



## National Galleries of Scotland receives planning approval for transformational North Edinburgh development



The City of Edinburgh Council has granted planning permission for the National Galleries of Scotland's exciting new community space, conservation, research and art storage facility in the heart of Granton, North Edinburgh. The Art Works will form part of the wider regeneration of the Granton area, and will be located on a brown field site west of Madelvic House on Granton Park Avenue, within one of Scotland's most diverse yet socioeconomically deprived areas.

The state of the art facility is designed with an innovative dual purpose, that goes beyond traditional art storage. While it will hold Scotland's renowned art collection, it aims to make it more accessible than ever before to explore the nations art. The Art Works will also contribute to the wellbeing and investment in the local area, offering community spaces for use by local residents, community groups and the wider public, all under one roof. Offering an additional 11,000m<sup>2</sup> of quality space – the equivalent of two playing fields – the facility aims to make a major contribution to enhancing the local community for the long term.

The Art Works will be a world-class home for more than 120,000 works of art to be stored, cared for, conserved, and researched, while not on display in a gallery. Storing

Scotland's extraordinary national collection in a completely new way, the public will be able to explore, discover, and engage with the art like never before. The building will also be a key focal point for community investment, pride and growth. Inside there will be spaces for public use, including social areas and amenities for visitors' comfort and enjoyment, such as a community studio, community support space, further education rooms and a Changing Places toilet. This will be the only Changing Places facility available in the Granton area, and opens up the spaces for even more people to visit. These specially designed toilets enable those who need extra equipment and space to use the toilets safely and comfortably.

Sustainability is central to the National Gallery of Scotland's vision for The Art Works. The plans include sustainable building practices which minimise energy impact and provide quality of life opportunities for the local community. As the country's largest cultural building designed to the Passivhaus standard, it will go beyond what is required by the Scottish Building Standards. It will be climate resilient and decarbonise the care of the nations collection.

Alongside enabling the National Galleries of Scotland to develop a vastly improved digital offering, the purpose-built facility will deliver a modern environment in which members of the public, colleagues, students and researchers can engage with the art stored there. The historic collection of the Royal Scottish Academy will also be housed in the new building and it will also be home to the Demarco Archive. Outside, there will be activity areas that bring the natural environment to life, including new green routes through to Granton Waterfront.

Accessible to all, The Art Works will attract and inspire local visitors and communities right through to specialist researchers in Scotland and from across the world. Several projects with local partners are underway, with completed projects including a collaboration with local charities and social enterprises to make 1000 art-themed face coverings for local people and visits for nursery groups to enjoy the community orchard which is currently on part of the site.

Previously known as the National Collection Facility, proposals for a building of this kind have been in the early stages of concept development since 2015. Now known as The Art Works, the project aims to bring Scotland's vast and extraordinary national art collection into a single, future-proofed location.

The national collection is currently stored across several sites where access and space are extremely limited, logistics are difficult, and conditions are suboptimal for enabling the full potential for public access, conservation and research to be realised. It also means it can be challenging for works to be made available for display and loan. The Art Works will be instrumental in addressing these issues, enabling much greater access to and engagement with Scotland's incredible collection of art treasures. The facility safeguards the future of this publicly owned, renowned national collection.

**Sir John Leighton, Director-General of the National Galleries of Scotland**, said: 'We are delighted to have received planning permission for The Art Works. We are committed to continuing work with the Council and other strategic partners to play our part in shaping and informing the development of north Edinburgh. Our project has the potential to be a huge catalyst for change in the local community and at national levels. The Art Works will allow National Galleries of Scotland to share its collection much more effectively across the nation and to bring the benefits of art and culture to the widest possible audience.'

Further information can be found at [www.nationalgalleries.org/theartworks](http://www.nationalgalleries.org/theartworks)

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

For interview and image requests, please contact us at +44 (0)131 624 6314, [press@nationalgalleries.org](mailto:press@nationalgalleries.org)

### **About the National Galleries of Scotland**

We are the National Galleries of Scotland and our three Edinburgh galleries are the National, Modern and Portrait. We house and look after Scotland's amazing world-class art collection. Step inside and explore treasures from Botticelli and Titian to the very best modern art and contemporary portraits of pop culture icons. And, as you'd expect, the world's greatest collection of Scottish art. We're a space for thinking, dreaming, doing and playing. Soak up the art. Meet friends in the cafés. Have a family picnic surrounded by the sculptures in the Modern grounds. Be inspired by our amazing art films. Choose your own experience. There is no one way to enjoy Scotland's national collection. We are yours to discover.