



# MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Out of the Blue Woos Developers as New Street Demolition Deadline Looms

Out of the Blue drive for studio space as end of New Street artists' colony sparks citywide crisis

**Out of the Blue** is lobbying developers and town planners in a bid to avert a crisis for the capital's artistic community.

Out of the Blue has also stepped up its search for new studio space in the city, but with the demolition of Out of the Blue's **New Street** studio complex to make way for the Calton Gate development beginning as early as Christmas, the critical shortage of studios in Edinburgh threatens to become a cultural crisis for the city.

Phase 2 of Out of the Blue's redevelopment of **The Drill Hall** in Dalmeny Street, which will provide production spaces for up to 30 artists, is scheduled to be complete in April 2006. Phase 3, scheduled to begin in spring 2007, will provide 30 more. The arts organisation is also actively exploring other options in a bid to boost the city's stock of creative space but with a waiting list at The Drill Hall of more than 100 artists, the demise of the New Street complex is a hammer blow to the quality of Edinburgh's cultural life.

Out of the Blue has been a driving force behind the area around New Street's regeneration since setting up the New Street arts complex and **The Bongo Club** some ten years ago. The arts organisation first proposed the creation of replacement artists' studios and exhibition space in the **Market Street** arches as part of a cultural quarter as far back as 2000 when plans for the redevelopment of the area were first tabled. Without definite provision for creative space in the latest plans, the development must call the wider vision of Scotland's capital as an inspiring place to live and work into serious question.

Out of the Blue coordinator Rob Hoon says, "While we welcome the dialogue regarding the role of the arts in the proposed development, all too often we see plans being made with little or no reference to the cultural vitality of Edinburgh. Of course, we understand that financial pressures exist, but we also believe that real value for money for the people of Edinburgh is best delivered by taking less tangible assets such as the creative opportunities of an area into account. We are urgently seeking alternative locations for the New Street cultural hub to provide for the immediate shortfall of space and I urge anyone who knows about a possible building to get in touch."

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Note to editors: *Out of the Blue Arts and Education Trust (charity number SC022812) supports and promotes cultural ventures. It has an established track record as a vital catalyst for creativity in Edinburgh and beyond. Out of the Blue gratefully acknowledges the support of the Scottish Arts Council, City of Edinburgh Council, Fresh Futures, Capital City Partnership, Social Investment Scotland, Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh & Lothian, Triodos Bank and Ikea. For more details please visit [www.outoftheblue.org.uk](http://www.outoftheblue.org.uk)*