

The numbers are not exact, being gathered from a number of sources and dates. The basic orders of magnitude, however, leave little doubt as to the sound economy of what is proposed. Any project along these lines requires the will of the City Council with the approval of citizens, along with the consent of English Heritage. A principal objective of this 'provocation' is to gain the mandate upon which comprehensive action to protect the long term civic character of City Hall and its environs can be based.

'A CIVIC MAKEOVER'

revenue efficient & sustainable

Feasible, justified & green!

The strong hope is that all these ideas can be brought about in an holistic way, including City Hall and the adjoining spaces, so that the result is indeed a coherent 'makeover' for the core of this city – a truly worthy 'civic centre'. What any scheme needs to avoid is the cherry picking of important assets that leave the wider problems untouched; instead a good scheme should grasp the nettle: renovate the offices of City Hall so that the accommodation problems of the Council can be resolved for the foreseeable future and set on a sound financial footing, include the Memorial gardens, St Peter's and Bethel Plains; finish off Guildhall Plains: build the Bistro and modify Mancroft churchyard: refine the market and in five years time it could all be done, making local government cheaper to run and the city centre looking refreshed and ready, with a proper face on this fine city of art and culture!

A SCHEDULE OF APPROXIMATE COMPARATIVE AREAS

EXISTING GROSS AREA	POLICE gross	NCC gross	NCC net	net/gross NCC	PROPOSED GROSS AREA (net of rail)	POLICE gross	NCC gross	NCC net @85%	net/gross NCC
GROUND FLOOR	3,296.0	534.0	2,762.0	2,228.0	67.6	3,301.0	534.0	2,767.0	2,352
GROUND FLOOR	3,341.0	534.0	2,807.0	2,073.0	66.0	6,655.0	534.0	6,121.0	5,203
FIRST FLOOR	2,743.0	534.0	2,209.0	1,675.0	61.1	3,841.0	534.0	3,307.0	2,811
SECOND FLOOR	2,740.0	534.0	2,206.0	1,672.0	61.0	534.0			
THIRD FLOOR	2,514.0	534.0	1,980.0	1,446.0	73.0	534.0			
	14,434.0	2,670.0	11,764.0	9,984.0	63.0	13,797.0	2,670.0	11,127.0	9,405.0

sq	net of rail	(all floors)	(includes police)	SM	SF
13,797.0	2,670.0	11,127.0	9,405.0	191,233.0	
			(no police)	11,341	124,325.5

access available	124,325.5
CIVIC access retained	26,312.0
net available for office	103,024.5
OFFICE required OCT 05	46,000.0
NETTAL SURPLUS	43,924.5

net police area

NOTES

The Estates Officer reported to the Executive in Oct 2005 that 5,574sq m (60,000sq ft) of useful area, was the office requirement for the staff numbers at the time. These proposals give a new area on the 3 lower levels (allowing for the police to remain) of 9,405sqm (101,233sq ft). Within this the retained Council facilities, (Council Chamber, Lord Mayor etc.) would continue to occupy 1,885 sqm (20,310 sq ft) leaving, 7,520sq m(20,301sq ft). Whereas the current building yields 30% efficiency in the use of its space, the proposals outlined here offer efficiency at something in excess of 85%: it means that at the efficiency of the new plan, we can count on 6,392sq m (68,805sq ft) as net or useful space – and given the numbers called for by the Estates Officer this leaves a surplus of 817sq m(8,805sq ft). Were the police to be accommodated in the Fire Station or elsewhere the surplus space would increase to something like 4080sq m(43,925sq ft – which becomes available for sub-letting and consequently revenue-earning.

A FIRST 'FEASIBILITY' STAGE BUDGET

GAINS	REVENUE	Eq CV: 5%	COSTS	BUDGET
REDUCTIONS rent paid, maint and repair	700,000	14,000,000		
STAFF ECON (say equiv. 2% at low end) 12 X £40K	480,000	9,600,000		
enhancements to C Hall not required		1,500,000		
SURPLUS SPACE 2,000SM for 15YRS@£15/sf	400,000	4,151,863		
POLICE RENT@£15/sf	344,887	6,897,740		
work to memorial gdn/rear yd/mkt toilets		3,500,000		
PARKING (50 non-resi @£750pa)	37,500	750,000		
		SALES		
APARTMENT CONSENTS (56no)		2,800,000	CITY HALL	15,000,000
			EXTERNAL SPACES	4,750,000
BISTRO		1,000,000	BISTRO	550,000
			ROAD AT REAR	1,000,000
			APARTMENTS upper maint etc	developper
			DISTURBANCE removal etc	1,000,000
TOTAL BENEFIT @ VALUE	TOTAL	44,199,603	TOTAL COSTS	22,300,000

NOTE

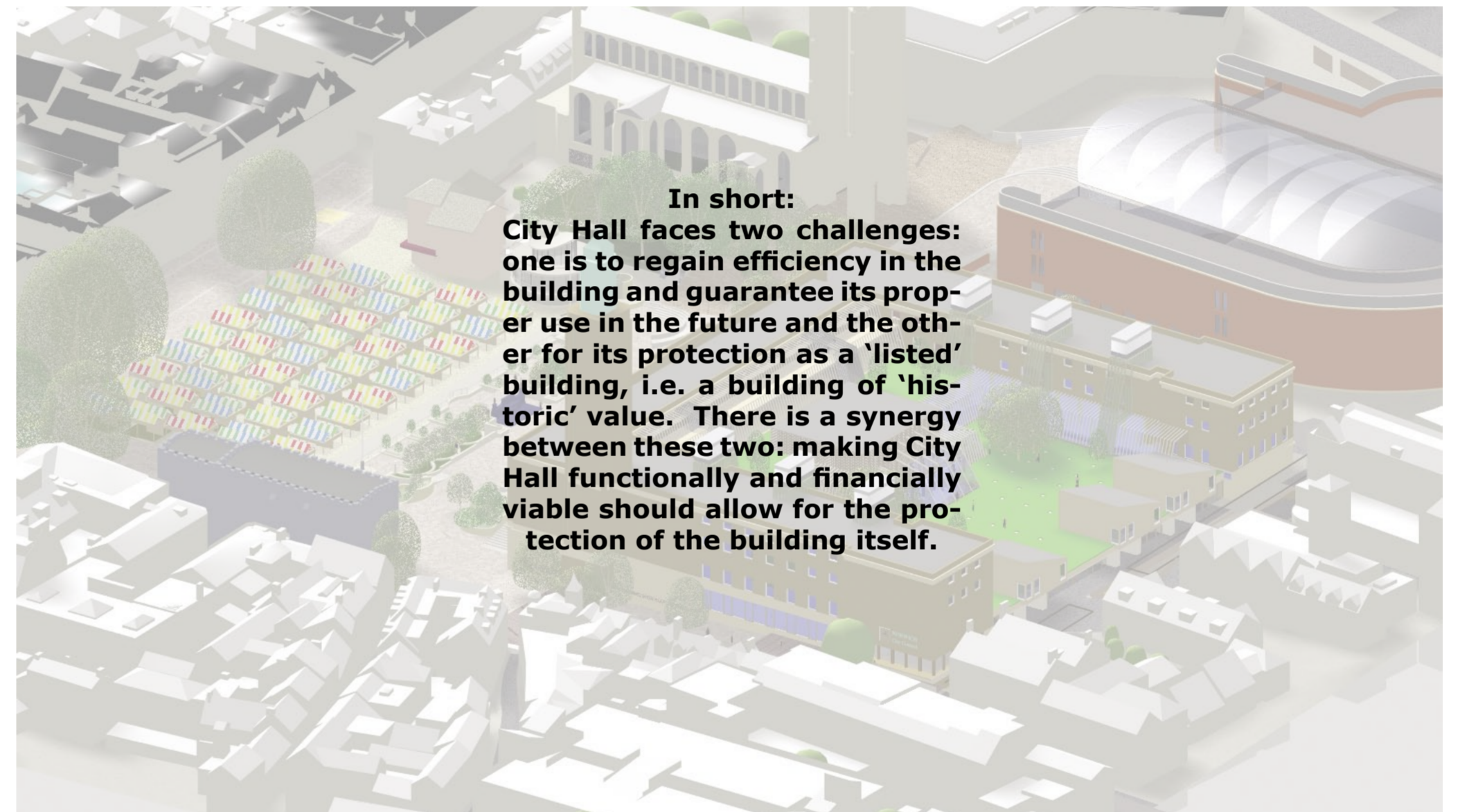
This second table shows that on a preliminary assessment the benefits or gains are something like double the costs. They will justify the investment necessary and upon completion start to give appreciable relief to budgets, even after allowing for the payment of interest and repayment of the capital expenditures involved.

