

East Market Street Arches, Edinburgh Old Town



Zone Architects have won a design competition to convert a series of arches in Edinburgh's Old Town to artists' studios and performance spaces. The arches will be converted as part of the Caltongate regeneration which is being led by developers Mountgrange. The Caltongate is a significant development site to the north of the Old Town and is midway between Waverley station and the Scottish Parliament. The Arches will play a crucial part in the process of providing vitality to the Caltongate area both as a destination and as a conduit drawing people along Parliament way, towards the Scottish Parliament.

The aim of the proposal is to provide a subtle mix of high quality, innovative *consumption* function (e.g. shops, galleries, street theatre) and also a high quality, original *production* function (artisan production), for local people and visitors alike. We have a vision of flexible premises that can spill out onto the streets when appropriate (sun, festival) and take people into and through at other times (evening, wet). There is also a need to differentiate from the more traditional souvenirs on offer in the established Royal Mile outlets.

To enclose the 18 arches Zone Architects propose a layered timber screen which will be a carefully designed collage of elements which will allow occupiers the possibility of comfortable retreating to work or extension out on to the pavement to display or sell.

As the first in a series of billboard displays, translucent digital images will be printed on to the glass with a series of anamorphic projections of the monuments of Edinburgh's Calton Hill opposite the arches. Internally the arches are treated as a series of found rock openings which will be swept out and smoothed inside like oyster shells. Materials selected refer to the network of artisans' workshops which existing in closes crossing the site before the arches were built in the 1850s.

The arches support Jeffrey Street which was built over a network of small closes as part of a series of 'improvement' measures to open up the Old Town, particularly to the north. They have since been used by the City Council for storage although latterly they have largely been empty.

Zone Architects

Zone Architects is a young award winning architects firm led by partners David Jamieson and Suzanne Ewing. Their developing portfolio of built projects in Edinburgh's historic urban fabric is underpinned by an ambition to create relevant, desirable and delightful places for dwelling in the city. The richness and variety of qualities of historic dwelling types, spaces and collective organisation in the urban realm is an inspiration.

Suzanne Ewing and David Jamieson are partners with 20 years combined architectural experience. They are both involved in teaching architectural design at the University of Edinburgh.

Mountgrange

Mountgrange Capital plc is a privately owned property investment and development company. Founded by Martin Myers and Manish Chande, Mountgrange is involved in a number of property initiatives; some as principal, others in either advisory, investment or development capacity. Mountgrange's current property portfolio includes development sites across the UK, but its business is particularly focussed on Scotland and the South East of England, offering a combination of office and residential space.

The two-stage invited design competition was run by Malcolm Fraser Architects who are also working within the Caltongate site.

Further information:

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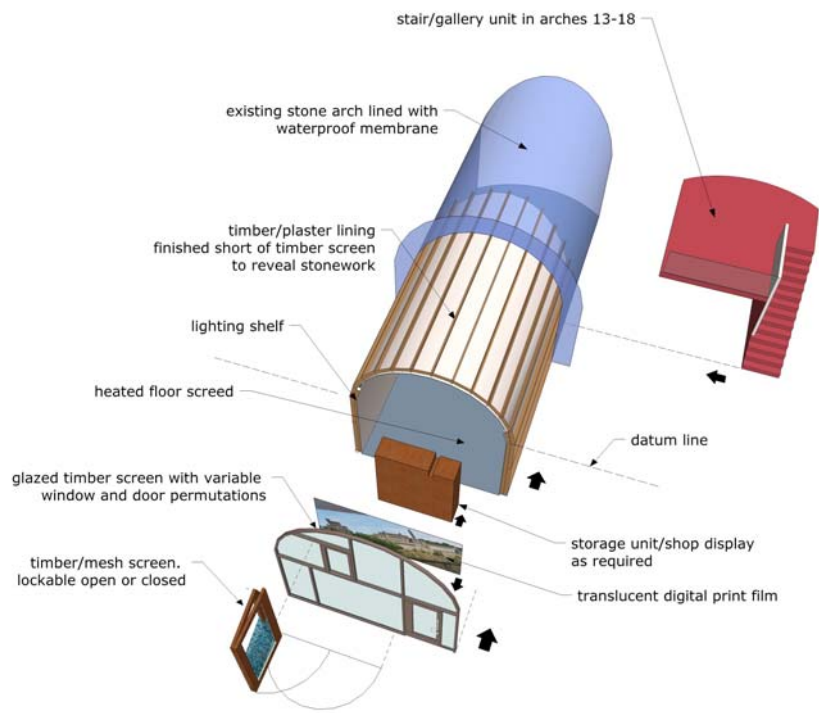
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Elevation of proposed studio spaces



view west along East Market Street.



organisation diagram



proposed arch interior