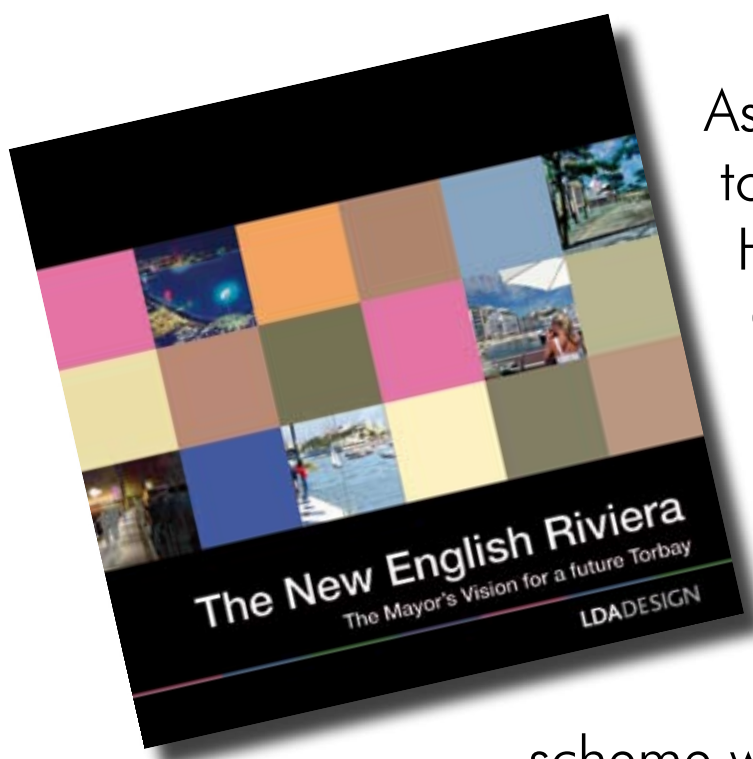


# Background

Torbay Council currently operates out of 17 administrative buildings spread around Torbay. However, an assessment, carried out in 2008, identified the potential efficiency savings and improvements to service delivery that could result from relocating all council staff into one, shared location. This location should be central, help services to be accessible and create a building that is capable of use by the wider community when not in use as an office.



# Civic Hub



As a result many different options were considered, and the most suitable location was deemed to be the existing Torquay Town Hall site. Over the past 12 months, a Civic and Community Hub project has been developed to incorporate the Town Hall site and Electric House into a Civic Hub with centralised services, community facilities, a business centre and improved office accommodation. The central location is as relevant now as it was when the Town Hall was completed nearly 100 years ago.

The £23million proposals, form part of the council's Mayoral Vision, and aims to help create an organisation that is fit, fast and flexible by incorporating all staff under one roof, or within very close proximity which will include Tor Hill House. It is also envisaged that the scheme will save the council around £30million over 25 years and deliver improved services.

# Community hub

A fundamental part of the proposals also include the provision of a new community Hub within the Assembly Hall and a Business Centre for community and corporate use.

The Assembly Hall is currently under-utilised and costs the council more to maintain than it generates in income from being hired out and it is not suitable for many events due to lack of facilities and poor acoustics.

This part of the town centre is generally quiet in the evenings, even during the summer months, with the majority of visitors choosing the harbourside area for their entertainment, visiting bars, restaurants and nightclubs. Leisure activities are generally served from the harbour area and the Town Hall area of town is often quiet, underused and as a result does not feel a secure, attractive environment in the evenings.

Plans for the Town Hall are well underway and the council is now keen to gather residents' views on what they would like to see within the community aspect of the project including the Assembly Hall.



# The current situation

Torbay Council's Civic and Community Hub project team have been working with architects from Stride Treglown in Bristol, as well as relevant council departments, to produce a range of exciting proposals for the Assembly Hall to realise its potential as a community asset.

The project team has also had input from experts in the conference and entertainment industry to discuss how the Hall would need to be improved in order to facilitate big events.

Proposed options for the refurbishment of the Hall have also been discussed with key stakeholders to ensure that they are fully involved in the process.

