



## 4th Quadrant of Victory Square International Architectural Competition Prague – Czech Republic

### Jury Phase 2 Assessment Report

Team No. 28: A69 - architekti

**Criterion a): The proposal presents a high quality solution for programme distribution, creates synergies between the activities, taking into account the needs of different types of users of the area.**

The proposal for an above ground Culture Centre opposite the UCT at the entrance to the campus provides a great deal of activity and interaction. The jury appreciated the change of location and massing in response to the jury's previous recommendations. The size of the entire programme is generous, the idea of a larger and more prominent Culture Centre was appreciated but posed significant issues including capital and running costs and the displacement of other functions on the site. Likewise, the location of the Culture Centre is rather further from the metro and there is no obvious route to it from the underground.

The UCT building has a playful quality which relates to the culture centre opposite and speaks of its youthful function. The required building programme is met.

There is a good mix of public activities around the outside perimeter around the western courtyard, however the access into this more public courtyard is very restricted and the jury doubted that this would sustain enough public passage.

The design of the shopping mall and the connection to the metro is clumsy, its use is rather limited, not commercially attractive. It terminates disappointingly in escalators up to ground and there is no direct connection either to the Culture Centre or UCT. The design of the basement floors is not fully functional neither in the retail section nor in the underground car parkings.

**Criterion b): The architectural and urban design proposal reinforces place qualities and respects the requirements regarding the urban design composition of Victory Square and its surroundings.**

There is close adherence to the Engel's masterplan. The design accentuates the axial importance of Technická Street, the architecture of the closed blocks does not emphasise their different function. Only the building of the Cultural Centre and the UCT building stand out from this uniform expression.

The elevations around Victory Square are monumental but handled in a sensitive way, especially with respect to matching the office and residential floor heights. The buildings are relieved by a continuous terrace at 5<sup>th</sup> floor. Building facades around the perimeter are varied from the monumental frontage and more pleasing, nevertheless its design and the execution of the blocks is too monotonous and uniform and lacks attractiveness for users. The Jury is concerned that the height

level of the surrounding buildings is not met. It is a pity that a solution to the sloping roof plane of the buildings (at least towards the square) above the main cornice is missing.

The stand-alone building of UCT, its representative appearance appropriate to the importance of the building with balanced proportion of facades towards Šolínova and Technická Streets is appreciated. The playfulness of the UCT test tubes is enjoyed albeit there are concerns about the external stairs. The space plan of the facades with many terraces and greenery is impressive but costly.

**Criterion c): The proposed public spaces and courtyards are architecturally and functionally interlinked with proposed buildings and enhance the socially cohesive functional mix and diversity of activities.**

The western courtyard has multiple entrances in logical places e.g. at the metro and Zikova Street, as well as the eastern courtyard. There is a well-articulated termination to Zikova Street.

Terracing on the interior of the residential courtyard softens the elevations and provides engagement with the landscape. However, closed blocks represent an untapped potential for creating good-quality public spaces. If the courtyard is open to the public, the vertical division of the courtyard and concrete retaining walls are not a city-forming element, the jury is concerned that this will encourage anti-social behaviour. The public lateral route through the residential courtyard is set down for privacy which the jury felt was problematic particularly because the necessary fences to stop people falling will make a very funnel/tunnel like public route. The courtyards are interlinked by the university and culture centre across Technická Street and by a very narrow lateral route which is not sufficient to encourage public permeability.

An open public space of sufficient capacity where cultural and public events could take place or more representative forecourt of the UCT building or the Cultural Centre in Technická Street is missing.

There are no strong proposals for the relationship or interaction of the buildings onto Victory Square to create activity and animation.

**Criterion d): The proposal presents a high quality solution for the blue-green infrastructure of the development site and contributes to the city's climate goals.**

There is interesting concept of "green pores", which act as a porous filter as well as horizontal and vertical (hanging gardens) network that supports local biodiversity and creates a series of micro-environments. The jury appreciated the thinking about linking with greening beyond the site boundaries and large areas of terraces and soil give opportunities for greening and biodiversity.

However, the jury doubts the landscape solution in Šolínova Street is workable given the vehicular requirements. The design presents the greenery ratio calculation with inadequate differentiation of the types of green spaces included in it. Trees in the paved area slightly exceed 25% share of the area of greenery on the ground.

**Criterion e): The proposal presents a holistic, feasible and sustainable mobility solution for all modes of transport.**

The design is not complete and some design ideas are not clear. The carparking ramp creates an obstacle for the metro pedestrian route that limits its reach to the

south only. A new metro entrance is proposed, including the necessary pressure lock, but this questions the need of the existing (middle) entrance. Bicycle parking is addressed neither inside nor outside the buildings, and the overall design of bicycle traffic does not provide any specific details. The calculation of parking spaces according to the Prague Building Regulations is missing.

**Criterion f): The proposal presents a technological solution with a high degree of energy efficiency and flexibility.**

The technical solutions are well thought through. However, there are many building cores which create a large amount of dual aspect apartments. The large central courtyard spaces will be well lit and provide great outlook for residents.