Lostwithiel Town Council Buildings

Feasibility Report

Revision P4

05.02.2025 - Final Issue - Report Issued to Town Council







- ♥ RIBA 2030
- Challana
- Challenge
- **★** Signatory



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Edgcumbe House, Taprell House and the Guildhall are three listed buildings, located at the heart of Lostwithiel and under ownership of Lostwithiel Town Council.

The three buildings are unsustainable to operate in their present arrangement and use. Poynton Bradbury Architects have compiled this report for Lostwithiel Town Council to review feasibility options for the future of the buildings.

The project team consists of:

Client – Lostwithiel Town Council

Architecture & Heritage – Poynton Bradbury Architects

Quantity Surveyor – Appleyard & Trew

Business Consultant - Len Smith

1.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This report has been prepared to build upon the findings from previous feasibility studies and support the ongoing design and brief development for Edgcumbe House, Taprell House and the Guildhall.

This report aims to present a costed, viable project which Lostwithiel Town Council can use to seek further funding to implement the design proposals.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF PROPOSALS

The outcome of this study is a preferred option for renovating this collection of buildings.

The proposal is for a Creative Workspace offer, which includes the town council offices, rentable meeting room/events space, hot desk and co-working facilities, a craft retail unit and creative workspaces for hire. This will be complemented by retaining and enhancing the museum in its current location.

The overall proposals include for fabric upgrades to the buildings to make them functional and more energy efficient.

The proposals have been considered in the context of the historic setting and aim to enhance the overall offer and appearance of the buildings. New interventions are proposed for less sensitive areas, with sympathetic materials and construction techniques.

1.4 NEXT STEPS

The scheme has been developed with grant funding in mind.

At the time of issuing this report we are between government finding packages.

The scheme, and this report, could be adapted to suit a public funding package, when the next round of grants is available.

From the current grant options available the scheme would align with both National Lottery Heritage Funding (Enterprise Grant) and Architectural Heritage Funding.

2.0 CLIENT BRIEF

2.1 PROJECT VISION

To find a long term, sustainable use for this collection of The Client's ambitions are: historic buildings and to retain them in ownership of the • For the project to enhance and celebrate the buildings' Town Council as a financially viable asset.

2.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- significant historic features and adapt some of the more recent, and less sensitive, building alterations and additions.
- For the project to offer a sustainable use that secures long term income for the Town Council.
- To enhance the offer of the local businesses and community. To not detract or be in direct competition with local businesses, but to complement existing uses along Fore Street and within Lostwithiel.
- Be a catalyst for the creation of conditions needed to secure growth, development and investment in the independent retail sector and foster sustainable town centre vitality.
- Improve accessibility into and around the buildings, where practicable, to allow a wider audience to enjoy this heritage asset.
- Improved sustainability and reduced carbon consumption in building operation.

2.3 OUTPUTS AND MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- 1. Economic stability for Town Council in operating these buildings
- 2. Balance between stakeholder groups, including Library, Museum and Town Council
- 3. Community support from local residents, businesses and
- 4. Positive feedback from statutory consultees including Historic England, Conservation Officer and Local Planning Authority
- 5. Improved sustainability for future building operation

2.0 CLIENT BRIEF

2.4 BUILDING FUNCTION AND ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS

2.4.1 GENERAL ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

- Consider way-finding and improve overall building accessibility at entrances and exits.
- Aspiration to provide new internal vertical circulation (lift) to provide easy access between floors within Edgcumbe House and Taprell House.
- Consider public frontages and attracting visitors into the buildings where public functions/uses are available.

2.4.2 TOWN COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS

Office space:

- Suitable for 3no. people and 4no. desks
- Will operate only during office hours
- No specific requirement for reception / waiting area
- Associated facilities required to support office space such as:
 - Teapoint / kitchenette
 - WC facilities, including accessible WC
 - Filing and printing areas
 - Phone / internet / IT requirements tbc
 - Meeting room(s)

Flexible meeting space:

- Suitable for up to 26 no people (16no. Councillors and 10no. public spaces) - tables and chairs
- To hold regular council meetings
- Requires level access to accommodate range of staff, council members and public visitors.
- Can be a temporary use as part of wider flexible
 space with complementary hours/use
- Associated facilities required to support meeting space, such as:
 - Teapoint/kitchenette
 - WC facilities, including accessible WC
 - IT requirements tbc

