the wall and the garden revealed becomes the most prominent symbol for the Canongate culminating in the King's Park.

The urban sequence that joins the Castle and Palace is full of character, but concealed. The Royal Mile is not a classic, prestigious axis, but an assembly of history, integral to its geographic scale.

On closer examination, a number of public open spaces, or buildings of Civic Historic importance can be identified, principally:

1. City Chambers
2. Parliament House
3. Tolbooth Church

Here the buildings are contained by other buildings at the wall, where the buildings step back to signal the Royal Mile.

A network of the public spaces on the Royal Mile is the spine of the Festival Gardens. The evidence in the wall and the connections to smaller secondary places along via wendy and courtyard.

John Hope's idea for Canongate traced an analogy with the site. Canongate is the spine with its life of buildings and accesses turning from this point.

As we descend the procession route beyond the Old City Gates, the wall begins to dissolve, further revealing green spaces, but more importantly the potential for urban fabric in need of repair and regeneration.

The approach the site, we may have a sense of openness but when heights an increase, the sense of enclosure reveals a wall with space between exterior and interior where open accessibility and views through to the park can be achieved, and a new Parliament Square created.

Fundamentally creating this series of public spaces where the Parliament, the tourist, the spectator can approach the building, in the integration of traffic and cycling, and therefore the coherence of the city and traffic to the barrier.

1. Edinburgh 1467
2. Edinburgh 1742
3. Tolbooth Church
4. Market Cross with City Chambers
5. Parliament House and St. Gile's
6. The Royal Mile Open Space and Crosses
7. The Royal Mile Bridge
Parliament Place

The new Scottish Parliament demands an architectural expression which:

- projects the image of a progressive nation whose parliament will be both visionary and contemporary
- establishes a commanding presence
- responds to the historic, urban and geographic context
- accommodates an accessible style of representation in a manner which will be both transparent and open in form
- maintains an architectural rigour where external form and internal function become legible and comprehensible.

Conceptual Approach

1. Establish the principal visual headings.
   - The approach from Canongate and the Royal Mile
   - The southern approach along The Canongate
   - Elevated views from Calton Hill, the Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat beyond

2. Identify the principal functional elements which can be used to give the Scottish Parliament its unique architectural expression and visual imagery.
   - The Public Entrance
   - The Open Space
   - The Grand Entrance

3. Identify those functional elements which can be abstracted or should be less visually specific.
   - The Office Areas which occupy a large area and thus considerable bulk can contribute to the concept
   - Restaurants, lounges, refreshment areas, etc.
   - Car-parking, security and management functions

4. Relate the Parliament Building to its immediate setting.

Urban Contour

Establishing a commanding presence on the historic site linking the Castle to the Palace of Holyrood House, the Parliament forms the final element in a sequence of buildings, streets and public spaces extending off the Royal Mile. Queen'sberry House is retained, restored and incorporated as a functional part of the Parliament complex.

Landscape Context

To the south, the broad spreading lawn of the Parliament Field merges into the lower slopes of the Crags, creating powerful elevated views back to the Parliament. These are complemented by the terraced elevated views from Calton Hill, the Observatory and the Folly to the north west.

6. Establish the significance of the Parliament Building in urban terms on the Royal Mile.

Passing through a national gateway at the end of Canongate, the facade is set back from the street aligned to establish a new Parliament presence and link it back to a progression of the street progression of the Mile. A visual signal is provided within the Place to mark the Parliament from the approach.

6. Use the historic pattern of the Royal Mile to establish a framework for the structuring of the building fabric.

A series of powerful, finely crafted stone walls reinforce the scale, massing and pattern of buildings, characteristic of the narrow houses and courts of the standardisation set at right angles to the Mile.

7. Provide the Civic entrance to the Parliament from the Place.

The stone walls are used to create containment for a new internal public place to a number of historically confined spaces off the Mile, including the service access lane, the area and the Crags beyond.

1. Key Relationships
2. Key Parliamentary Elements
3. Other Functional Elements
4. Urban and Landscape Context
5. Built Form Pattern
6. The Civic Entry
View across the Parliament Field

8. Establish a single expressive urban signal and symbol for the Parliament at the point of entry. A grand transitional glass pavilion is created that serves as a transition between the external and internal spaces, with an expressive, memorable and sculptural form.

9. Ensure that the public internal spaces, town and general area are accessible and visually apparent from the urban address. The entrance is established between the enclosing stone walls, and beneath the glass pavilion. Arrival is defined by a generous sequential ramp that forms a major feature across all grade levels from the street to the public space below. The ramp on the north side of the site leads to the public ramp, the oriel gallery and committee rooms. The elevated views, through the triangular layers of the Parliament Field and the Secretary Choir, are complemented with the enclosure of the Debating Chamber itself providing the principle dramatic form.

10. Establish the Chamber at the heart and focus of the Parliament.

11. The Parliament Field is experienced as the primary element forming the flexible approach to Parliament as a whole. The layout in the Parliament Field reflects the Choir's hierarchy. It is clearly visible through the oriel from the gallery and also as a flowing link within the internal volume between the two approaches - not as a monumental, single objects, but rather the visible expression of the Parliament's process.

12. Use the stone walls which enclose Queen's House as abutting elements for the MSP offices to form an integral part of the reading of the Parliament without compromising the scale of the buildings. The MSP offices form an open courtyard composition of terraces wings formed by Queen's House, looking out to a Members Private Garden. The stone walls form the secure external facade with minimal glazing. The internal garden levels to the MSP offices is extremely glazed.

13. Utilise Queen's House as a meaningful and integral part of the Parliament complex.

The Members' lounges and oriel (Room A101) is located within the building at this ground and lower ground level, offering direct outdoor access to the Members' Private Garden which opens to the dramatic views to the Choir (beyond). This Members' Library is located on the first level, accessed directly from the MSP offices in the garden wings.

14. Tackle the imagery from the popular elevated vantage points of Carlton Hill and the Secretary Choir, and embed a distinctive, legible and memorable design.

From Carlton Hill, the dominant element will be the entry pavilion with its transparent glass planes disturbing the view of approximately 10m above roof level.

From the south, the Debating Chamber will be expressed as a cupola containing a transparent glass dome at roof level, a transom providing a connection to the roof plane and form of the Chamber below. The space containing the house and MSP offices will be subordinate to these dominant forms.
The Principal Functional Elements

The Debating Chamber

In order to avoid the Debating Chamber being seen by the public as a 'precinct' and exclusive place, we propose an architectural expression which is neither an overtly disciplined sculpture nor an discrete internalized form, apparent only from within. Nor is it seen as a fully glazed box; it is an intervention to the interior space (security considerations) or interior space (sense of privacy).

We propose that the Chamber be powerfully expressed both internally from the public foyers and externally from the Parliament Field, as a metal wall within which lies the Chamber. The wall itself forms a hive-like void within which lies the Chamber. The light well forms a lens-like void within which lies the Chamber and gallery space and reflects the characters of the hall upon the ceiling, the ceiling.

The light well is solid at its base but becomes progressively more perforated as it reaches its upper level. Behind the perforations a glazed glass allows daylight into the Chamber and a seating void, offering a degree of translucent natural lighting into the Chamber itself. Through the well, the public gallery access and ante spaces would have views to both the foyer and also the...

Thus, the reading of the Chamber is both internally and externally expressed to provide access to the...