In summary, this is all at a very early 'feasibility' stage. Figures have been deduced or borrowed; dimensions are based partly upon survey and partly upon scaling from prints and photographs. Assumptions have necessarily been made. Nonetheless the orders of magnitude and the differences are provocative and deserve testing with due rigour. It would appear to be worth twice as much as needs putting in and that for doing the lot - solving all the major problems and grasping all the opportunities.

The purpose of this exhibition is to open a public debate about the future of City Hall. We should have such a debate because a number of financial pressures are growing on this fine city centre building, on the council that runs it and on the area around it and these pressures will, sooner rather than later, require action. All cities face these pressures but they have choices about how to deal with them: they can see them as opportunities for long term civic renewal or crises requiring a 'quick fix'.

This exhibition explores the options for a civic makeover of City Hall and the space around it and argues that this building is more than sustainable as the heart of local government in Norwich.

Anecdote and rumour about the future of City Hall have gained some momentum for several practical reasons. Firstly, there is pressure within the City Council for unitary status and, even though there is pressure from the County Council and adjoining District Councils against this change the issue highlights a basic fact: City Hall in its current layout is too small an office for the present organization and could not accommodate any expansion. Secondly, City Hall has recently had its 'listing status' upgraded to '2 starred', meaning that standards of maintenance have to be raised even these are already cripplingly expensive. The main reasons for these high annual service costs are that the basic fabric of the building is in need of extensive renovation but also because the layout and logistics of the building have become increasingly out of date over so many years with changes in staff numbers and hi-tech advances that they now conspire to produce a hugely inefficient use of space; organisationally, environmentally and technologically.



The general proposition that follows is that CITY HALL should be seen as a vehicle for providing the holistic solution to its own financial problems: its own, as well as those of other nearby problem structures and spaces. By revitalizing City Hall as the centre of local government there is an opportunity to inject new civic energy into the city. Instead of viewing citizens as anonymous 'customers' – who might be served at commercial arms length by offices out of town – another typical 'quick fix' solution in many cities, our City Hall should exemplify a broader vision of government that seeks to strengthen the social, economic and political fabric of the city centre. By ensuring that government and citizens can continue to share the same central space in the city the proposals of this exhibition might reasonably be regarded as

'A CIVIC MAKEOVER'

'Civic' being shorthand for the City Hall and the adjoining buildings and spaces - the symbolic and practical heart of the city.

The key buildings involved are as follows: *City Hall, the Guildhall and the Market, St Peter Mancroft and the Forum* and the spaces between: namely, *Gaol Hill, the east end of St Giles Street, St Peter's Street and the east end of Bethel Street, Millennium Plain*. Together this area constitutes the epicentre of the city.

What's happening at the moment?

Private developers have seen the potential for adapting City Hall to commercial uses but so far this interest has encouraged the Council in its efforts to address rising costs but, as yet, prompted no clear answer as to how to resolve the Council's longer term problems of sustainable accommodation.

It is worth noting the thoughts that private developers have had about the area, because they highlight the tensions involved. A developer's proposal in 2005 led to a Report, (19 October 2005) by the City's Head of Property Services to the Executive. The report, inspired by the developers, considered the Council vacating City Hall for a new office building of 60,000 sq ft. to be constructed on the site at the rear: City Hall itself being taken over for adaptation as an hotel but, rather improbably, sharing with the Council in the use of the 'civic bits' of the Hall, namely the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms. The scope of this proposal did not extend to include the spaces and other equally dilapidated Council owned structures around it which include, on the west and south edges of the market, the Memorial Gardens and the Shops and Public Toilets.

The 2005 Report is striking in showing how developmental options were being defined around a private sector opportunity, rather than being conceived first and foremost in terms of long term Council and city interests and encompassing all Council responsibilities, i.e. with the Council developing a vision of its own sustainable future in the heart of the city. Private sector investment could be hugely beneficial, but the concept for the Council's future should be driven by the Council and the citizens it represents - hence this debate! Opportunistic private developments would leave the Memorial Gardens, for example, still in ill repair, even though they have the same potential as City Hall itself to be either a civic and financial liability to the city or a civic and financial asset.

As this 2005 proposal shows: private developers will, quite understandably, tend to seek to take over the key existing asset in any Council portfolio and, while this can provide a single cash injection with the sale of a major building, selling off assets without a longer term plan does nothing to resolve the long term developmental challenges facing the Council as both an actor for the City and as a key employer in the inner city economy.



EMPLOY THE FULL SITE by.....

- constructing a proper new 7.5metre street at the rear of City Hall that will permit the area between City Hall and the Memorial Gardens to be freed of all normal traffic whilst still, giving access to a modified parking basement.
- extending and modifying the building envelope of City Hall, principally at the sides and the rear: moving the 'business and public entrance to St Giles Street whilst leaving the colonnaded and impressive main entrance for ceremonial purposes: continuing with the present lower, ground and first floor uses for administration and members and converting the upper two storeys to residential use.
- reconstructing the Memorial Gardens to provide the long awaited re-siting of the War Memorial: changing the spaces under the garden to incorporate new toilets, needed sub-station, storage and administrative facility: extending the east wall, south and west as a plinth that incorporates improved market steps and a new building to replace the demolished old shop unit and toilets.
- carrying out other open space enhancements around City Hall to create 3 No. new, useable and useful spaces to add to Millennium Plain and to assert a wider pedestrian theme. The new spaces, as with Millennium Plain, should be appropriately terraced and planted to complement their adjoining buildings. The new spaces to could be known as St Peter's Plain, Bethel Plain and Guildhall

It seems important to keep people living as well as working in the centre of Norwich. With new and 'greened roofs' as outlook and with some parking in the basement, the 2nd and 3rd floors with their lower ceilings are more suitable as apartments than as offices.

CENTRE LIVING In a 'prime location'

Over a secluded garden

The present City Hall is vertically split - with two floors of offices above and two floors of offices below the 'civic' level - Council Chamber, Committees etc. This proposal is to maintain this 'ceremonial' level for the Council, the Lord Mayor and their needs and to confine the offices, mostly to the Ground Floor largely as a single level office.

The upper two levels, if kept as office, would continue to make for unnecessary vertical movement. The suggestion is that it is better that these levels should be dedicated to other purposes - perhaps attractive apartments?

With a wide and stimulating panorama over the centre of Norwich in all directions, this location, in a lightly trafficked part of the absolute centre of the city, could hardly be bettered as a residential location.