2.4.3 LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS

- Current operating hours
 - Wednesday daytime only, 10am 4pm
- Book storage shelving
- Equipment and furniture includes:
 - Staff desk and seating
 - Children's area and associated furniture
 - Book check in machine
 - Book drop letterbox
- Associated staff facilities, such as:
 - Teapoint/ kitchenette
 - WC facilities, including accessible WC
 - Desk space
- · Associated public facilities, including:
 - WC facilities, including accessible WC

2.4.4 MUSEUM REQUIREMENTS

- The Museum is open from beginning of April to end of October. Operating hours:
 - Mon to Fri 10.30am 4.30pm
 - Sat 10.30am 12.30pm
- · Maintain accredited Museum status
- Space for artefacts and display
- Office space for storage and archiving
- Associated facilities for volunteers:
 - WC facilities, including accessible WC
- Note: Museum is staffed by volunteers, a group of approximately 70 members



2.0 CLIENT BRIEF

2.5 REVIEW OF EXISTING BRIEFING DOCUMENTS

We have undertaken a review of the following documents:

- Hayhurst & Co Architects Report (2023)
- Strategic Action Plan (2019)
- Le Page Architects Report (2018)

The starting point for the project brief was to consider the previous feasibility work and the Hayhurst Report, which was initially tasked with addressing Edgcumbe House and Taprell House exclusively, without incorporating the Guildhall and Museum spaces as part of a broader masterplan for Town Council properties in Lostwithiel town centre.

The project brief for the current study also includes assessing how the Museum and Guildhall uses can complement those of Edgcumbe and Taprell House.

Hayhurst & Co Architects Report (2023)-Review Hayhurst Strategies

- 1. Strategy 2 (Community B&B) was the Hayhurst Report's preferred strategy leading to the following concerns:
- Lack of a detailed operational model;
- Negative feedback from Historic England regarding level of intervention to historic building;
- Challenges around practical management, including security and fire escape routes;
- Focus on visitor use rather than benefits for local residents.
- 2. Strategy 3 (Private Residential Use) was discounted as it would not secure external funding and would limit the building's long-term community flexibility.
- 3. Strategy 1 (Heritage and Creative Arts Centre) is the preferred path forward because it:
- Aligns with client and stakeholder aspirations for community use;
- Enhances regeneration efforts and strengthens the high street;
- Provides creative studios on the upper floors, benefiting local residents and generating income;
- Offers opportunities for linking a heritage centre/pop-up shop with the museum.

The Hayhurst Report recommended a strategy centred on a "Heritage and Creative Arts Centre with Associated Guest Accommodation." This was strategy 2 in their report.

As part of the current project, further consultation and assessments were carried out, in relation to the previous options and recommendations. It was concluded that guest or rented accommodation is not taken forward as part of this study, for the following reasons:

- Feedback during stakeholder consultations in October 2024 indicated concerns about suitability for a town-centre location, including parking limitations.
- Using Edgcumbe House for accommodation would complicate efforts to create a level access link between Taprell House and Fore Street, which is considered essential for improved connectivity between the three Town Council properties.
- The insertion of guest accommodation would likely have a greater impact on the historic fabric of Edgcumbe House.
- Reduced opportunities for external grant funding in operating as a community B&B.
- Operating model of community B&B is not comparable with the Town Council retaining possession and running of the buildings.

Instead, the team have chosen to develop the Hayhurst Report's 'Strategy 1 - Heritage and Creative Arts Centre with Artists' Studios'. This is an approach that prioritises community use, local benefits and flexibility, while maintaining alignment with stakeholder aspirations for regeneration and strengthening the high street offer.

3.1 SITE CONTEXT

Lostwithiel is a small Cornish town located at the head of the Fowey estuary. The town is equidistant from Liskeard, St Austell and Bodmin.

Edgcumbe House, Taprell House and the Guildhall are located at the heart of Lostwithiel and are both architecturally and culturally significant buildings within the town centre. Edgcumbe House and the Guildhall open directly onto Fore Street – a bustling street of independent businesses and private dwellings forming the town's principal service / shopping hub. Taprell House is currently accessed via an alley from North Street, a street more domestic in scale.

All three buildings lie in the Lostwithiel Conservation area and the character zone 'Core of the Medieval Town' as identified in the Lostwithiel Neighbourhood Plan (2018). They are surrounded by many listed and historic buildings.

