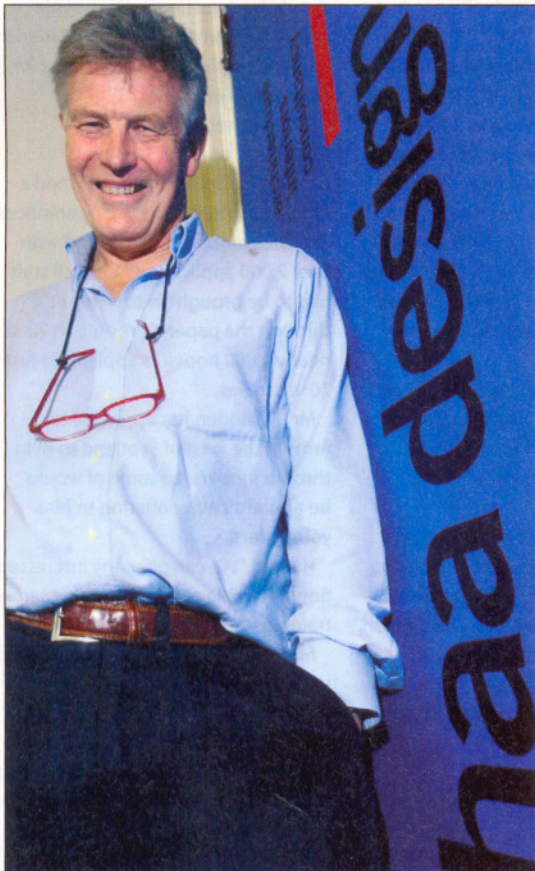


At the heart of the regeneration



Hugh Anderson, managing director of haa design, has witnessed many regeneration projects in Glasgow since he established his architectural and interior design consultancy in 1994.

The company, employing 12 staff recruited from some of Scotland's top-rated design schools, has worked with many clients throughout Glasgow and the West of Scotland on restoration and regeneration projects. They are currently designing an office park as part of the Irvine Bay Regeneration initiative.

Hugh said: "Regeneration initiatives must be welcomed but what has been disappointing in the past has been the lack of funding and involvement by public agencies in continuing to shape such developments as they evolve from initial plans."

"While regeneration does have to be commercially-viable, serious public sector support is also required to ensure that more than purely commercial interests are realised."

"Like weeds growing up in an allotment we have seen too many retail warehouses, bowling alleys or fried chicken restaurants take over opportunities that, in social and urban design terms, had so much more potential for wider social, environmental and cultural benefit. Examples abound:

Ravenscraig, Dundee Waterfront, St Vincent Crescent, Springfield Quay next to Kingston Bridge."

"Sometimes such commercially-focused developments can help to get the regeneration process started but should be expected to lead to something better and more innovative and socially important – Glasgow's Merchant City being a fair example. New Gorbals also shows how quality planning and a sustained effort can ensure the right type of development takes place with its mix of social and private housing and commercial premises."

"Private sector-led developments not only go for the big bucks and the easy hit, they so often squeeze out smaller scale marginal projects which contribute so much to the quality of urban space. What we need are measures to enable smaller initiatives to take root without the land being traded on at a profit. The question would appear to be, how much is it worth to the public sector to fund quality and diversity?"

"As a medium sized practice, with loads of energy, creativity we have a huge amount to offer to large scale regeneration projects with a range of skills from consultancy to architecture to interior design which can adapt itself to the mixed-use nature of regeneration. What we say is 'just give us a chance to offer something other than commercially successful vanilla for Glasgow.'"