



Lowestoft Town Hall Project

Public Consultation

January 2023



The Lowestoft Town Hall Project is a Lowestoft Town Council initiative supported National Lottery Players via the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, The Architectural Heritage Fund, The Towns Fund, and East Suffolk Council

History of Lowestoft Town Hall



1884 Ordnance Survey Town Plan



1905 Ordnance Survey map



1927 OS map

The town hall is in the heart of Lowestoft and deserves to be rejuvenated to enable it to become the hub of our community.

Timeline for the project

It is an important part of Lowestoft history, which should be preserved for future generations.

- pre-1859**
A chapel of ease was built on the site in the early to mid fourteenth century, which was incorporated into a market building that was eventually known as the Town House or Chamber. It was rebuilt in 1698.
- 1859**
The 1698 building was demolished and replaced with a new building designed by John Louth Clemence. Samuel Morton Peto donated stained-glass windows by John Thomas. The existing Council Chamber remains from this version of the Town Hall.
- c1870s**
The New Market Inn on Compass St was built. It was incorporated into the Town Hall in the 1970s, although is not part of the listing.
- 1899-1900**
Widening of the High Street meant much of the previous building was demolished and rebuilt, with only the old Council Chamber retained. The architect was Borough Engineer George Henry Hanby.
- 1904**
Town Hall extended by three bays on Compass Street, also designed by Hanby.
- 1914**
Town Hall extended up to Mariners Street to accommodate committee room, residential accommodation and offices.
- 1935**
Small extension to the 1914 extension on Mariner Street
- 1970s**
New Market Inn incorporated into Town Hall
- 1993**
The Town Hall is listed
- 2015**
Waveney District Council moved out of the Town Hall. It has remained unoccupied since.
- 2017**
Lowestoft Town Council was formed and became the owner of the Town Hall
- May 2021**
Lowestoft Town Council's project team, led by MossKing Associates, submitted a successful first stage funding application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- May 2022**
Appointed the design team - HAT Projects, Richard Griffiths Architects, Momentum (structural engineering), Max Fordham (building services engineers)
- May 2023**
We will submit second stage bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund and apply for planning permission
- Nov 2023** (if funded) – delivery stage begins
- Apr 2024** – main contractor starts building work
- Summer 2025** – Town Hall reopens

Drawings below reproduced by kind permission from Suffolk Archives



SA-193-2-1-23-1
Drawing of Town Chamber (1784)



SA-1300-72-6-29-1-1
Town Chamber (anonymous, c1850s)



SA-1300-72-6-29-2-1
1859 Town Hall (anonymous, c1859)



c.1890 photograph of the High St showing the 1859 Town Hall



1897 photograph of the High Street showing the 1859 Town Hall
Photo Credit: Alice Taylor



1905 Photographs of the Town Hall and widened High St



1905 Photographs of the Town Hall and widened High St
Photo Credit: Alice Taylor



Photo Credit: Christine Bayes

Photograph showing construction of the new Town Hall. The retained Council Chamber can be seen in the top right.



Original drawing of the Mariners Street 1914 wing



Current day photograph of 1935 extension



1986 Photograph of the Town Hall

The Town Hall is such a beautiful old building. The neglect feels like it's bringing this end of the high street down. Make it right so the town can have some pride in itself.

Why reopen Lowestoft Town Hall?

The Town Hall has been owned by Lowestoft Town Council since 2017. It is currently deteriorating, but if restored it could become an amazing community facility.

Redevelopment of the Town Hall would bring people to the High Street, helping other local shops and businesses. It could also create new jobs for local people, both directly (working in the Town Hall) and indirectly (through supporting other local businesses).

It's too nice a building to stay empty!
That end of town needs an attraction or something worth going up that end for!

It is an amazing building that Lowestoft is lucky to have. At all costs it should be restored to allow public use. It is in a unique place to revitalise the old town.