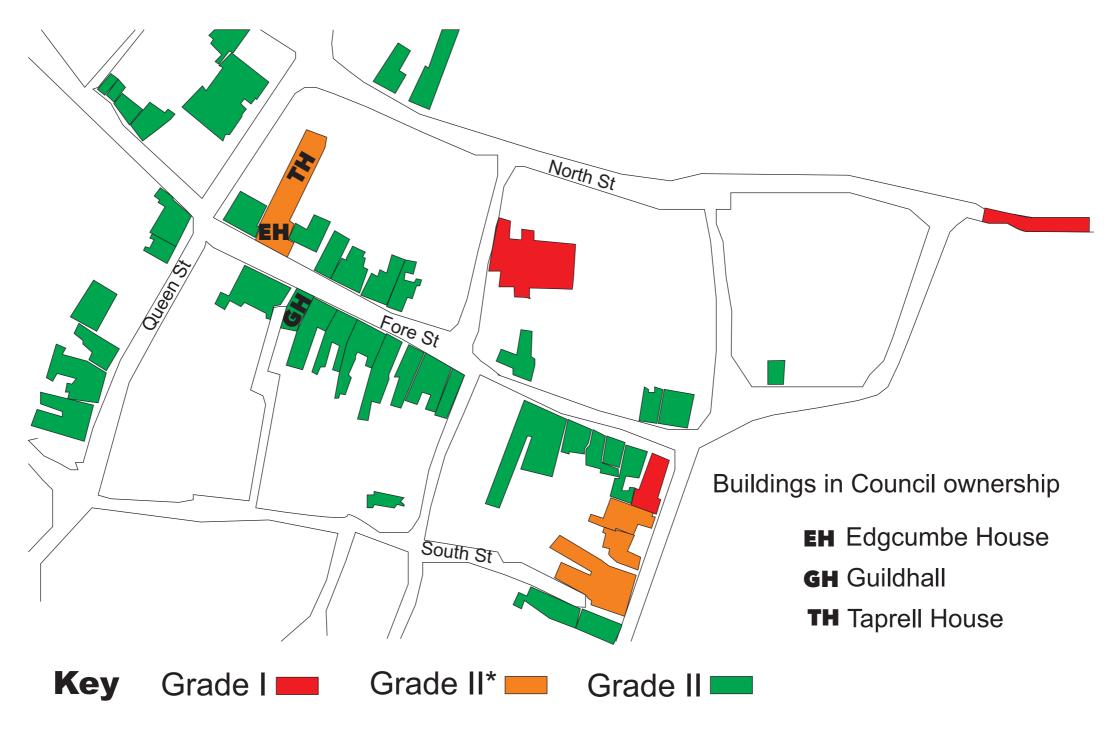
The buildings have excellent rail links – Edgcumbe house is approximately five minutes walk from the station. There are also a number of bus stops predominantly located on the A390 to the west of the buildings as well as several free car parks serving the town centre.





3.1 SITE CONTEXT cont.

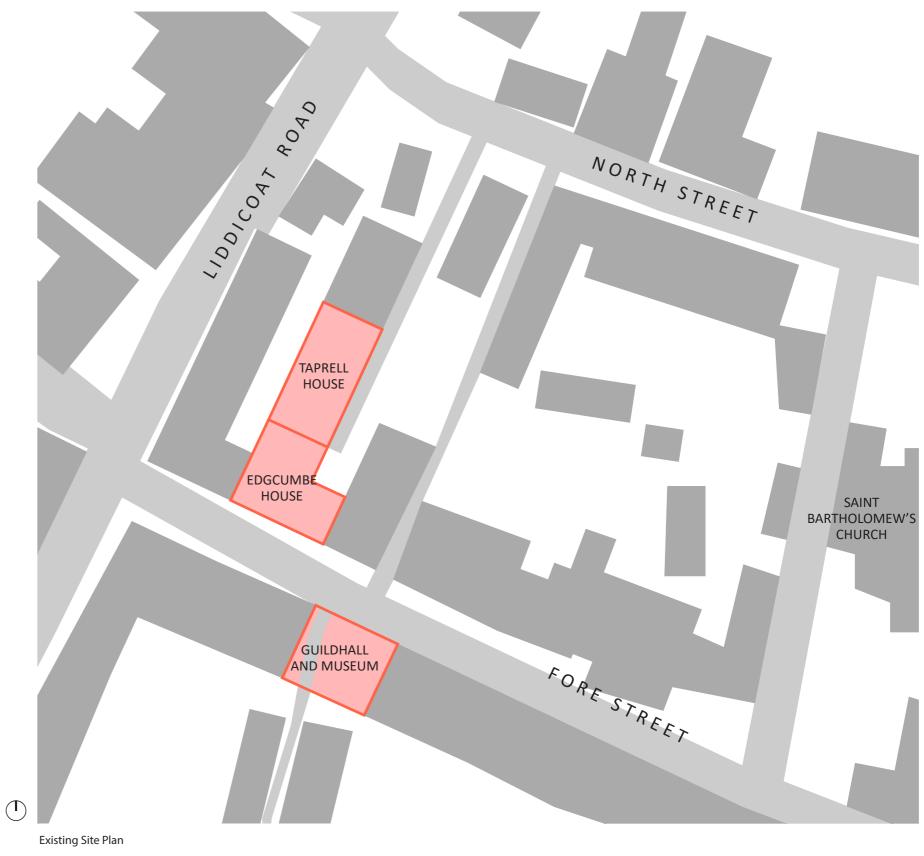
Lostwithiel Town Centre Listed Buildings

