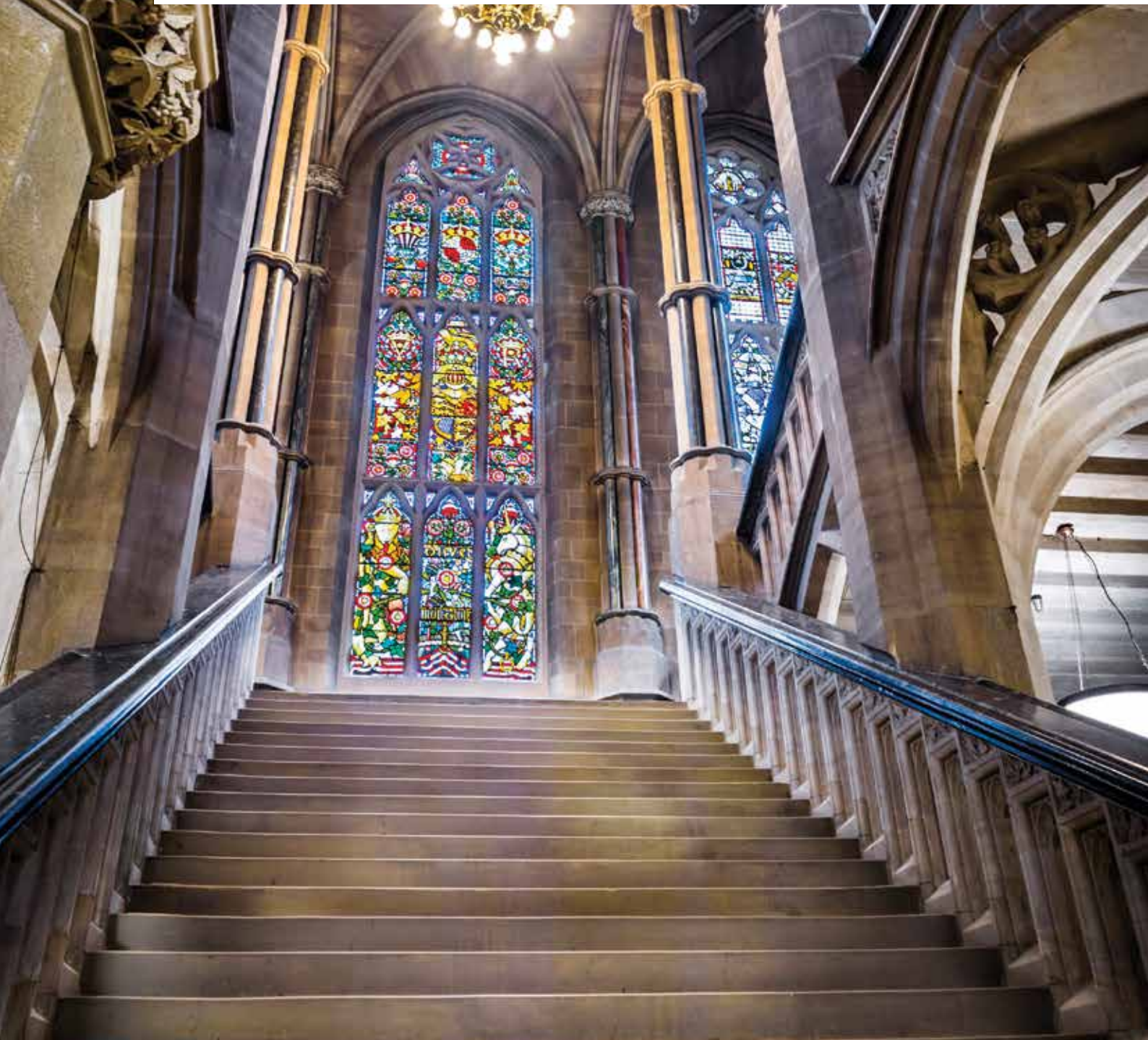


# Rochdale Town Hall Restoration & Revival

Public Consultation



ROCHDALE  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORTH  
1871

Rochdale  
Development  
Agency



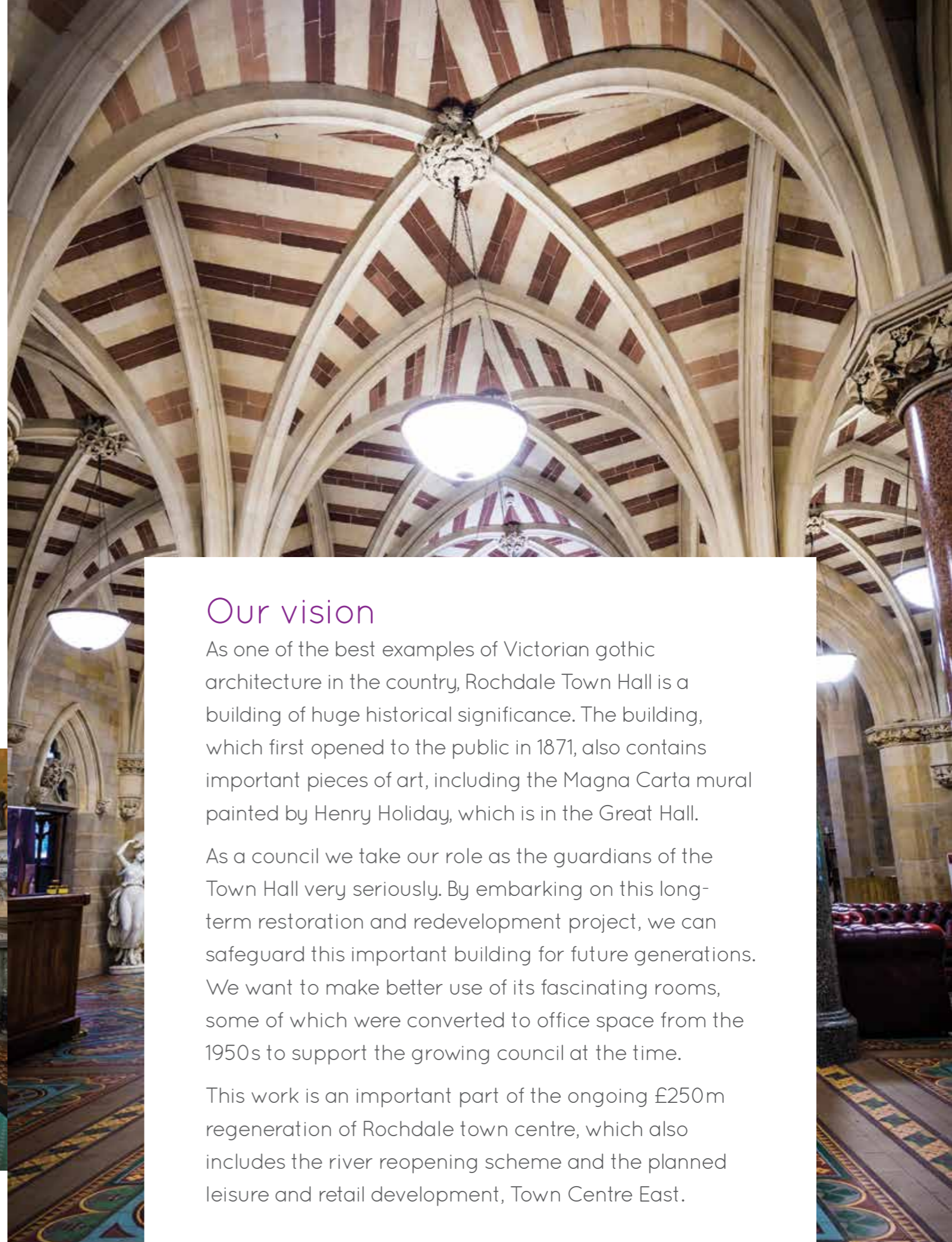
## Getting your views

Rochdale Town Hall is our greatest historic and cultural asset but it needs work to restore and adapt it so that it can be preserved for future generations.

We also want to make even more use of this stunning building so that more people can enjoy it in the future. That's why we are working with the Friends of Rochdale Town Hall (FoRTH) and Rochdale Development Agency to develop a Heritage Lottery Fund bid.

The Grade I Listed building is already used for events like weddings, concerts, tours and tea dances but now that council staff have moved to Number One Riverside we have an opportunity to further develop this building as a community facility and visitor attraction.

We all have a stake in this public building so it is important that you have your say. That's why we are inviting you to take a look at our plans and let us know what you think. Your views will help us refine the plans ready for our first stage bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund later this year.



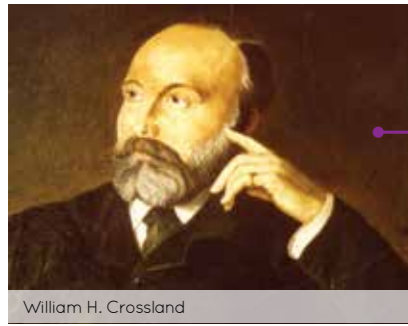
## Our vision

As one of the best examples of Victorian gothic architecture in the country, Rochdale Town Hall is a building of huge historical significance. The building, which first opened to the public in 1871, also contains important pieces of art, including the Magna Carta mural painted by Henry Holiday, which is in the Great Hall.