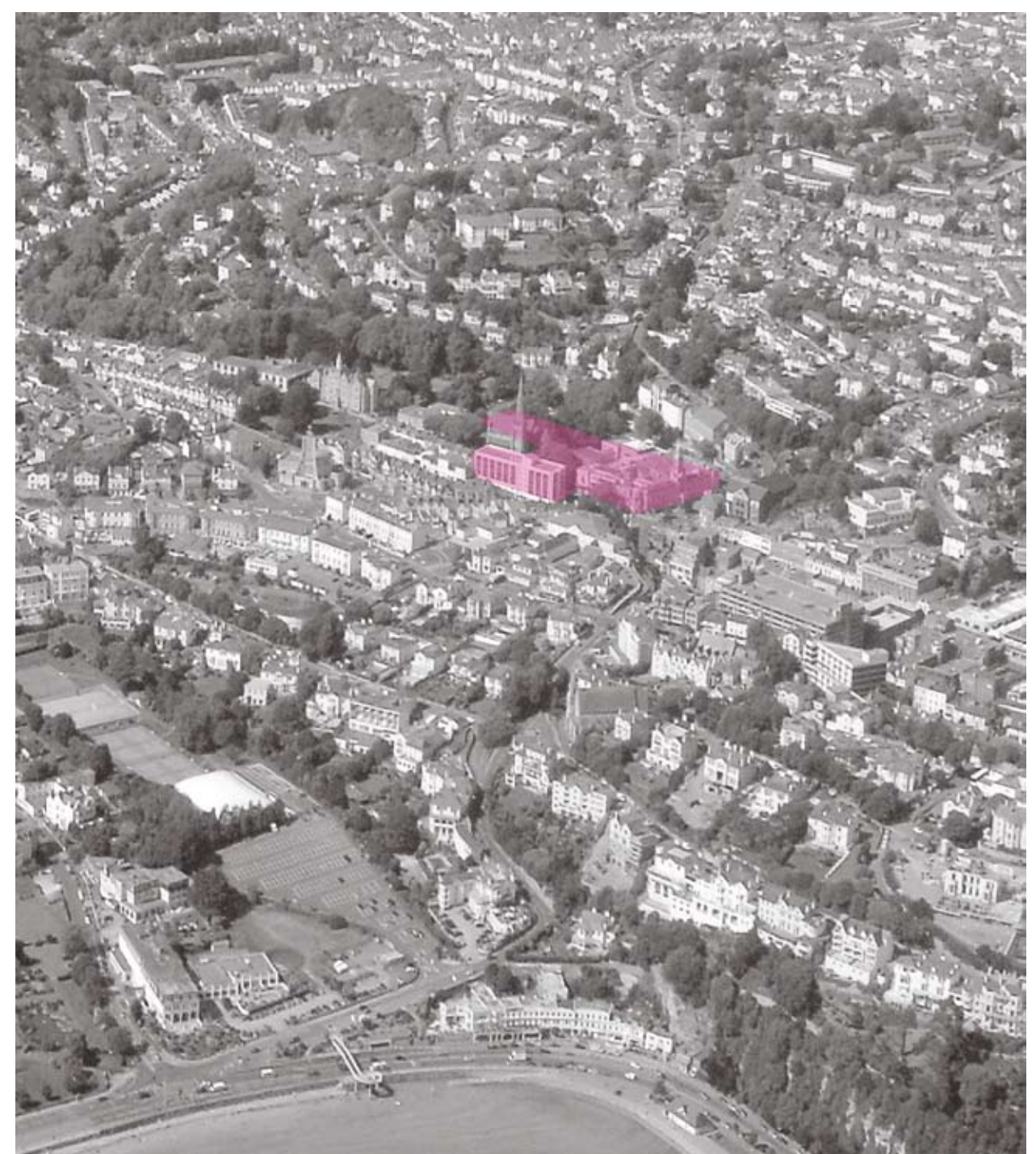
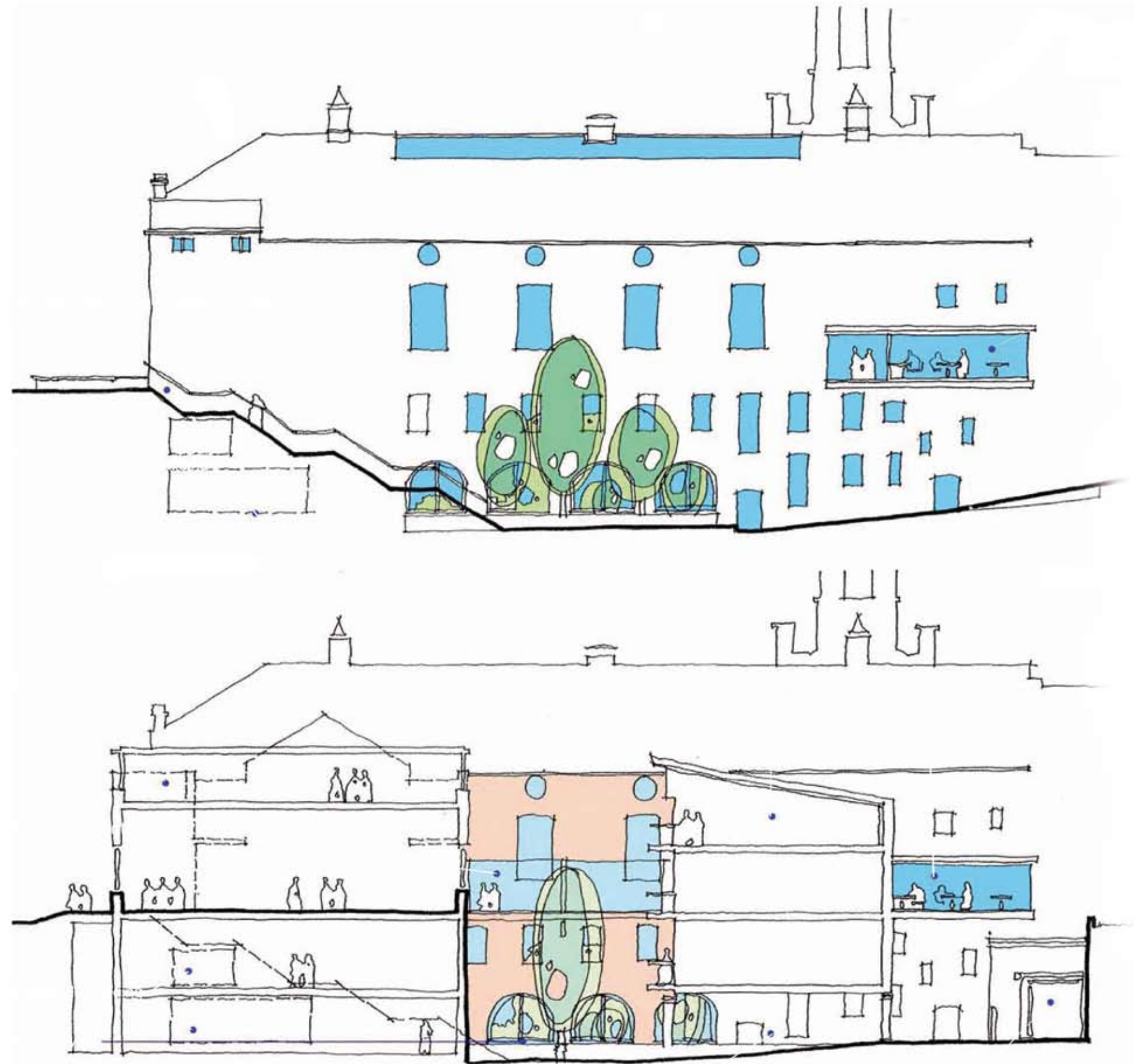
In November and December 2008, preliminary consultation was carried out with members of the public to discuss the 'Community Hub' element of the project, with the specific aim of generating ideas for uses of the Assembly Hall.

