

New design may deter antisocial behaviour in Fleshmarket Close

New lights and artwork could be installed in Edinburgh's Fleshmarket Close as part of efforts to deter vandalism and anti-social behaviour from the historic steps.

Plans unveiled by The City of Edinburgh Council have proposed replacing existing lighting with 'heritage lanterns' and seven 'decorative archways' that feature designs relating to the history of the Close

In addition, it's suggested the three graffiti-laden doorways 'where anti-social behaviour and detritus gather' are refurbished and turned into 'artwork-based glimpses into the industrial heritage' of the area, complete with sound effects.



Plans state: “These are composed of market scenes and a trompe l’oeil style view into the belly of the old Scotsman building to see the large-scale printing machines that used to inhabit the space.

“It is proposed that each scene be accompanied with the sounds of the images being shown through directional audio which creates a focussed beam of sound that is only audible when you are within the beam. This is to be focussed in the recesses to animate the images but also to discourage loitering in the refurbished environments.

“The lighting is designed to work at pedestrian level throughout but also supports the eye in travelling up the

buildings that make it such a unique environment.”

The city’s closes “are often perceived as smelly, dirty and unsafe,” plans say, adding: “The lack of footfall can create further problems with anti-social behaviour and vandalism taking place there”.

And it is hoped the redesign – part of a wider partnership project between the Council, Edinburgh World Heritage, Napier University, local businesses, and residents to refurbish twelve of the city centre’s iconic closes – will tackle these issues “by creating a positive cycle of change”.

“Making the alleyways more interesting, attractive and visible, which will increase the number of people using them, which in turn will make feel them safer and less prone to anti-social activity,” plans add.

“The scheme is designed to unify spaces and aspects of Fleshmarket Close from top to bottom. This is achieved through unified lighting and artworks that will change the atmosphere of the place.”

With permission for works in other locations including Carrubbers Close, Stevenlaw’s Close and Fountain Close previously granted, it’s expected council planners will approve the new plans for Fleshmarket Close in the coming weeks.

It was seven years ago a light installation by artist Callum Innes was used to make [High School Yards steps](#) more welcoming

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