As a council we take our role as the guardians of the Town Hall very seriously. By embarking on this long-term restoration and redevelopment project, we can safeguard this important building for future generations. We want to make better use of its fascinating rooms, some of which were converted to office space from the 1950s to support the growing council at the time.

This work is an important part of the ongoing £250m regeneration of Rochdale town centre, which also includes the river reopening scheme and the planned leisure and retail development, Town Centre East.

# How did we get here? - Timeline of then and now



William H. Crossland



Before the fire - original clock tower



After the fire - rebuilt clock tower



The Council Chamber



Number One Riverside



The Grand Staircase

- 1856** Rochdale is incorporated as a Borough, with an estimated population of 34,545 people.
- 1859** The Council decides to build a Town Hall to serve as its administrative base.
- 1864** Leeds architect, William H. Crossland, wins the competition to design the Town Hall and site clearance begins. The build costs £160,000 - far more than the original budget of £20,000, funded from the profits of the town's gas company.
- 1872** The Town Hall opens. The building is used largely for councillors and council officers, with the public only able to access the rates hall (now the bistro) to pay their taxes. Although the Town Hall is very much a public building today, as part of our redevelopment, we would like to make it even more accessible and welcoming to members of the public.
- 1883** A serious fire damages the original clock tower. The replacement clock tower designed by Alfred Waterhouse (the architect for Manchester Town Hall) is 15 metres (49 feet) shorter than its predecessor. The clock tower now stands at 25 metres (82 feet).
- 1900** The Town Hall is lit by electricity. Before this gas lamps and open fires were used for light and warmth.
- 1930s** The fire station, which had been based in the Town Hall from the time it opened, moves to Maclure Road, next to Rochdale railway station.
- 1951** Rochdale Town Hall is recognised as being of national importance and is listed Grade I, the highest designation.
- 1963** The planning department and police move from the Town Hall to other buildings.
- 1960s** Beat nightclub 'Lower Chambers' opens in the Town Hall basement. Membership costs 1s 6d.
- 1970s** Former rates hall opens as the Town Hall café with a new kitchen. The old police cells, which had been based in the Town Hall since it opened, close.
- 1981** Following the Magistrates' Court's move out of the building in the early 1970s the old court is redeveloped as the new council chamber.
- 2013** The majority of remaining council staff based in the Town Hall move out and relocate to the new customer service centre, library and office building, Number One Riverside. This gives the council and its partners a unique opportunity to consider the re-use of the rooms which were previously used as offices.
- 2013** A significance appraisal is carried out on the Town Hall by conservation specialists as required for a Grade I building. They conclude that Rochdale Town Hall is one of the finest examples of Victorian architecture and design in the country. It is described in the report as one of the best town halls in the UK.
- 2013/14** Specialists carry out a feasibility study on the Town Hall and make recommendations on how to preserve and develop it for future generations.
- 2015** A stage one bid will be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund by the end of the year.
- 2016** If the first stage bid is successful, the council and its partners will draw up a more detailed second stage bid and submit this to the Heritage Lottery Fund
- Mid 2017** The council will find out if it has been successful in its Heritage Lottery Fund bid.
- Late 2017** If the bid is approved, work will begin.

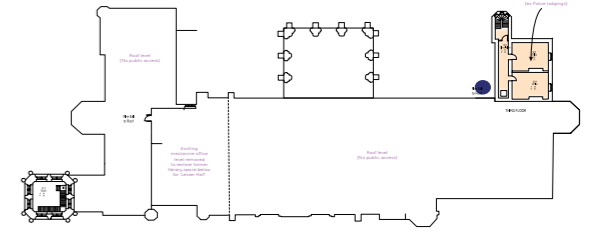
# Rochdale Town Hall Proposed Floor Plans

## KEY

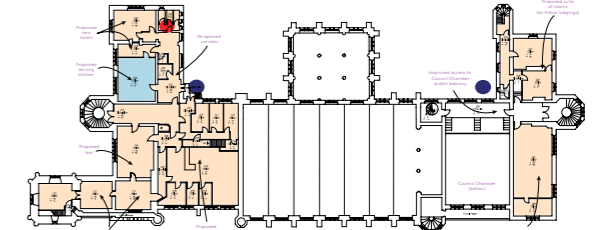
- Spaces to be restored and remain in public use
- Spaces to be restored and opened to public access
- Spaces to support new users (staff only)
- Proposed new lift
- Proposed fire escape