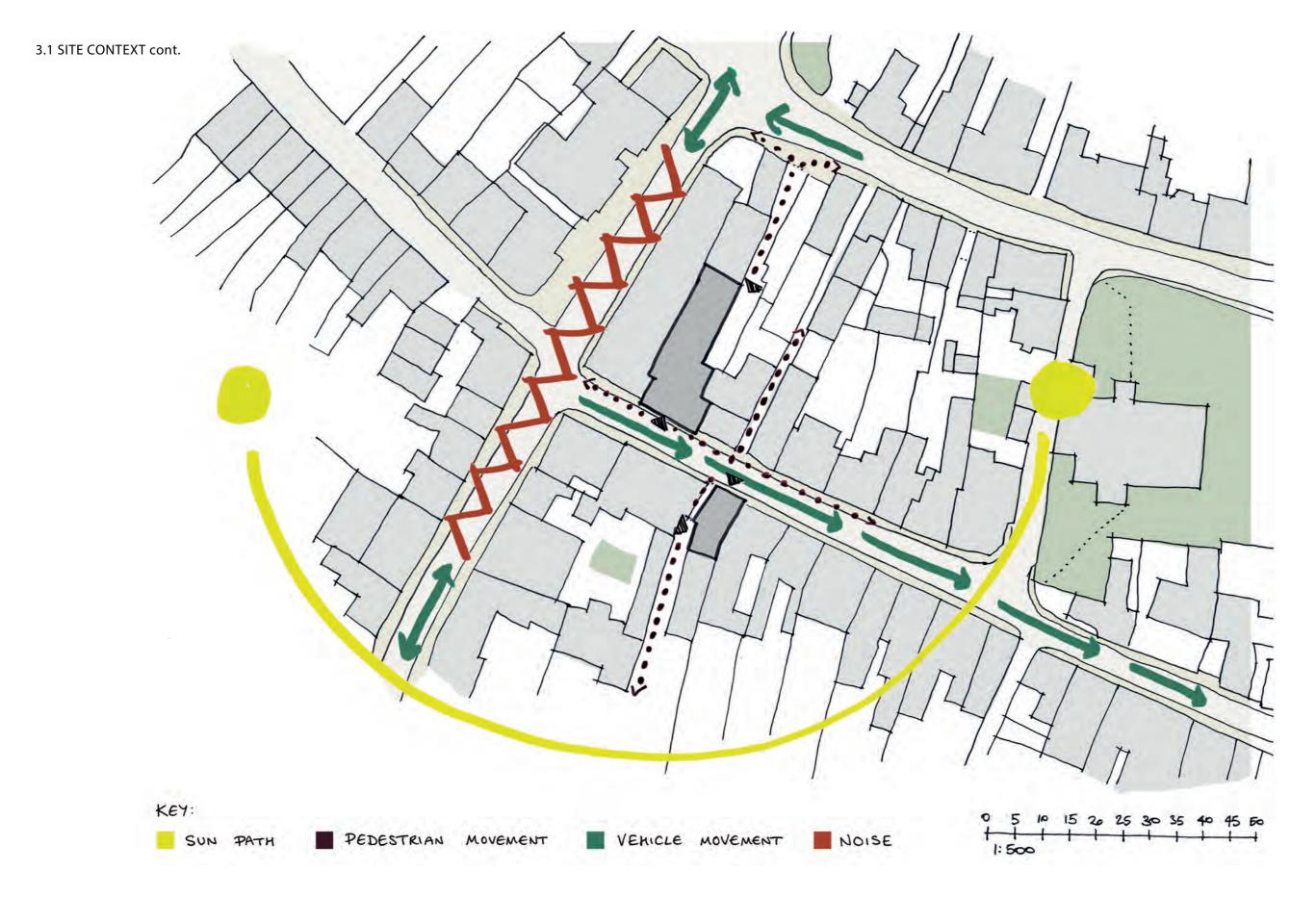


Plan provided by Lostwithiel Town Council



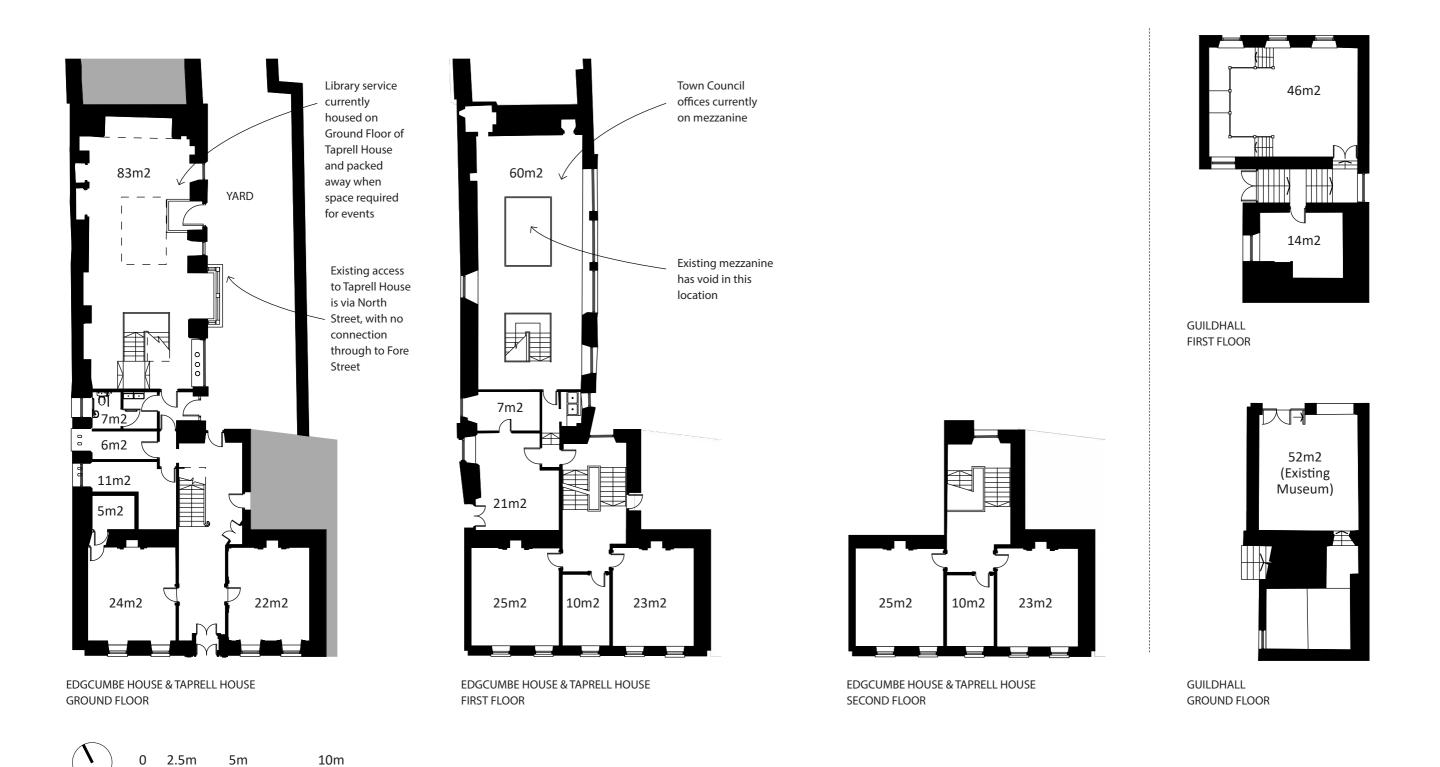
3.1 SITE CONTEXT cont.







3.2 EXISTING PLANS



1:200 at A3

3.3 EXISTING BUILDING SUMMARY AND PHOTOS

3.3.1. Taprell House (Grade II*)

Description:

The building is slatestone and granite rubble with dressings and slate roof. It dates from the early 16th century but now forms a rear wing to Edgcumbe House. The building currently accommodates the Town Council office, as well as the local library service. The library is open two days a week.

The internal layout has been much altered in 19th and 20th century and currently consists of an open plan ground floor, with mezzanine area above. The mezzanine structure has a void providing some double height space at ground level. There are several granite details remaining including a large fireplace at the northern end of the ground floor. Ancillary spaces are located to the southern end, between the main space and Edgcumbe House.

