

AMA says it is the preferred bidder for Summerhall

The developers, AMA, have confirmed that they are the preferred bidders for the buildings at Summerhall in a statement released today.

In the statement they describe Summerhall as the “troubled arts venue”, but say that they will retain arts as a priority in developing the buildings.

The family trust Oesselmann Estate Limited is the owner of the buildings, and Robert McDowell, the face of Summerhall, is the oldest of the brothers who are beneficiaries of the trust. He has been quite open that [the sale of this property](#), which he has turned into arts venue, was against his wishes.

A representative of the trust said: “We are delighted by AMA’s proposals for Summerhall and their commitment to continue supporting the arts at the venue. In the meantime, existing tenants can remain in place, and discussions are ongoing with two charities, Edinburgh Palette to take over the day-to-day management of the facility and Summerhall Arts to take over the delivery of the currently planned and future programme of events.”

AMA have developed many sites in Edinburgh, describing itself as the “luxury home specialist”.

AMA commit to supporting the arts

Dr Ali Afshar, co-Founder and MD of AMA, said: “We are proud

to have been chosen as custodians of this iconic Edinburgh landmark and one that we know is so important to the arts community.

“Summerhall is a complex city centre site, steeped in history and containing a number of listed buildings. Its use as a Fringe venue and home to small businesses has given it a special place in the hearts of local people. As we start to develop plans for its future, we intend to treat Summerhall with respect and consideration for its rich history, with an ongoing commitment to continue supporting the arts on the site.

“Following a full legal process, we will be undertaking a structured consultation with stakeholders, planners and the local community to determine the way forward for Summerhall, as we want to develop the best possible plan to achieve a sustainable and commercially viable future. We anticipate that this will be a mixed-used plan, but we can confirm that any planning application we make will include allocating a substantial proportion of the space for art, conference, entertainment and public space.

“AMA is a well-respected Edinburgh family business, with more than 40 years’ experience in delivering award-winning developments in the Capital, including complicated sites such as the former Scottish & Newcastle Brewery and St Vincent Place. The redevelopment of Summerhall is a challenge we are very much looking forward to, and we want to reassure Edinburgh residents that we will bring forward a proposal that respects the local surroundings and the existing exceptional architecture, and that it will be carried out to the highest build quality by our professional team.”

CULTURE CONVENER

Culture and Communities Convener, Cllr Val Walker, said: “I’m pleased to see AMA announced as the preferred bidder to lead

plans for the future of this treasured arts venue. We have consistently highlighted Summerhall's vital role in Edinburgh's arts and cultural landscape, and I'm encouraged to see the commitment to making the arts a central focus in its sustainable development.

"Summerhall is a beloved cultural institution and festival venue, and we're dedicated to supporting Edinburgh's cultural sector as a whole and the Summerhall site plays an important part in this. I look forward to meeting with AMA to discuss their plans and the venues next chapter."



One of the events which has used Summerhall in the past – this was the Edinburgh Science Festival Launch at Summerhall on 24th Feb 2022

© 2022 J.L. Preece