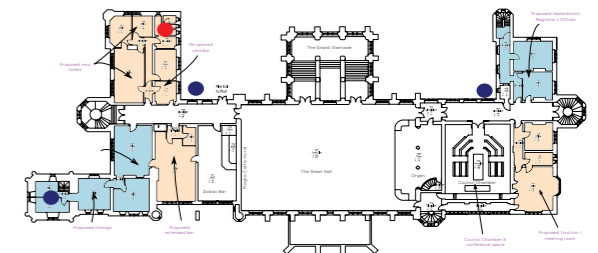
## 3 Third Floor



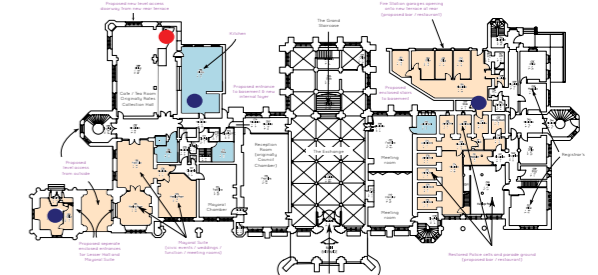
## 2 Second Floor



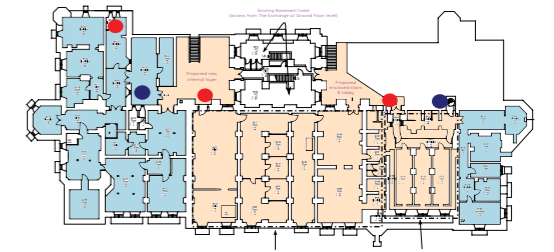
## 1 First Floor



## G Ground Floor



## B Basement



# Uncovering lost spaces - The plans

## Creating a new 'Lesser Hall'

In the 1950s, a mezzanine floor was added above the former library space on the second floor to create much-needed offices. We would like to remove the mezzanine floor to create added height and turn this space into a 'Lesser Hall' with its own access, bar and toilets. This hall could be used as a location for smaller functions.



## Converting the old police cells

Once restored to its former glory, this section of the building could be added to the regular Town Hall tours, so people can see what conditions were like in the 1870s when the cells were first opened. Alternatively, there is also an opportunity to convert the cells into a bar/restaurant with the cells being used as booths for seating.



## Former fire station area

We propose to renovate this area, in keeping with its original style, to create a better space for weddings and a new south-facing outdoor terrace area.



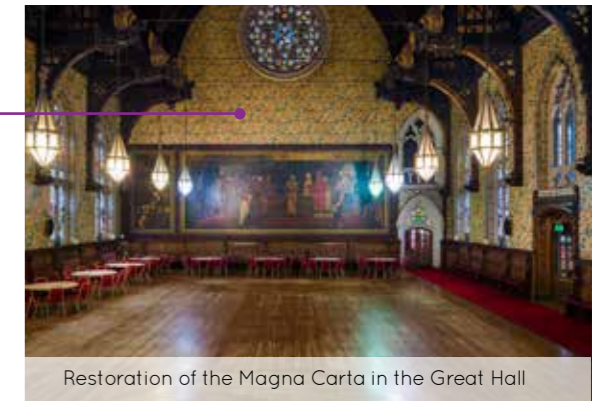
## Improved Town Hall tours

We propose to extend the Town Hall tour to take in the above 'lost' spaces and develop an interactive phone or tablet app to give you a commentary as you pass through certain areas.



## Restoration

We would like to restore the important pieces of art and decorative features, including stained glass windows and the impressive Magna Carta mural in the Great Hall and return them to their former glory.



## Improving accessibility

We intend to provide three additional lifts and improve the access between different sections of the ground floor, make changes to the handrail in order to improve safety on the grand staircase and add a new high quality front entrance to allow easier access.

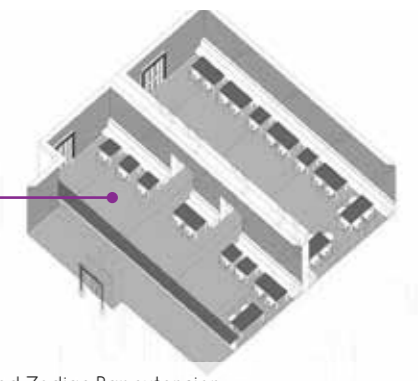


## Extension of the Zodiac bar

The Zodiac bar could be extended into the adjoining room, which is currently unused, to create more space.