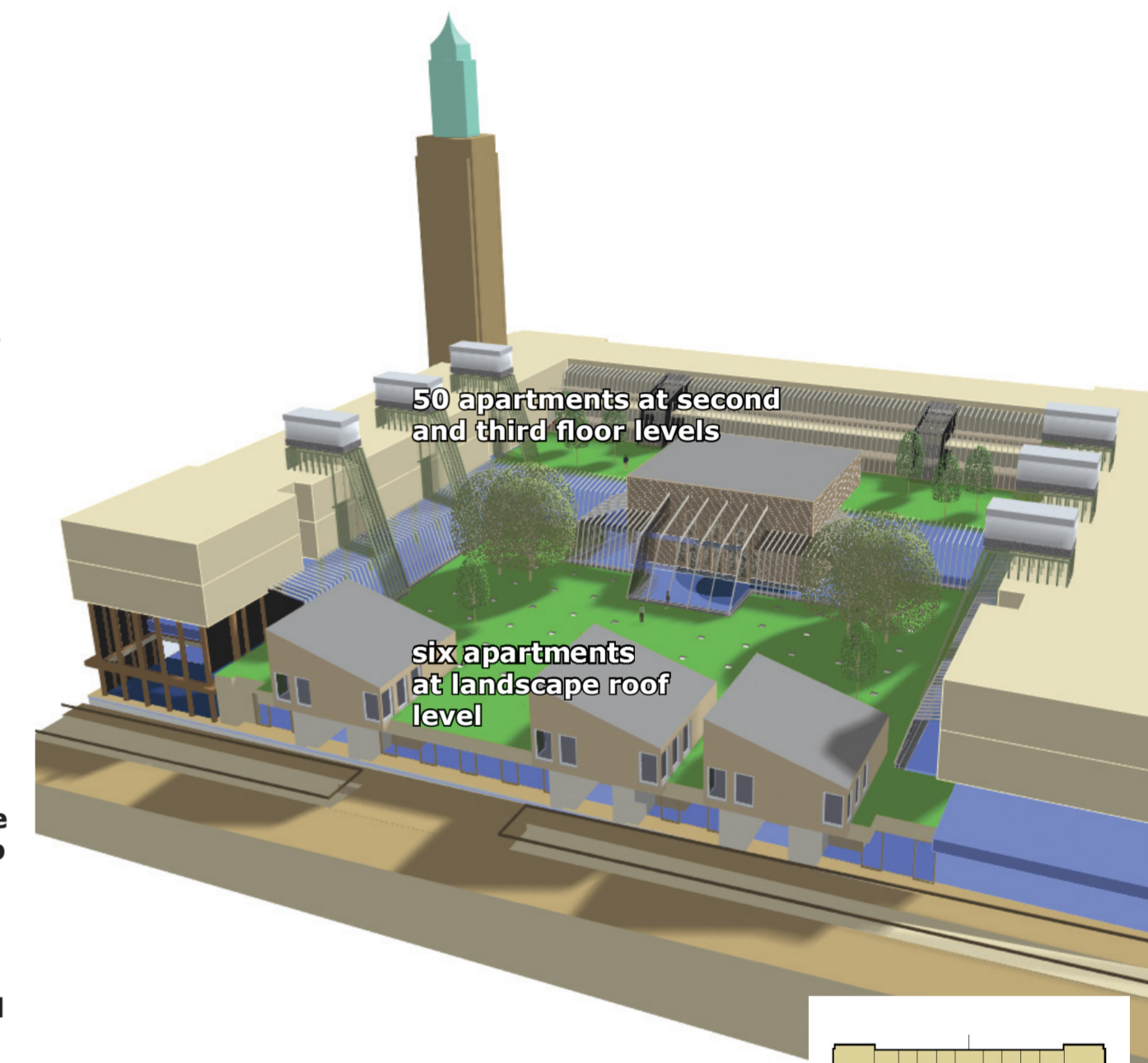
From the Council's point of view, if the levels are no longer required as offices, they can become a profitable site. These levels can be sold to help elsewhere in the scheme.

This proposal is to offer an opportunity for 50 apartments at these levels and to suggest a second small group of say, six apartments at a lower level on the western edge of the green.

The second and third floors of City Hall offer any developer an unusual but favourable opportunity in which to invest. A flying freehold/leasehold - that comes with a largely ready-built envelope. For the developer, no foundation or ground work would be required although some demolition, alteration and repair/ replacement of the main fabric is required - not cheap but within bounds.

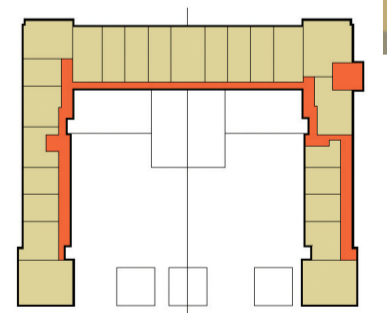
From the Council's point of view, once the upper storeys are disposed of, their maintenance goes with them for all time and is a further annual economy.

No alteration would be necessary to the main 'listed' elevations. The altered rear elevations and the extensions of the side elevations should be designed to harmonise with the existing. They result in a completion of the original intentions of the design.

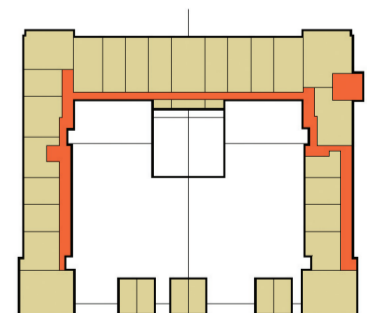


The two upper storeys, (the present 2nd and 3rd floors) - as apartments overlooking a roof garden

third floor



second floor



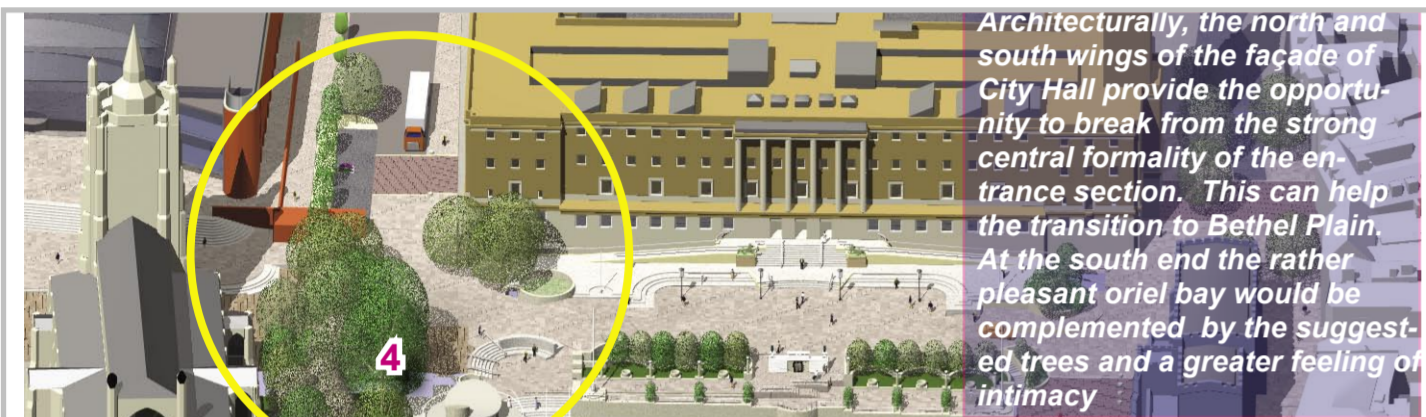
56 mostly 'top of the market' apartments are proposed as an example, many of these enjoying almost 'pent-house' locations. The majority of the 50 apartments in the main building would have two of the front, (east) facade windows and could have a conservatory or balcony at the rear. In floor area they would range between 770 and 1,800 sq ft. A splendid place to live - quiet and overlooking the new public hanging garden.

The intended final result, (of the proposals set out in the paper 'A Study Re-visited') is a sequence of spaces, each with its own defined entrance and exit, purpose, character and identity. Of these Bethel Plain is perhaps the greater innovation

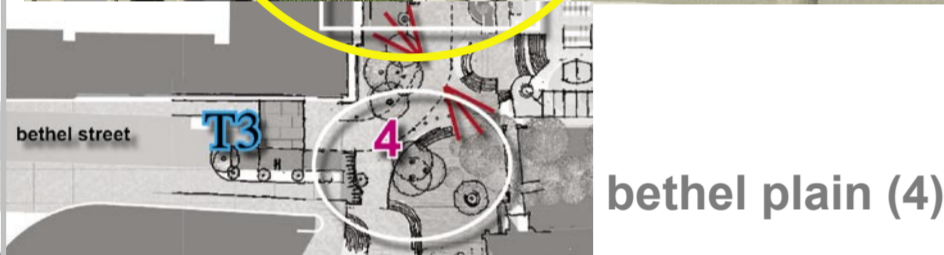
CITY HALL & CIVIC SPACE

the Market's edge St Peter Mancroft and the Memorial Gardens

Synergies and opportunities



Architecturally, the north and south wings of the façade of City Hall provide the opportunity to break from the strong central formality of the entrance section. This can help the transition to Bethel Plain. At the south end the rather pleasant oriel bay would be complemented by the suggested trees and a greater feeling of intimacy



bethel plain (4)

This area is nowhere at present: it is the draughty corner of Bethel & St Peter's Street - an over-wide 'road' really, not even a 'street'!. Fortunately there is space, - and enough of this to resolve it into this 'plain' that could yet be.