The building is accessed from an alleyway from North Street.

Summary of Condition:

- · Generally in a fair condition
- No obvious signs of damp
- Services in need of upgrade
- Potential for upgrades to improve thermal performance



Entrance alley to Taprell House from North Street



View along alleyway towards North Street



Ground floor view of Taprell House



Library furniture in existing granite fireplace



View of mezzanine area in Taprell House



View of existing workspace alcoves on mezzanine

3.3 EXISTING BUILDING SUMMARY AND PHOTOS

3.3.2. Edgcumbe House (Grade II*)

Description:

The existing 18th century building has a granite ashlar elevation to Fore Street, with slurried slate mansard roof. There are two storeys with an attic, on moulded plinth, five bays wide. It is a single depth plan house, with central entrance to hall and principal room to left and right with rear stair tower. The entrance is through central double doors with overlight, plain pilasters and hood on consoles.

The building is connected to Taprell House, which can be accessed through the external courtyard or via internal doors at ground and first floor levels.

Internally much of the valuable heritage interior remains, including decorative plasterwork, 19th century dado panelling and the 18th century open well stair. One of the ground floor rooms also hosts the Mayor's Parlour.

Summary of Condition:

- Building has undergone recent internal redecoration and roof works
- Potential for upgrades to improve thermal performance
- No obvious signs of damp



Fore Street view of Edgcumbe House



Fore Street entrance to Edgcumbe House



Recently redecorated internal joinery



Existing internal joinery

3.3 EXISTING BUILDING SUMMARY AND PHOTOS

3.3.2. Guildhall (Grade II)

Description:

The Guildhall is a two-storey building housing the museum at ground floor level. It is a granite ashlar building, dated 1740, with later alterations. There is a hipped slate roof with ridge tiles.

Internally the first floor chamber has fielded dado panelling, with re-sited linenfold panelling along the west end wall, a deep coved plaster cornice and timber steps leading up to the central mayoral seat. There is a small store room at first level, currently used as storage space for the museum.

The museum is accessed from Fore Street, whilst the Guildhall is entered via steps up from Guildhall Lane.

Summary of Condition:

Museum (Ground Floor)

- The museum is in a fair condition, but requires upgrade works
- The ground floor walls are in poor condition, with signs of damp and degrading to the masonry
- Services are in need of upgrade
- Potential for upgrades to improve thermal performance

Guildhall (First Floor)

- The hall is in a good condition following recent redecoration
- Services have been recently upgraded
- Tracked wheelchair has been purchased to improve accessibility to first floor
- · No obvious signs of damp



Fore Street elevation of Museum / Guildhall



Internal view of museum displays



Museum displays within the Old Jail Cell



View of the first floor Guildhall



Mayoral seat in the Guildhall



Existing access staircase to Guildhall

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE OPTIONS

Following stakeholder consultation, site visits and a review of the building several design options were prepared for review.

Notes on the options:

- Hayhurst & Co Report: The starting point for these options was Strategy 1 from this report
- Drawings: The plans are based on legacy drawing information, therefore all areas are approximate only.
- Library Relocation: Feedback from Cornwall Council Libraries confirmed their flexibility in housing library services elsewhere, potentially in the nearby Community Centre. This relocation allows the project to focus on maximising the arts and heritage offer. Integrated library layouts were tested and ultimately discounted as they diluted the arts focus.
- Wedding Venue Option: Using the Guildhall's first floor as a licensed wedding venue, supplemented by reception space in Taprell House, was considered but rejected as it would limit the building's operations to specific groups and times, failing to meet broader community aspirations.

Additional Considerations

- 1. Museum Location: Options tested include situating the museum in the Guildhall or Edgcumbe House, maintaining the same display and storage areas currently in use.
- 2. Connectivity: All options propose a through-route between Fore Street and the Taprell House courtyard. Making this passage light, visible and inviting is a key priority to attract visitors.
- Performance Integration: Options 1b and 2b include a performance element that could link with organisations like 'Carn to Cove.'
- 4. Building Upgrades: All proposals include upgrading the existing building fabric to improve energy efficiency and minimise heat loss through measures like roof insulation, thermal linings, and enhanced internal services.

This comprehensive approach aims to preserve the historic character of Lostwithiel's key buildings while fostering community engagement, cultural development, and local economic regeneration.