What you told us before

In January 2021, we asked the people of Lowestoft what they wanted to see in the Town Hall:

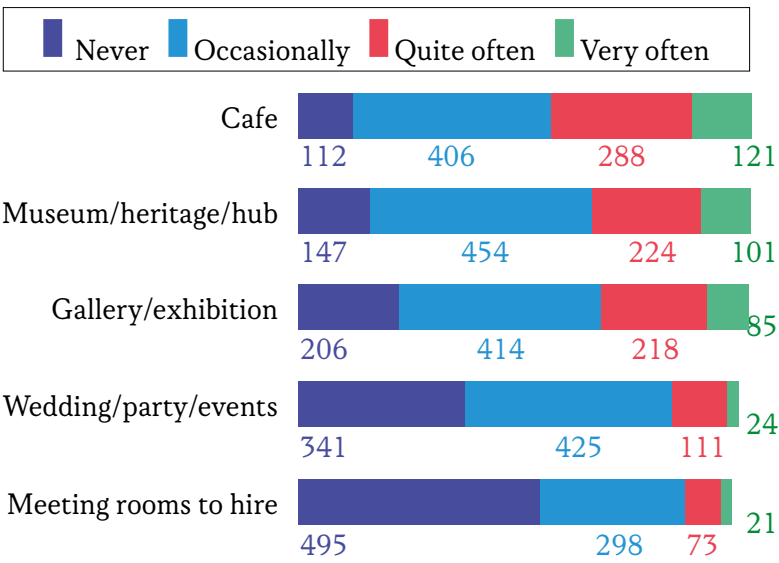
- 999 residents completed our survey
- Over 90% came from NR32, NR33 postcodes

Quotes from the survey

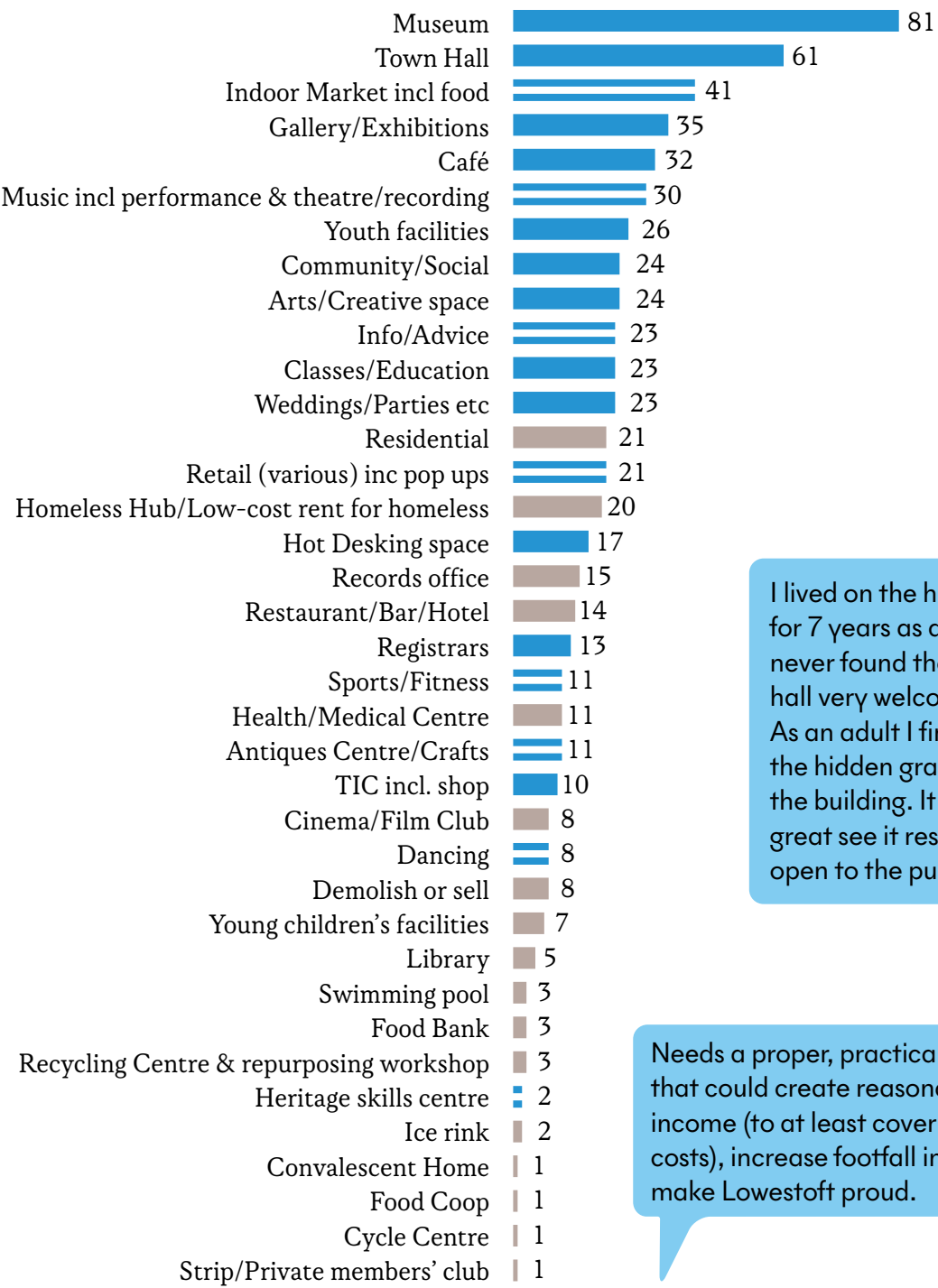
Comments from people surveyed about Lowestoft Town Hall in 2021 are quoted in speech bubbles across the boards