For the pedestrian it is the true threshold as you move from Market to Millennium Plain and Market to St Peter's Plain. To service this I have suggested an easing and an extension of the existing south end market steps. These are developed in matching stone, to remain compositionally, as part of the gardens.

Features illustrated in this 'aspiration' include:

A small grove of trees to soften the SE corner of City Hall as part of the transition to St Peter's Plain - this faces south and east and could have a seat or two for the weary.

A couple of light trees in the foreground of the view from the steps across to the Forum

A public lift adjoining the remodelled steps to give access to Bethel Plain but also to the Memorial Gardens level.

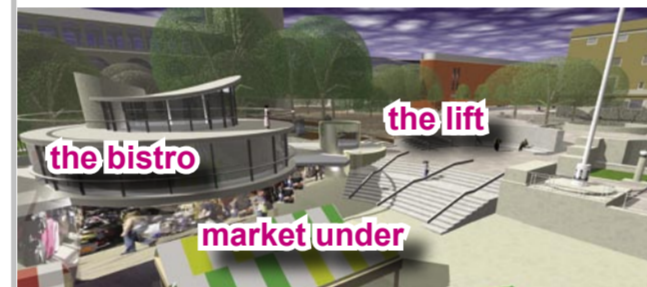
A covered store for bicycles, or wall or some such object to close the visual gap between Forum and City Hall a little. It helps the scene to pull an extension of the Forum plinth across the road and perhaps serve to screen motor cycles behind. Places to sit under the trees as you cross this Plain. A place to trade perhaps if only ice cream - anyway, not just a left-over transitional space but somewhere pleasing to be!



Bethel Plain is a space largely rescued from land 'left-over' from past highway allocation. Ideally this Plain should also incorporate the NW element of the churchyard and thus allow the tower of St Peter Mancroft to participate in Millennium Plain in a better way. No doubt this latter suggestion is controversial but it gives the church seem to want to glaze the base of their tower as the answer to a security problem and to provide an attractive new entrance and exhibition space.

Gather all the useable space together and place the trafficked route on the City Hall side of the present carriageway and a splendid new place is created. Screen it from the North. Sculpt it and shape it as an extension of the levels of Millennium Plain, using the blend to create a seating wall and you have another arena for a fresco entertainment.

Add trees for screening and shade - two 'groves' are suggested - to complement City Hall with its pretty oriel bay at its South end and to assist in the architectural transition to the Forum. Find seats in the sun and the shade and you have a splendid new facility. This space should not be allowed to dissipate and fragment. Pause could be encouraged in this corner - a good sunny spot to rest.



Two further illustrations from 'a study revisited'



None of the proposed changes will compromise the familiar public character of City Hall in the city centre. This important listed building will continue to speak as the complement at the west end to Norwich Castle at the east.

CITY HALL NEEDS TO CHANGE

why?

The offices of City Hall are obsolescent .

City Hall is woefully unsuited to a modern office purpose.

Its 'net to gross', (area) is about 30%. This means that only about a third of the total area is available as useful office: conversely, the remaining 70% of the total has to be heated, cleaned, lit etc, just the same! Quite the wrong way round. This causes the money spent thus to be wasted in similar proportion - in excess of £500,000 per annum!

City Hall is very inflexible in its provision of offices.

Comprising, at present, many small rooms built as 'permanent' structures - these are difficult to combine and of an unsatisfactory shape even where this has been done - militating against accommodating larger teams that need larger spaces and flexible combinations.

City Hall is very inflexible as an organisational space.

The fact that most office space is on the floors above and below the first floor Council Chamber and Committee Rooms, cuts the existing office space into very separate upper and lower parts.

City Hall is very inflexible in technological terms.

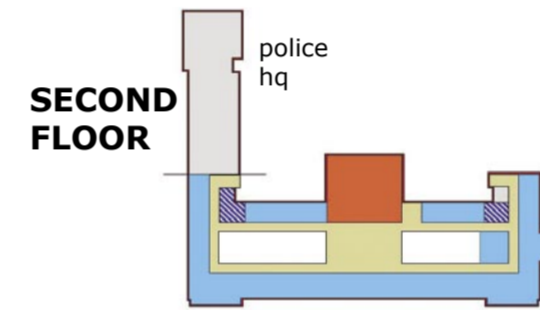
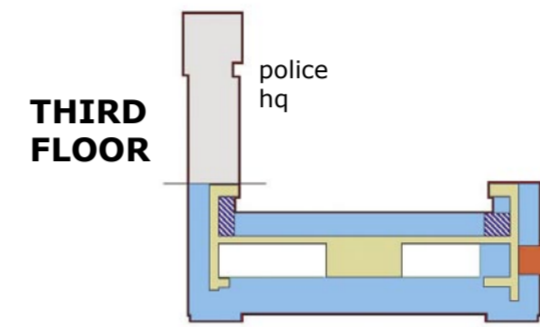
Modern offices use modern technology. Spreading an office over a number of floors and then dividing those floors into rigid compartments makes serious changes in IT and other services difficult, delaying and taking longer to implement and expensive - especially so if there has been no initial provision for proper ducts or service ways.

City Hall is not green.

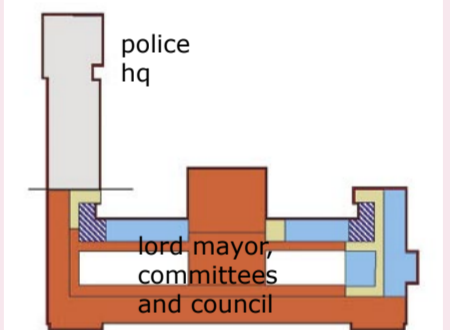
The long exposed perimeter of outside walls adds to the other serious inefficiency of the large 'gross' area: the overall plan shape is narrow, with extended wings - quite unsuitable as an exemplar to be offering to the constituents!

City Hall is not friendly.

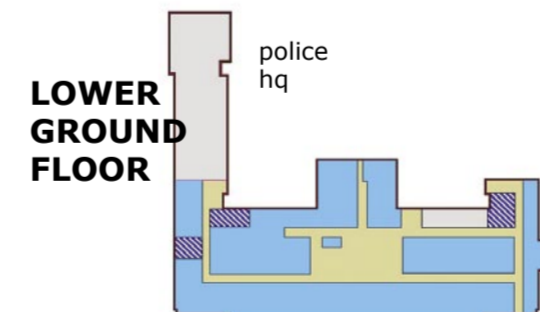
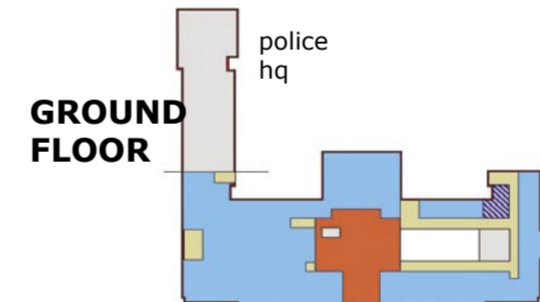
City Hall is not friendly to staff or public. Inside the ambience is a prevailing one of 'make do', dominated by unfriendly reception arrangements and far too much interior corridor. The main entrance is inaccessible to the handicapped and not especially ideal even for a civic occasion, with too many steps that are too small and too steep.



upper offices



FIRST FLOOR



lower offices



The Council Chamber, Lord Mayor's Parlour and the like, (the 'non-office parts') are in no great need of change and are all retained in these proposals. They contain fine and interesting craftsmanship and are probably the strongest interior reason that justifies the listing of the building.