The options explored in the following pages are:

Option 1b Creative Arts Centre

w/ flexible performance space

Option 2a Heritage and Arts Centre

Option 2b Heritage and Arts Centre

w/ flexible performance space

OPTION 3 Creative Workspace

w/ Craft retail unit (Preferred Option)

Options 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b were presented at a public engagement event on 12th December 2024.

Following feedback from this event, and the subsequent Town Council meeting held on 17th December 2024, Option 3 was developed.

4.2 OPTION 1A - CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE



4.2 OPTION 1A - CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE

NOTES

- Library and library facilities relocated off site in alternative Lostwithiel location
- Museum remains in existing location with archive store in Edgcumbe House
- Museum storage area reduced from 14m2 to 11m2
- Consider ongoing management in operation
- Many creative arts centres have some kind of cafe / coffee offer as additional pull

ADVANTAGES

- Potential to improve connectivity between Taprell House and Fore
- Museum remains in existing location Active frontage to Edgcumbe House
- Edgcumbe House alternations minimal
- 6no. studios for income generation

DISADVANTAGES

- Upper floors are not accessible no lift access
- Less income generated for Town Council as Fore Street shopfront occupied by Museum

OTHER RELEVANT PROJECTS

- The Ladder, Redruth
- Redruth Buttermarket
- Pixel Penzance
- Mount Pleasant EcoPark
- IntoBODMIN
- Krowji, Redruth
- Messums Creative
- Arts Centre, Penryn
- CAST, Helston



Creative work / studio space Krowji, Redruth



Creative work / studio space CAST, Helston



Creative Arts Centre intoBODMIN



Creative work / studio space CAST, Helston



4.3 OPTION 1B - CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE w/ Flexible performance space

NOTES

- Library and library facilities relocated off site in alternative Lostwithiel location
- Museum remains in existing location with archive store in Edgcumbe House
- Museum storage area reduced from 14m2 to 11m2
- Lostwithiel town centre has many narrow apertures and alleyways and infill extension could draw inspiration from this
- Consider ongoing management in operation
- Many creative arts centres have some kind of cafe / coffee offer as additional pull

ADVANTAGES

- Potential to improve connectivity between Taprell House and Fore Street
- Museum remains in existing location
- Infill extension frees up space within Taprell House.
 Could be used for storage / WCs / kitchenette / cafe
- Active frontage to Edgcumbe House
- Edgcumbe House alternations minimal
- 6no. studios for income generation

DISADVANTAGES

- Upper floors are not accessible no lift access
- Higher impact externally to create infill extension
- Less income generated for Town Council as Fore Street shopfront occupied by Museum

OTHER RELEVANT PROJECTS

- The Ladder, Redruth
- Redruth Buttermarket
- Pixel Penzance
- Mount Pleasant EcoPark
- IntoBODMIN
- Krowji, Redruth
- Messums Creative
- Arts Centre, Penryn
- CAST, Helston







Performance space Mount Pleasant Ecopark



High quality narrow infill extension to listed building



High quality extension to listed building Garden Museum, Lambeth

4.4 OPTION 2A -HERITAGE AND ARTS CENTRE 70m2 83m2 YARD 14m2 GUILDHALL FIRST FLOOR 24m2 52m2 41m2 22m2 25m2 10m2 23m2 25m2 10m2 23m2 EDGCUMBE HOUSE & TAPRELL HOUSE EDGCUMBE HOUSE & TAPRELL HOUSE EDGCUMBE HOUSE & TAPRELL HOUSE GUILDHALL **GROUND FLOOR** FIRST FLOOR SECOND FLOOR **GROUND FLOOR** 5m 0 2.5m 10m 1:200 at A3 BOOKABLE EVENTS / CREATIVE WORK / TOWN COUNCIL MUSEUM ANCILLARY / BOH **RETAIL UNIT** WORKSHOP SPACE STUDIO OFFICE

4.4 OPTION 2A - HERITAGE AND ARTS CENTRE

NOTES

- Library and library facilities relocated off site in alternative Lostwithiel location
- Museum remains in existing location with archive store in Edgcumbe House
- Museum storage area reduced from 14m2 to 11m2
- Lostwithiel town centre has many narrow apertures and alleyways and infill extension could draw inspiration from this
- Consider ongoing management in operation
- Many creative arts centres have some kind of cafe / coffee offer as additional pull

ADVANTAGES

- Potential to improve connectivity between Taprell House and Fore Street
- Museum remains in existing location
- Infill extension frees up space within Taprell House.
 Could be used for storage / WCs / kitchenette / small cafe
- Active frontage to Edgcumbe House
- Edgcumbe House alternations minimal
- 6no. studios for income generation
- Upper floor of Taprell House is accessible by lift