What you would like to see the Town Hall used for?

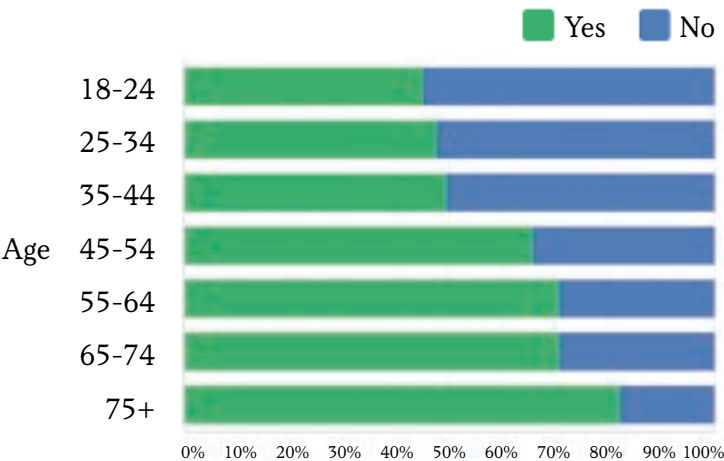
How much would you use the facilities?



Included in the Town Hall design (solid blue) Can happen in the Town Hall design (striped blue)



Should Lowestoft Town Council move into the Town Hall?



I would love to see it come back to life. It is a beautiful building and should be used to benefit the community.

I lived on the high street for 7 years as a child but never found the town hall very welcoming. As an adult I finally saw the hidden grandeur of the building. It would be great see it restored and open to the public again.

Needs a proper, practical vision that could create reasonable income (to at least cover operating costs), increase footfall in the area, make Lowestoft proud.

A renewed Town Hall for Lowestoft



Presence on the High Street

The building facades will be restored to bring the Town Hall back to its former glory. A canopy at the entrance will welcome people.

It needs to belong to the community & people need to feel welcome when visiting.

It's an amazing space and could bring so much life up to the high street and work with other businesses.

Registry Office
for the Suffolk County Council team*, handling the registration of births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, and citizenship ceremonies.
*Subject to final agreement with Suffolk County Council

Heritage Hub
celebrating Lowestoft's history, working alongside local museums

Studios
- a well-equipped 'messy space' for art workshops and community activities

Co-working hub
where people can rent a desk for a day or a month, working alongside like-minded people

Council would be more accessible in the town.

Lowestoft Town Council Offices

New Hall
for community use, weddings and parties, craft fairs, performances, and anything else you would like to do in it!

Please let it become a busy, productive and attractive place. So much of Lowestoft is in decline. Please let there be some attractive planting too.



A new atrium

The old yard will be opened up to welcome visitors with light and the lively sounds of the reception and cafe. Wherever possible, existing floor and wall finishes will be retained.

It needs to belong to the community & people need to feel welcome when visiting.