Many good ideas were generated by the consultation with noticeable themes occurring. The main ideas that were generated included the following:

- multi-functional venue
- conferences/meetings
- concerts
- keep current use but better marketing
- use partitions to create flexible rooms

Using the ideas generated by initial consultation, 3 different ideas were developed, all of which were deemed to be equally suitable but offering slightly different benefits. This does not mean that other more radical options cannot be considered and appraised, all ideas are welcomed.

The following boards outline these proposals and offer local residents and businesses the opportunity to have their say.



It is the intention in all three options to open up the glazed lanterns to let daylight into the Assembly Hall and return the interior to its bright former glory (originally it had green walls and a white ceiling). With the use of a simple motorised black-out facility to these glazed lanterns, a flexible performance space will be created.

Under the existing balcony, a small kitchen and a bar are proposed to be able to cater for all types of events.

# Option one

Option 1 retains the status quo of uses for the Assembly Hall:

- Performances
- Flea market
- Badminton
- Exhibitions
- With the addition of the council chamber and public seating as well as large conference use.

By addressing the acoustic problems that exist, by treatment of surfaces and the installation of acoustic devices within the space, the opportunities for better use of the hall for performances would be enhanced.

The acoustic installations could also be used to control the scale/volume of the council chamber environment and public seating area.

In addition, performance lighting and sound systems could be installed to suit the hall's new uses.

Moveable, flexible screens at floor level could be used to divide these spaces.



|   |                |  |              |
|---|----------------|--|--------------|
| <b>Stride Treglown</b>  |                | PROJECT<br>CIVIC AND COMMUNITY HUB, TORBAY   |              |
| Promenade House, The Promenade, Colton Down, Bristol BS20 3JH<br>T 0117 914 9271 F 0117 914 9207 E <a href="mailto:enquiries@stridetreglown.co.uk">enquiries@stridetreglown.co.uk</a><br>www.stridetreglown.co.uk |                | DRAWING TITLE<br>CGI ASSEMBLY HALL, OPTION 1 |              |
| SCALE<br>NTS  | DATE<br>JAN 09 | DRAWN<br>RT                                  | CHECK<br>GVM |
| DRAWING NUMBER<br>14530_SK169   |                | REV  |              |



# Your comments

In order for the council to deliver the best option for the community of Torbay it is vital that we hear your views.

Please let us know which of the options you like best and why, or if you feel none are suitable then please give us your alternative suggestions.

If you do not have time to leave feedback at the exhibition or you would prefer to take some information away with you to consider, you can fill in a questionnaire which can be then be sent to us by freepost.

The project team needs your views, so please get involved and help make the Town Hall a place to suit the needs of the people of Torbay.

# The Project Team



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