New single storey space in the rear yard permits the development of one principal level of office to satisfy most of present needs. The extended level would be square in shape - ideal for more open, flexible spaces and offering a perimeter of 'cellular' spaces for small offices

CITY HALL RE PLANNED

a new office plan

The key: new City Hall operating as mainly a ground floor space

An important first move in modernising the office is to reduce the number of floors used for this purpose - **concentrating the majority of the office space at a single level - the entrance level.** This way it could allow for flexibility and communication: Lifts and stair use will be kept to a minimum and the free circulation of people and all technical services will be enabled.

Ground Floor - the principal level.

At the rear of City Hall, the existing perimeter brickwork and many of the partitions should be demolished. The floor thus exposed would be made good and extended west, over the whole of the area at present occupied by the old car park and yard.

This will allow a **single extended floor of approx 6,700 square metres gross area - rather more than the area provided by all five existing levels!**

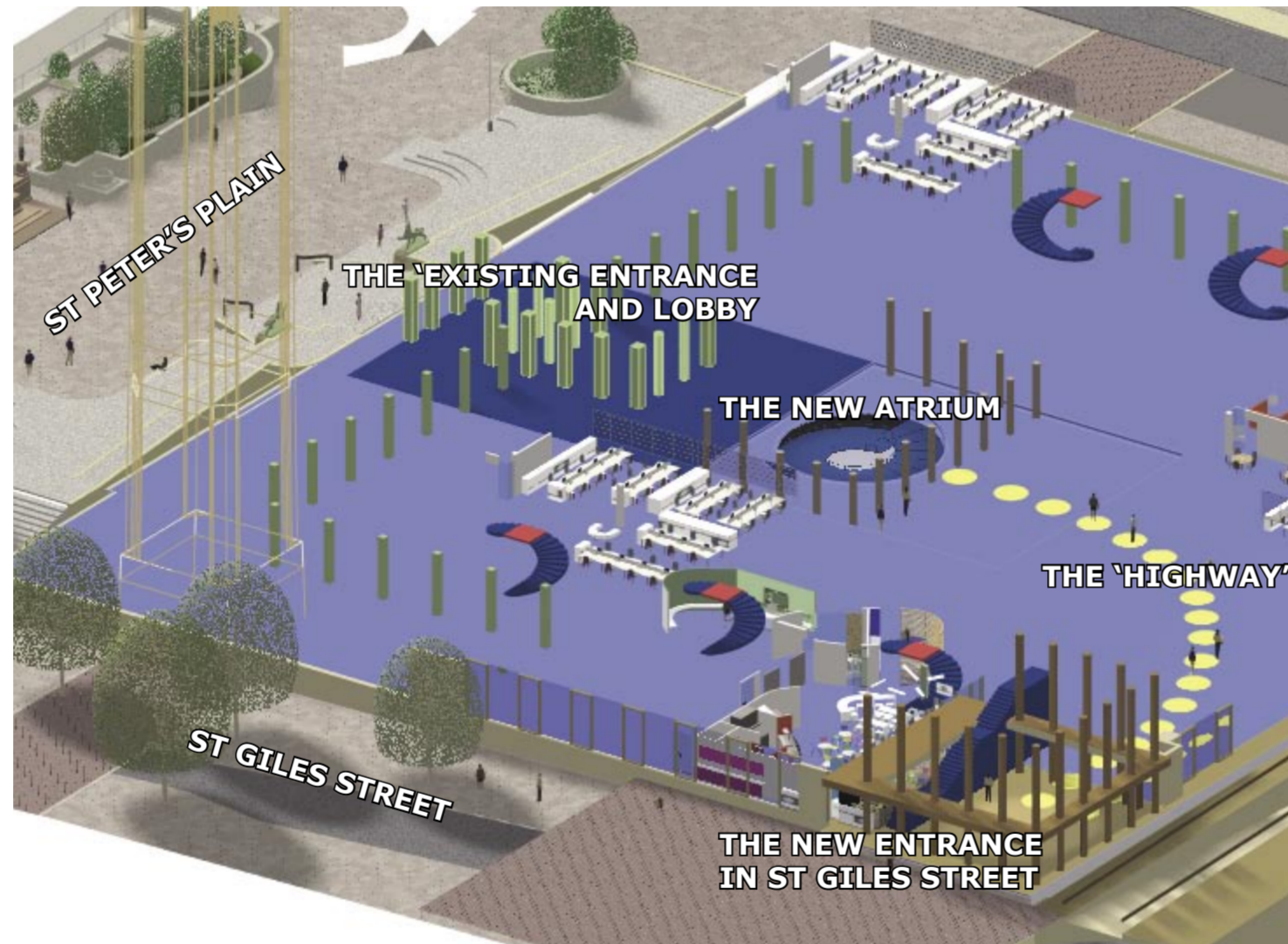
If the greater efficiency of a deeper floor plate is taken into account, (unlikely to be less than 80%) the improvement in available and useful floor area is more dramatic. **This single level would absorb staff now at St Giles House and St John Maddermarket - leaving a surplus, not a deficit as at present, when measured against present needs.**

The new floor plan will create great flexibility for distributing and changing services and can provide easily for the need to furnish for changing layouts. **This floor level is close to ground at three of its four edges, so street access is easy to provide where wanted.**

For example, the new main public and business access is sited at the NW corner in St Giles Street. At street level, opposite a convenient public car park, friendly in feel and well related to taxi and bus services, such an entrance will add a further welcome measure of support to this commercial street.

Through the new entrance might be provided an internal 'street': a sort of 'reception Broadway' for all departments of principal public contact, leading to a central atrium or node. Alternatively, some kind of reception 'arena' - a 'one zone to serve all' of some size, with maybe cash kept a bit separate - as at the South Norfolk DC offices. Reception arrangements, interview carrels, rooms etc. as required, would be arranged close to these situations.

The ground floor when extended to a useful square plan, will provide on a single level, all the office space needed at present. A link 'spine' or 'highway' will connect the formal and the informal entrances via an atrium: little need for day to day use of lifts or stairs.



The new main entrance, which is at street level, would be of a friendly and approachable scale.

The grand, present main entrance, would be reserved for ceremonial and formal uses - for which it is ideally suited: even this would become easier to use and more accessible if the ideas for St Peters Plain are properly carried forward at the same time.

Continuing these extracts from the June 2006 paper, 'A Study Re-visited', Bethel Plain, created out of the large and draughty corner of Bethel Street would be a useful and attractive addition to the City's short repertoire of places where things can happen.

CITY HALL & CIVIC SPACE

Bethel Plain as an extension of Millennium Plain & Market

A place for trade & promenade

These pages extracted from the report of June 2006 illustrate how useful space can be generated out of SLOAP - space left over after planning.

Bethel Plain could work in conjunction with Millennium Plain to provide more flexibility when the latter is engaged in longer term attractions such as ice rinks and the like. This often occurs at times of the year when there is genuine pressure on such spaces for other equally seasonal events.



Continuing with *edited and supplemented quotations* from earlier proposals made by the author in 2005/2006, in two documents, "City Hall & Environs" and "A Study Re-visited". The full texts are available on the web at www.cityhallmakeover.net

CITY HALL & CIVIC SPACE

St Peter's Plain and better approaches to City Hall

Spaces that complement the buildings and that are useful

None of the proposed changes will compromise the familiar public character of City Hall in the city centre. This important listed building will continue to speak as the complement at the west end to Norwich Castle at the east.

CITY HALL A LEVEL UP & A LEVEL DOWN

amenity at the first floor: archive in the basement

a level up for member contact and a level down for archive etc

st peter's plain (3)

St Peter's Plain (3) should aspire to the status of a place with a name and its own, strong, identity - not to remain for all time as a modified St Peter's Street. It should be a 'Plain' such as Millennium Plain: to be 'entered and left', one in which to 'assemble': for City Hall ceremonial - formal and informal - meeting and greeting visitors and our democratically elect: for opening ceremonies, 'switchings on' and royal visits.

City Hall, a fine building, is a bit over-bearing, a bit of a 'big brother'. The main entrance steps, too steep and too many, are especially intimidating and even a mite dangerous for distracted dignitaries.