To be successful, the building needs to be fully open and occupied. To create a buzzy and vibrant atmosphere.

Visitor Information Point

Cafe
open to everyone

Meeting spaces
for groups, classes, committees and more

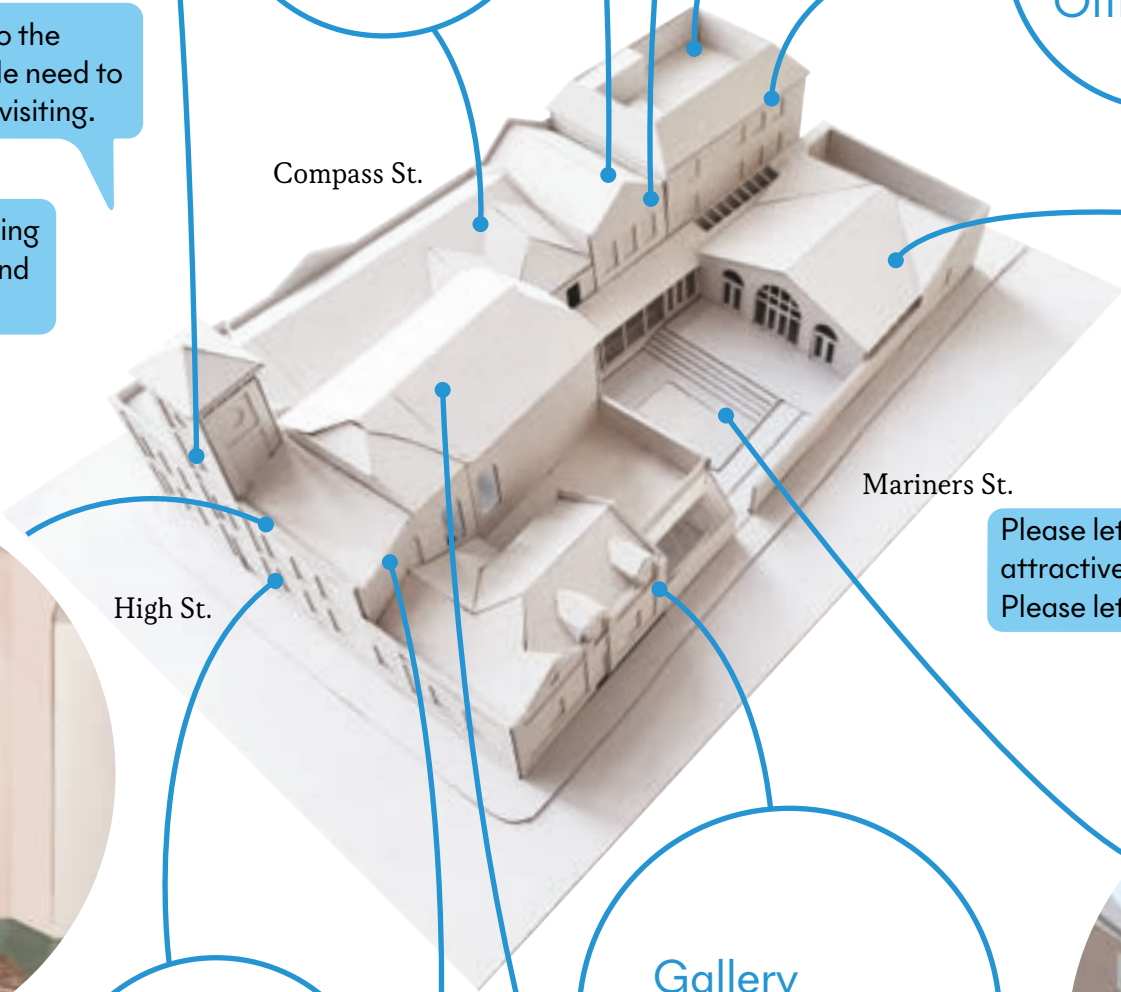
Gallery
for changing exhibitions, including local artists

Council Chamber
will be used for ceremonies, council meetings and other events

Courtyard Garden



I hope the stained glass windows stay.



The design approach

We need to extend the Town Hall to make space for all the activities that will make it a thriving community hub.

