Plans for Guildhall

AN entrepreneur behind IAN LEWIS plans to turn Carmarthen's 01267 610452 historic Guildhall building into a restaurant and cafe bar has unveiled details of the £1 million project.

a listed building in the heart of the town, has been snapped up as part an exciting project for of the Lounges group Carmarthen. which already has eateries Zinco Lounge in Swansea stress is that the frontage not touch, all dining will and Croeso Lounge in will remain. Also, the main

work is about to get under those in the entrance hall way and it will be open to will stay the same. the public in the summer," said James Morse, director opened back and the of Nextcolour Ltd which is black and white tiling carrying out the work and inside will remain, along which was behind the with the steps and stair hugely successful launch case at the end of the hall- at the entrance doors to of Oyster Wharf in Mum- way, along with the side

The cafe bar restaurant remains as yet unnamed be the disabled access too. but will occupy the ground crown court above will in its glory.

The venture will create up to 35 jobs.

thenshire Council has the space for them to be of the Guildhall, Mr Morse been agreed and talks standing on an open plan said: "It sits in an imporhave already taken place room for dining, along tant part of the town and cil took ownership and the with Cadw over the ambi- with the bar." tious plans which seek to redevelop but retain much ment work over the dec- they were blocked off.

who oversaw the development of the Swansea The former courthouse, branches and has a background in renovating Court,

entrance will stay the "A six-month project of same, the main doors and

gates will staircase.

"The side entrance will

floor and the impressive ating the hallway and for- itable groups and schools mer court room will be for educational purposes, remain untouched yet vis- knocked down to open the free of charge. ible for customers to soak ground floor up into one

nal features and we plan for a fee as they do now. A deal to lease the on recreating more lime-

Mr Morse added: "One side of the ground floor, family-friendly of the buildings character the old cells area, was whether for breakfast, authority was "going out and original features, redeveloped after 1974 lunch or dinner that then on a limb" by doing so, but together with returning and original windows on has the potential to send recognised the imporsome which have been the Hall Street side have people off up into King hidden due to develop- not been seen since then, Street and the newer part

We will be bringing Walk).

entrance, but a nice light open space."

Indeed, even the cells will be used for cool storage of beverages.

Turning to the Crown Mr Morse listed buildings, said it was explained: "We knew how important this was and is.

It's an incredible court "One thing that I want to room that we simply will be on the ground floor.

"We are putting toilets across the landing from the court room upstairs but as for the court, it will remain as it is but we want people to be able to see it and enjoy it.

"We will be placing waist-height glass panels the court upstairs so people can look into the court."

Coupled to that, the "The current walls cre- court will be open to char-

While TV and film crews will continue to have "The walls are not origi- access to the crown court

Looking at the wider ties it together.

"The aim is to create a

"We are looking forward building from Carmar- stone columns to open up impact of the regenerating to the project getting under way.

Carmarthenshire Coun-

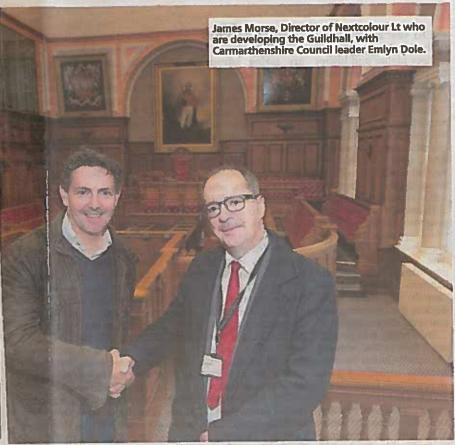


reigns of the Guildhall last year and council leader space Emlyn Dole admits, the tance of the building.

He said the newlyof town (St Catherine's struck deal with Lounges and developers Nextcol-



will mix the old with the new



"When we bought it as a letting the building go was council, the alternative of pretty grim.

"We took that risk and all that is on offer in the that risk has turned out town over the next year."

well because of the offer here, as far as the regeneration of this square and this is the Guildhall the county seat, it emphasis

"The ambition is to be commended on behalf of the developers because what they are doing is bold.

"It is a unique project but also keeping the historical aspect upstairs in the court room which is absolutely dripping with history and that's going to be kept and enhanced because there will be more people who can see it and appreciate all that has happened there in the context of the history of this county.

"So it works in all ways, along with the regeneration that we are continuing in Carmarthen town, and joining King Street and the lower part of the town, which again will be reflected when we think about Jackson's Lane and that project.

"We are excited about the Guildhall project and



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James Morse, director Nextcolour