## Other essential works

Other essential works are proposed include a new heating system, repairs to the roof, walls, windows and a new electrical system.



## Now tell us what you think

Now you've read about our plans, we'd love to know what you think. You can fill a survey in today and hand it in to the staff at the exhibition or return it to the Town Hall reception at a later date. Alternatively, you can fill the survey in online at [rochdale.gov.uk/townhall](http://rochdale.gov.uk/townhall)

**Please let us know your views by 31 July 2015.**

## Next steps

We will provide Heritage Lottery Fund with a summary of all your responses and use them to help the restoration of the Town Hall.

We are looking to submit our first stage Heritage Lottery Fund bid by the end of this year. If this is successful, we will then submit a more detailed second bid in 2016.

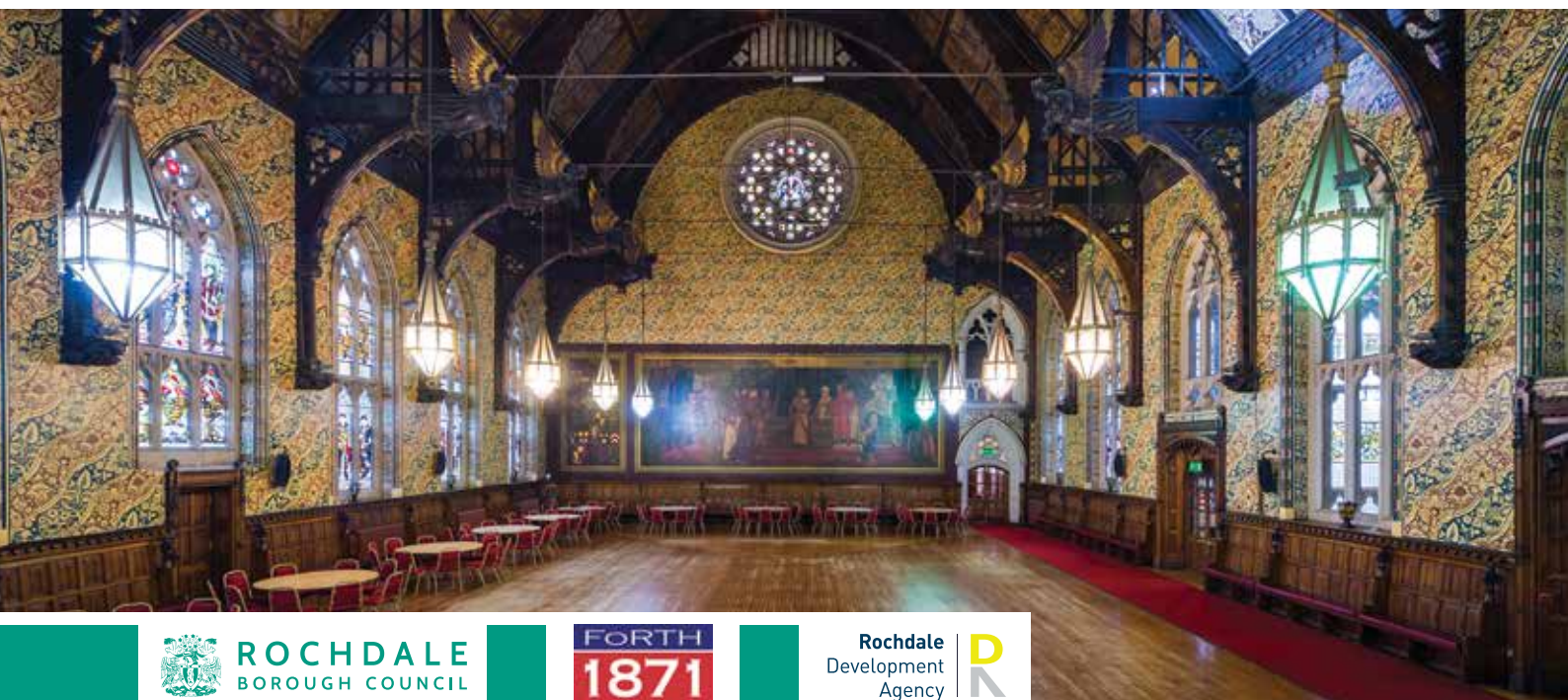
## For more information

For more information on the Town Hall, please visit [rochdale.gov.uk/townhall](http://rochdale.gov.uk/townhall)

### Or contact:

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