The Town Hall was originally one building within a dense urban block. The back of the Town Hall was never meant to be seen.

We want to use the new extensions to restore this setting by creating a strong frontage along all the streets, and placing a courtyard in the centre of the block.

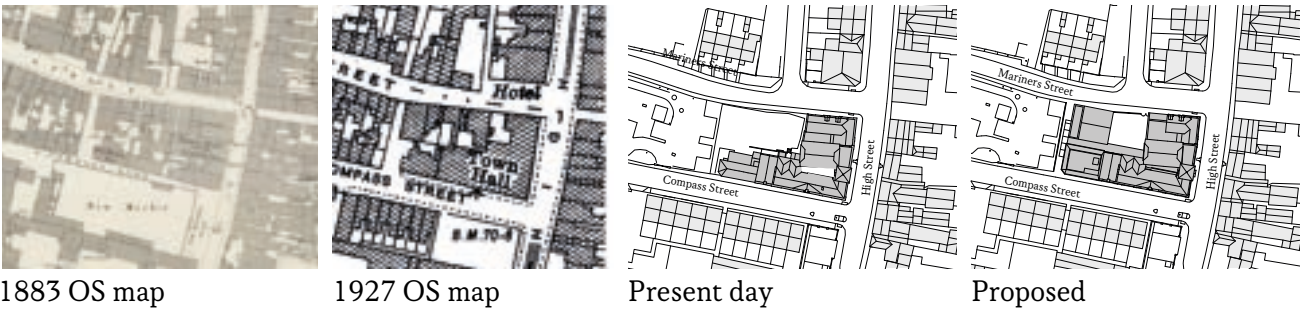
In creating a courtyard at the heart of the block, the new buildings have less impact on the most significant historic part - the Council Chamber itself.

This also protects the Town Hall from the visual impact of future development proposals that may come forward on the site next door.

(Right) Sketch view of proposal from corner of High Street and Mariners Street. (Below) Same view today.



(Right) Sketch view of proposal from Albany Road (Above) Same view today.



Examples of red brick boundary walls in Lowestoft surrounding a varied range of buildings and hidden gardens.



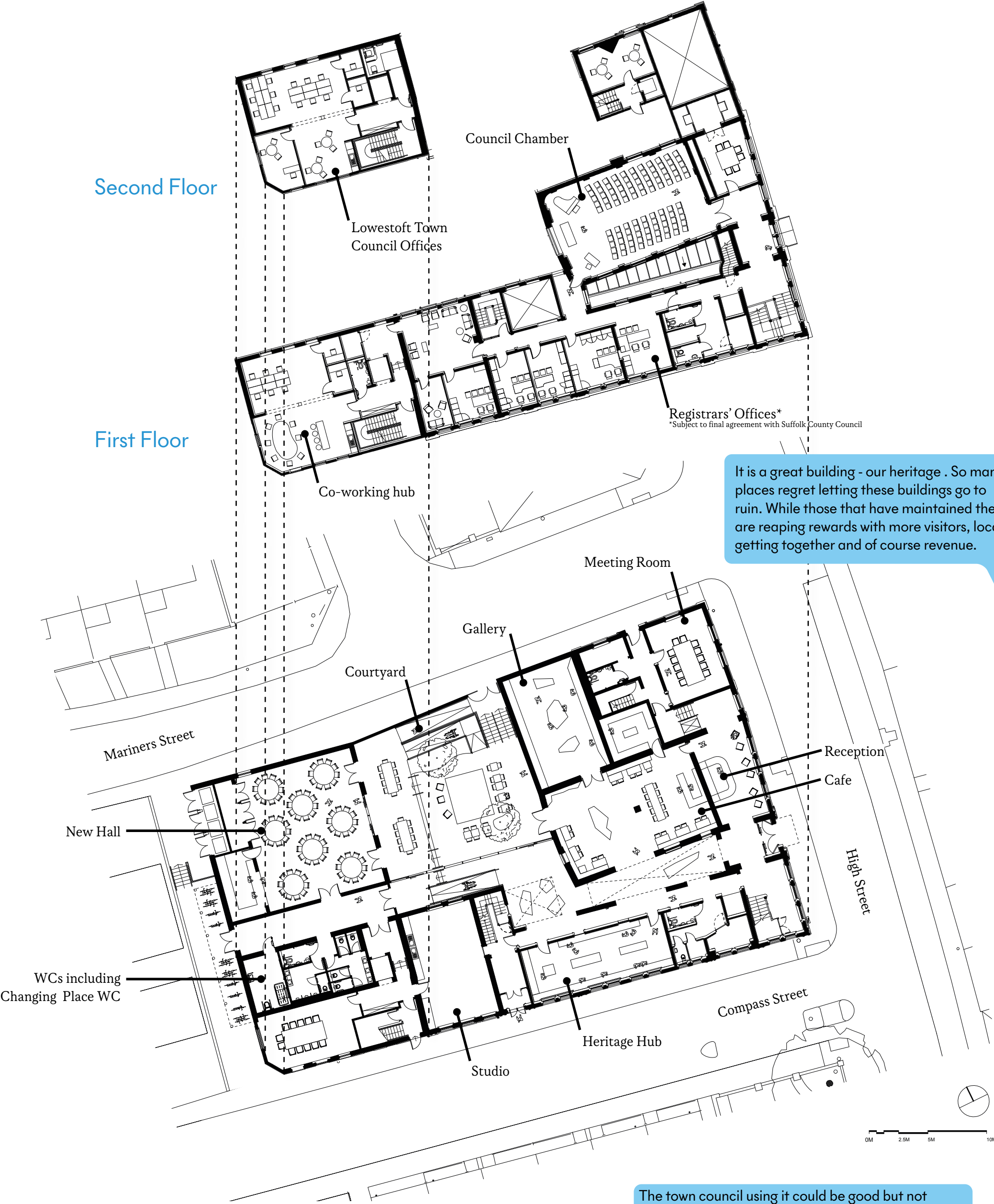
Sketch view of new courtyard and event hall.