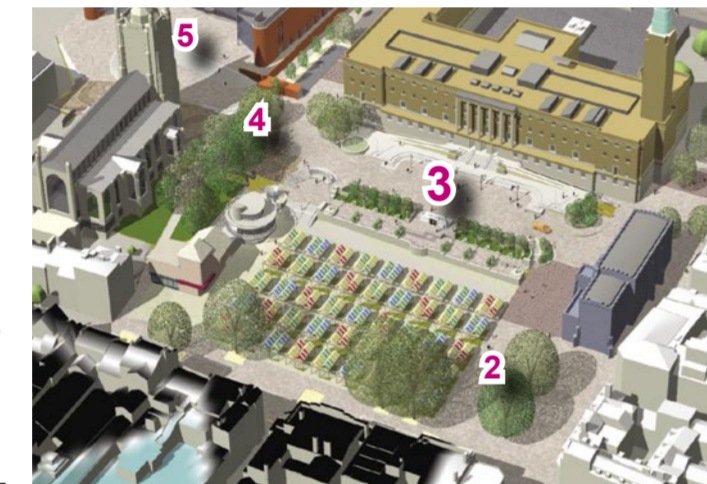
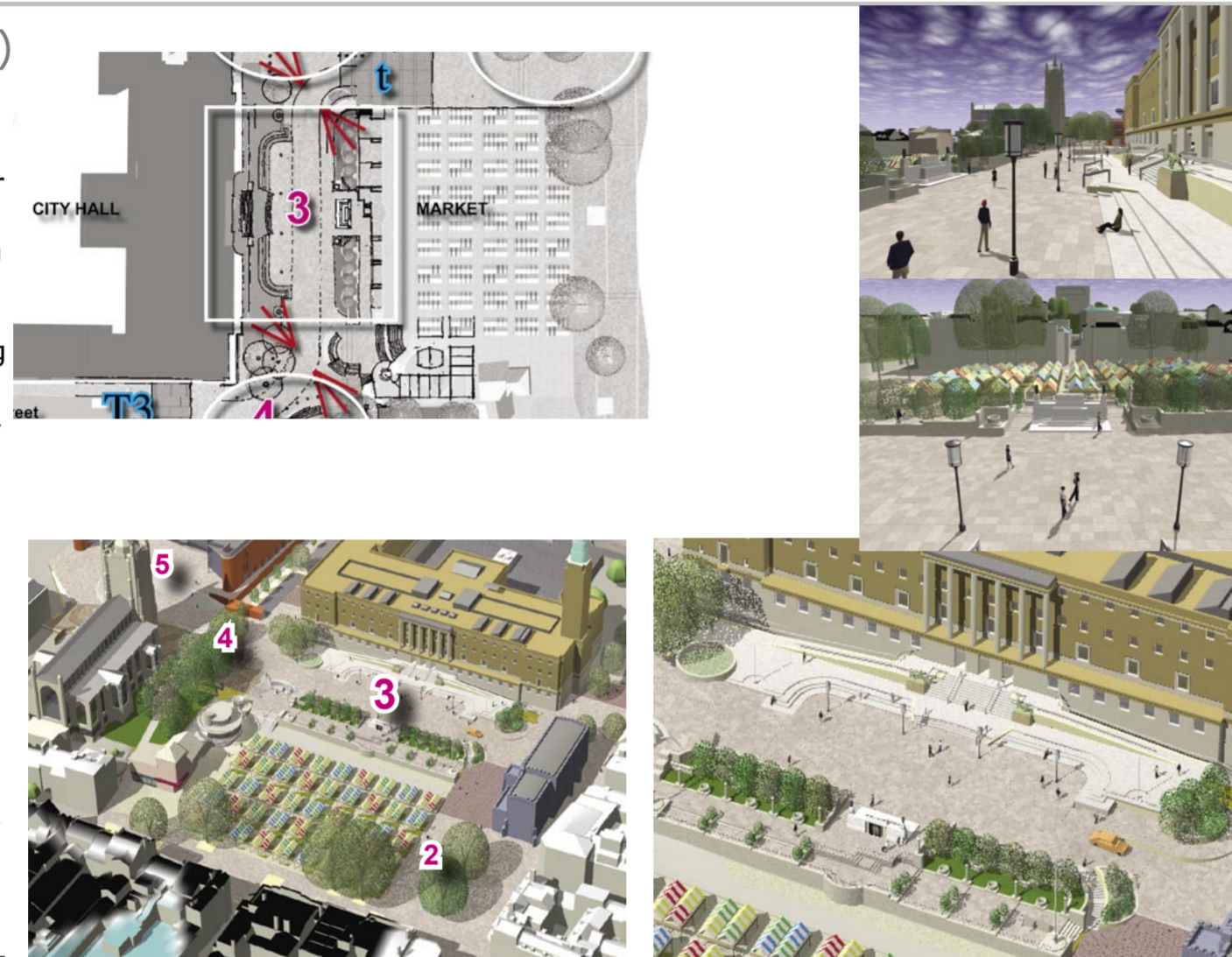
A local and small modification of the cross fall to a forward fall only, for the width in front of steps and lions, will require a couple of steps less. A redefinition of the adjoining pavement to move a couple of steps forward and suggest 'arena', will provide a base for the dignitaries and, on occasion, a viewing platform for others.

If traffic is constrained to the line of the lower half of the existing carriageway, the maximum pedestrian zone is left in front of City Hall for normal use. If this is decided too late for the current exercise, it should be built in to future change. Placing the traffic as far away from City Hall as possible also avoids the need to drown the front in street lighting and allows the present bronze smaller scale fittings to be re-used.

The small existing flagstaffs can be used to better effect if there is space to bring them forward.

Whilst preserving the open basement, one good placing for wheelchair access to the main entrance of City Hall is by a single, or as shown, a pair of ramps to rise on the line of the present flower beds, for very easy access. Architecturally, this is an improvement in the visual 'location' for the entrance and helps to 'ground' the building.

Respecting the line of the Memorial Gardens to frame a raised and reversed war memorial gives most appropriate 'presence' to the memorial within St Peter's Plain and allows the maximum space for a parade.

