



Assessors' Report – Stage 2

West Cork Arts Centre Architectural Design Competition

Assessors present:

Ms Ann Davoren (Chair)
Mr Denis Deasy
Mr Emmett Scanlon
Ms Mary McCarthy
Ms Maud Cotter
Ms Helen Collins
Mr Patrick Creedon

Report:

The jury was impressed by the Stage 2 submissions received. There was an interesting range of approaches taken to addressing the brief but the unanimous view of the assessors was that competition submission No. 146 was the clear winner.

Submission Number 146 – Winner: Donaghy + Dimond Architects

The winning scheme, submitted as a model presentation of sophisticated and beautiful drawings, is an aesthetically appropriate response to site. The public laneway and bridge and the semi-private courtyard and the river comfortably coexist due the considered placement of the building on the site. The clarity and strength of the original submission were built upon and the architects responded well to the comments made by the jury at Stage 1.

The submission fulfils the brief;

- it provides a simple solution to the complex problem of integrating the existing laneways, the public realm and the building;
- it is functionally smooth, the spaces dovetail and respond well to the programmatic needs of the Arts Centre;
- it is site-sensitive, the use of colour is appropriate to the context;
- while the historical bakery is not retained, the echo of the building is incorporated in a sensitive way;
- it displays an understanding of the work of artists and how practitioners might want to use the building and relate to other users of the building and the general public;
- the significance of the commercial aspect of the brief was well understood;
- it creates a mature civic space, addresses the public realm and adds coherence and relevance to the town.

The proportions of the higher section sit well in context and are a sensitive response to the stream.

The jury believe that the winning project has the potential to make a significant and positive contribution to the urban fabric of Skibbereen.

Unsuccessful Shortlist in numerical order by submission

Submission Number 70: O'Donnell + Tuomey Architects

A beautifully presented submission. Architecturally very interesting but does not adequately resolve the programmatic issues of an arts centre. The jury's concerns, expressed at Stage 1, regarding the circulation spaces and the economic repercussions for the budget and functional operations were unresolved. The building seems to dominate the site rather than unlocking its complexity and engaging with the local context.

Submission Number 139: Clancy Moore Architects

The internal layout is thoughtful and beautifully resolved with the different volume interacting effortlessly, this being most particularly apparent in the interaction of the internal spaces with external open-air courtyards. The concerns about the exterior form and expression of the building being disconnected from the interior organisation noted by the jury at Stage 1 was taken literally by the architects at Stage 2, however, the exterior remains spatially and socially disconnected both from the interior and the urban context. The ideas expressed in the Stage 1 submission were not realised in Stage 2.

Submission Number 190: Matter Design / Office dA

The interaction of the interior spaces was the strongest aspect of the design, particularly the organic flow of uses concentrating around a central lightwell / courtyard, as noted by the jury at Stage 1. However, the building does not engage positively with the public realm, appears sealed and is not civic in its external expression and did not develop adequately from Stage 1.

6 January 2009