Sketch model of Town Hall with new additions

It would be nice to retain the external part of the building as it was built, but used inside for everyday and for the local community.

Proposed floor plans



It is a great building - our heritage . So many places regret letting these buildings go to ruin. While those that have maintained them are reaping rewards with more visitors, locals getting together and of course revenue.

Public uses that bring the Town Hall to life are located on the ground floor.

The town council using it could be good but not downstairs as that would be such a waste. Downstairs needs to be run by the public for the public.

While the town hall needs to be carefully redeveloped, the heritage that it contains should remain and be accessible for all to enjoy.

People Landscapes and Buildings (PLB) are our museum interpretation specialists, and will work with the Project Team to consult and engage local heritage experts, volunteers, families, schools and communities with the concept designs to inform how the designs develop.



Photo credit- Birds Eye production line - Jack Rose Collection

Working with Poetry People to capture people's memories and stories of the Town Hall and Lowestoft Industries. These memories and recollections will inspire a new video poem created by Dean Parkin which will be launched in February 2023.



A tricycle with a fishing smack inspired design has been at local events, sharing news about the project and chatting to people about their memories of Lowestoft.

CA Shine
with group and
affiti artist
ne



LOWESTOFT TOWN HALL TAKE OVER

See inside the old Town Hall on High Street
10am - 2pm Saturday 29 October
10am - 2pm Sunday 30 October

Free, no booking required
at Lowestoft Town Hall, High Street
NR33 9SA

- Visit the Council Chamber
- Have a go at creative activities
- Share your memories of the Town Hall with 'Your Lowestoft Memories' project
- See artwork by YMCA and displays about the new Town Hall Project
- The History of the Lowestoft Town Hall told by David Butcher - Sunday at 2.30pm. Please book your free ticket at events2014.co.uk

Programme is subject to change. Please be aware that there are no facilities for feeding and events is limited. For more information please email us at info@lowestoftworldgarden.com



Craft activities
inspired by
the Town Hall
stained glass



Photo Credit: Bob Collis

Co-op factory
memories event
at Lowestoft
Station.

Training opportunities



Scan the QR code
to take a tour of the
Virtual Town Hall



Examples of Town Council collections

Follow the Town Hall project to keep up to date on activities
 Facebook @LowestoftTownHall
 Instagram @lowestoft_townhallproject