

Universal replaces Draw Associates on **Reiss** flagship store



By Scott Billings

British fashion retailer Reiss has signed up Universal Design Studio to create the design for its forthcoming London flagship store, dropping Draw Associates from the project only a few months before opening.

The change of hands for the store's design comes as Reiss gears up for a complete relaunch of its brand identity, created by its retained branding consultancy Made Thought. An overhaul of the visual identity 'from the logo down' will be revealed in July when Reiss also launches its first stand-alone accessories format.

Draw Associates had been working on the £25m Barrett Street site for over a year, but Universal was brought in to take over the project 'within the last couple of months', according to Reiss director Steven Downes. It is under-

stood that Draw's plans were largely scrapped in favour of a new design scheme by Universal. The store is due to open around October.

'We wanted different design input to broaden our appeal and [founder] David Reiss felt a need to get a different dimension for the store,' says Downes.

Reiss will continue to work with Draw Associates on its global store roll-out programme, with sites in the pipeline for Los Angeles, New York and Florida, as well as China (DW 20 April 2006). The consultancy also continues to manage the rest of the Barrett Street complex, working with architect Squire and Partners on the Reiss head offices, as well as residential and penthouse elements of the building.

'We are continuing to work on the global part of the expan-

sion, but there is now a bigger design team to handle the company's very ambitious plans,' says Draw Associates director Dorrien Hopley.

Universal is also developing retail designs for a Reiss outlet in Terminal 5 at London Heathrow Airport, due to open in March 2008.

Made Thought is working with both groups to manage the presentation of the Reiss brand in store environments, says director Paul Austin.

'There will be a whole new branding system from top to bottom. This time next year, Reiss will have a completely different look,' he says.

REISS WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT

- Draw Associates has handled Reiss retail design for more than ten years
- Universal Design Studio brought in to take over the London flagship store design at Barrett Street
- Made Thought formally appointed as branding consultancy earlier this year
- Barrett Street building will also contain Reiss headquarters, residential space and penthouse suites, with design by architect Squire and Partners and Draw Associates