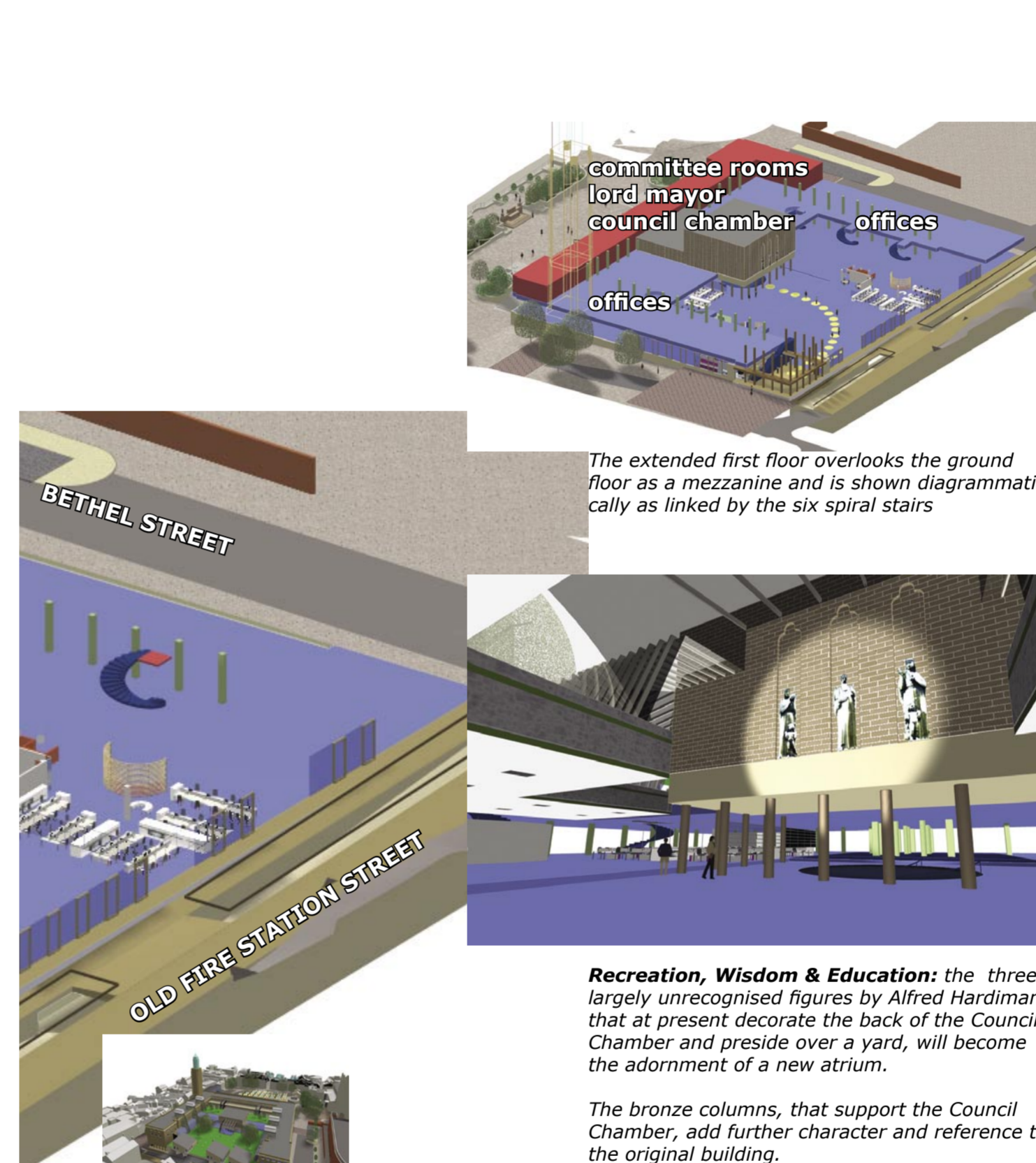


The raised and reversed war memorial should not intrude into St Peter's Plain - to respect the line of the present retaining wall is best for the Memorial Gardens and for St Peter's Plain



".....meeting and greeting visitors and our democratically elect....."

Quotations from the paper, "A Study Re-visited" dated June 2006

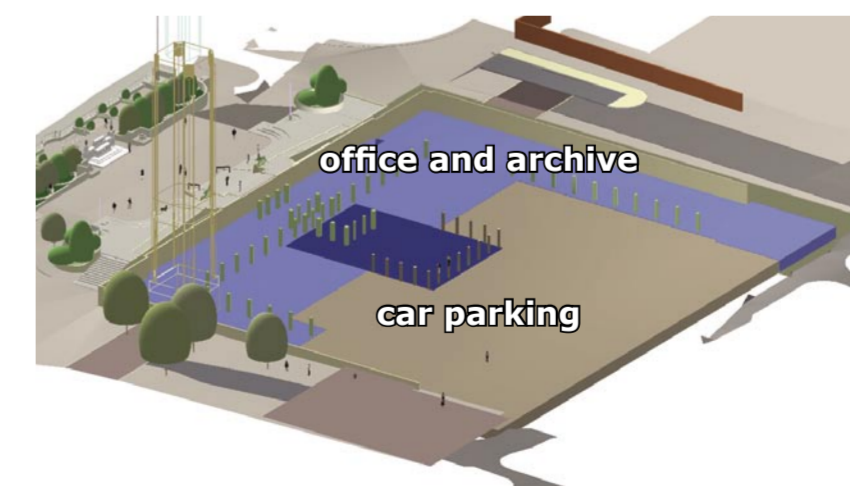


The extended first floor overlooks the ground floor as a mezzanine and is shown diagrammatically as linked by the six spiral stairs

Recreation, Wisdom & Education: the three largely unrecognised figures by Alfred Hardiman that at present decorate the back of the Council Chamber and preside over a yard, will become the adornment of a new atrium.

The bronze columns, that support the Council Chamber, add further character and reference to the original building.

A green roof covers the new space - a large part of the total office and brings its own benefits



The basement will continue to provide some element of office, archive and back up facilities. There is space for about 100 cars.

First Floor - the mezzanine level
The existing 'civic suite', comprising Council Chamber, Committee Rooms, Lord Mayor's suite etc would be retained. Many of the remaining internal walls would be demolished, as would elements of the three external enclosing walls, overlooking the rear yard.

At this level, perimeter glazing, as with Castle Mall, will overlook the roof garden above the ground floor office. Much of this extensive glazing will be shielded from direct sun and will thus provide daylight and view, without excessive solar gains.

The broad result of these changes internally, is a mezzanine offering further office floor space in addition to the retained 'civic' areas - Council Chamber etc. With the ground floor, this would create an open and airy, two level, office of modern and attractive proportions.

Lower Ground Floor - part basement and part ground level, (it coincides with the pavement in the NE corner). This level can provide much useful storage and archive facility, as well as some useful office. It could also provide parking for about 100 cars. **Some spaces could be associated with the residential accommodation over, and perhaps some office parking for areas to be sub-let in the medium term.**

A basic step towards a more energy efficient building is the square shape and perimeter around the new principal office at ground floor level. A large reduction in the area of exposed perimeter wall will be the result and all of it at the more sheltered lower levels.

CITY HALL A GREEN BUILDING

a move towards a carbon zero sum

A lead and a virtuous example for citizens

A well insulated and planted 'green', landscaped roof of heavy construction is proposed as a covering for the new element of the extensive Ground Floor. The precedent of Cas-



tle Mall, Norwich, shows how a roof can become a garden and provide massive insulation and thermal stability, and still look naturally well.

The dimensions of the total green space are usefully large - some 60 x 45 metres over the split levels - quite big enough to add a convincing 'green' to the centre in a very effective location. Inclined glazing, mostly shielded from direct sun, would make a perimeter giving much good daylight and ambience to the mezzanine and to the large office space below.

This new cross-section and the open well plan suggest some of the energy efficiency principles employed at the new Sellic Library, University of Edinburgh. Natural ventilation would be provided by peripheral wind structures, avoiding the need for mechanical interventions.

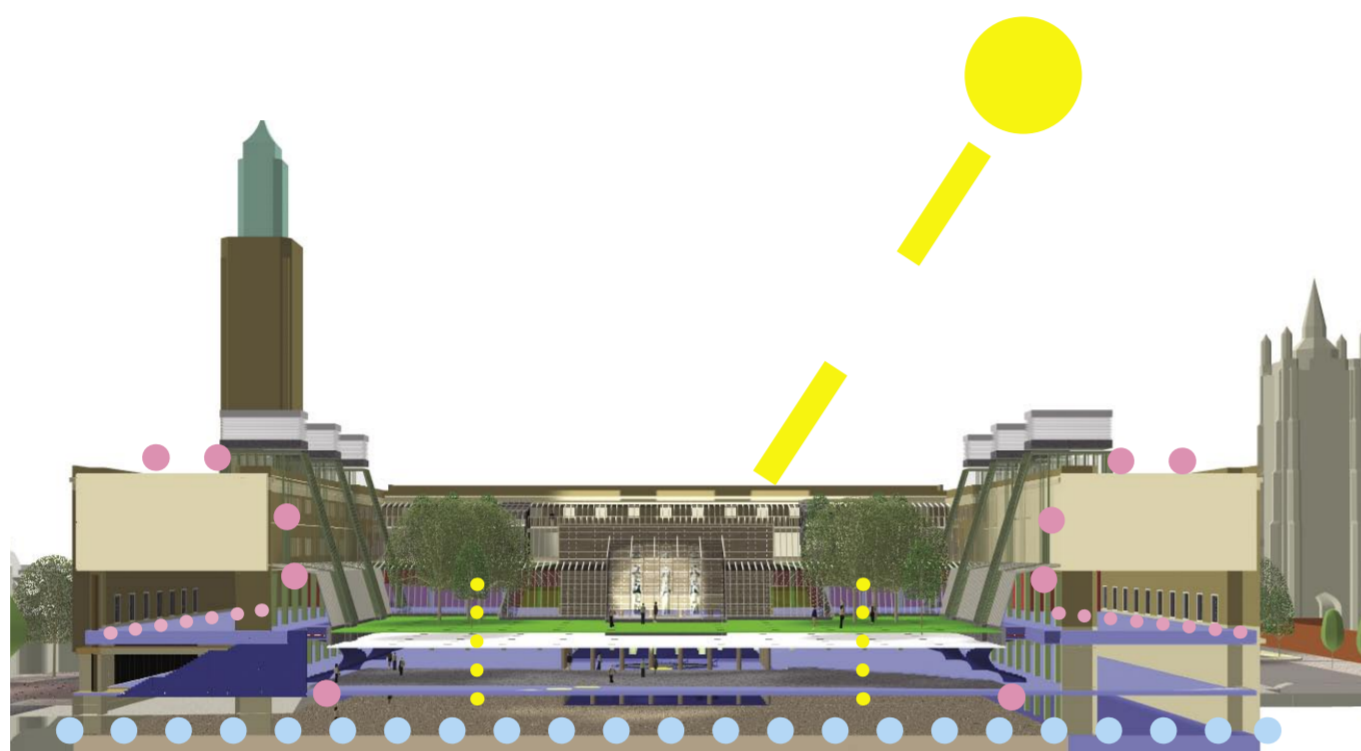
A roof of high thermal mass, especially if used with the wind towers to cool the building overnight, would add further economy and comfort. This arrangement represents an advance on the similar principle that was employed by



Michael Innes in the design of the South Norfolk District Council Offices at Long Stratton in the early '70's.