DISADVANTAGES

- •
- Higher impact externally to create infill extension
- Less income generated for Town Council as Fore Street shopfront occupied by Museum

OTHER RELEVANT PROJECTS

- Tavistock Guildhall
- Krowji, Redruth
- Kresen Kernow, Redruth
- Hayle Heritage Centre
- Arts Centre, Penryn
- Wellcome Collection Reading Room, London
- Liskeard Library
- Red Pottery & Gallery, Redruth



Heritage Arts Centre Milton Keynes Heritage Arts Centre



Lettable Shopfront Marianna Kennedy Lighting and Design studio / retail in listed shopfront unit



Museum
Ditchling Museum of Arts and Craft



Lettable Shopfront
Pure Nuff Stuff - Manufacturing and selling skincare products in Grade 1 listed shopfront unit



4.5 OPTION 2B -HERITAGE AND ARTS CENTRE w/ Flexible performance space

NOTES

- Library facilities relocated off site in alternative Lostwithiel location
- Museum and store relocated to Edgcumbe House. Total museum area (including archive store) reduced from 66m2 to 63m2
- Museum currently acts as informal Tourist Information, by adding public uses to front of Edgcumbe House it draws visitors into the building. Creates a hub
- Lostwithiel has many narrow alleyways and extension could draw inspiration from this
- Consider ongoing management in operation
- Many creative arts centres have some kind of cafe / coffee offer as additional pull

ADVANTAGES

- Potential to improve connectivity between Taprell House and Fore Street
- Lettable shopfront on Fore Street. Potential studio / retail unit for local artist or maker
- Infill extension frees up space within Taprell House. Could be used for storage / WCs / kitchenette / cafe
- Active frontage to Edgcumbe House
- Edgcumbe House alternations minimal
- 6no. studios for income generation
- Removing mezz. increases usable are in Taprell House
- Upper floor of Taprell House is accessible by lift

DISADVANTAGES

- Higher impact externally to create infill extension
- Town council office on first floor not accessible unless lift installed
- Museum footprint slightly changed and footfall potentially reduced
- No double height space in Taprell House

OTHER RELEVANT PROJECTS

- Tavistock Guildhall
- Krowji, Redruth
- Kresen Kernow, Redruth
- Hayle Heritage Centre
- Arts Centre, Penryn
- Wellcome Collection Reading Room, London
- Liskeard Library
- Red Pottery & Gallery, Redruth



Heritage Arts Centre Milton Keynes Heritage Arts Centre

Heritage Arts Centre

Hayle Heritage Centre



Performance space intoBODMIN



Lettable Shopfront Marianna Kennedy Lighting and Design studio / retail in listed shopfront unit

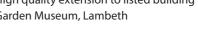


Ditchling Museum of Arts and Craft



High quality extension to listed building Garden Museum, Lambeth







CREATIVE WORKSPACE 4.5 OPTION 3 w/ Craft retail unit

NOTES

- Library facilities relocated off site in alternative Lostwithiel location. Library collect / drop-off stand on ground floor of Taprell House
- Lostwithiel has many narrow alleyways and extension could draw inspiration from this
- Consider ongoing management in operation

ADVANTAGES

- Museum remains in existing location, with archive store in Edgcumbe House
- Potential to improve connectivity between Taprell House and Fore Street
- Infill extension frees up space within Taprell House
- Improved accessibility to first floor via lift
- Larger footprint to Taprell House due to removing mezzanine
- Edgcumbe House alternations minimal
- Active frontage to Edgcumbe House, including income generation from craft retail unit
- Combination of co-working and creative studio spaces have potential to form a sense of community within Edgcumbe and Taprell House
- Upper floor of Taprell House is accessible by lift

DISADVANTAGES

- Higher impact externally to create infill extension
- Double height space in Taprell House omitted

OTHER RELEVANT PROJECTS

- Devonport Market Hall, Plymouth
- Krowji, Redruth
- intoBODMIN
- **CAST Helston**
- Liskeard Library
- Newquay Orchard co-working
- The Work/Shop co-working, Penryn
- Penryn Arts Centre
- Red Pottery & Gallery, Redruth



Creative Work / Studio CAST, Helston



High quality extension to listed building Garden Museum, Lambeth



Creative Workspace Devonport Market Hall, Plymouth





Craft Retail Unit Argal Home Farm, Falmouth



Craft Retail Unit Pure Nuff Stuff - Manufacturing and selling skincare products in Grade 1 listed shopfront unit