A combination of perimeter glazing and roof lights and perhaps even sun pipes, could provide daylight over a large part of the main office area, for many of the working hours of the day.

Daylight would give way at other times to phased-in background lighting, supplemented by task lighting. The orientation of much of the glazing suggested is pretty optimal for a high level of comfort and without a great need for elaborate shading mechanisms.



Principles of natural ventilation, daylight admission, the use of overnight 'free' cooling in warm weather and the like, would be enabled in a building of this form.



Notes and illustrations relating to *the spaces are edited and supplemented quotations* from earlier proposals made by Michael Innes in 2005/2006, in two documents, "City Hall & Environs" and "A Study Re-visited". The full texts are available on the web at www.cityhallmakeover.net

When defining any policy for design it is relatively easy to get agreement to words. Much more difficult is achieve the same unanimity as the images start to emerge. Most designers will tell you that to produce almost any answer quickly is the way to arrive a meaningful brief! This is why the Study defines the suggested principles but shows them as they might be applied.

CITY HALL & CIVIC SPACE

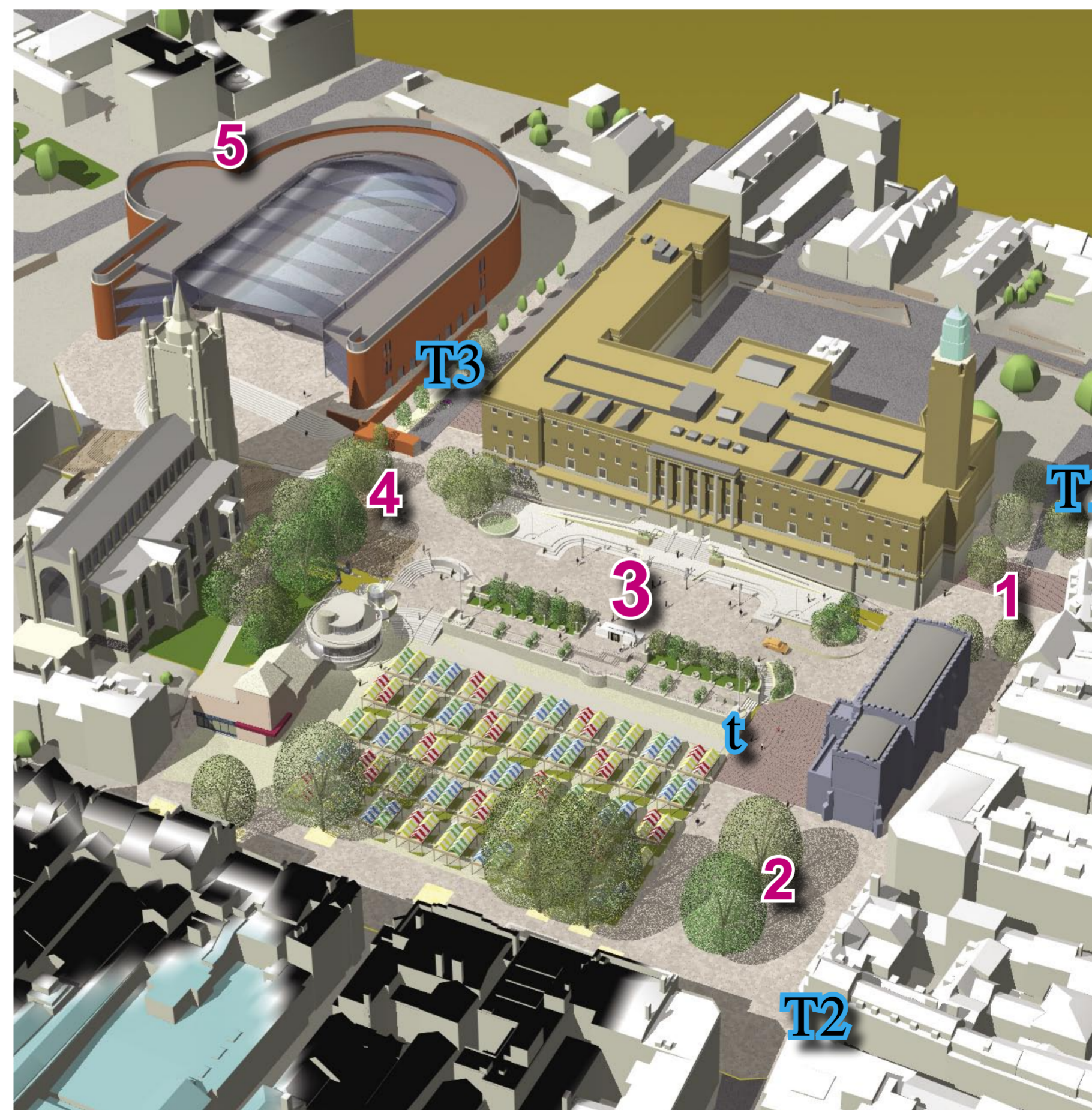
St Peter's Plain and better approaches to City Hall

A sequence of linked spaces that interact with each other and which relate to the buildings they adjoin

The spaces are as important as the buildings. Millennium Plain is popular and is occupied by visiting attractions often enough to deny it as a general space for gathering. Nothing wrong with this, except that its not big enough and when so occupied is a clutter. Add Bethel Plain and there will be more scope. Make the space in front of City Hall into a proper place, as can be done with the traffic out and you have a place for a parade as well - may be even enough between them, on occasion, to pull the fair back into town! Improved highways do not make public spaces - they have to be kept simple, empty and unpretentious so that activity can win!

Five spaces have been defined. They have been numbered on the key diagram and will be referred to as 'Plains' for discussion purposes. One of them, Millennium Plain, (numbered 5) already exists and is well established in front of the Forum - a great success in social terms, whatever your view of the architecture!

Spaces numbered 1&2 at present exist as elements of St Giles Street, Gaol Hill and Guildhall Hill. These will be referred to, as they were in the earlier Study, as the Upper and Lower Guildhall Plains. The space numbered 3, the principal new space in front of City Hall is at present St Peter's Street. Space No 4 would be made out of the corner of Bethel Street and St Peter's Street.



The intended final result is a sequence of spaces, each with its own defined entrance and exit, purpose, character and identity. Each space should be furnished to complement the buildings and monuments surrounding it - particularly in respect of their scale, function and architecture.

Spaces numbered 1 to 4 are entered and exited across three small zones designated as 'thresholds' (T1, T2, T3). It is hoped that eventually these may describe the limits of a mainly pedestrianised zone. T1 is sited to correspond with the tower of City Hall and T3 with the SE corner entrance to City Hall. T2 relates to Jarrolds' corner. The zone labelled 't' marks the change between Lower and Upper Guildhall Plain and complements components of the south elevation of the Guildhall. Each threshold thus corresponds to an architectural feature.

The entrance and exits to St Peter's Plain should be defined by a visual squeeze or constraint - partly to discourage pedestrians from crossing at the corners and partly to make traffic aware of the change.