

CIVIC THEATRE : DARLINGTON

Options Appraisal



Introduction

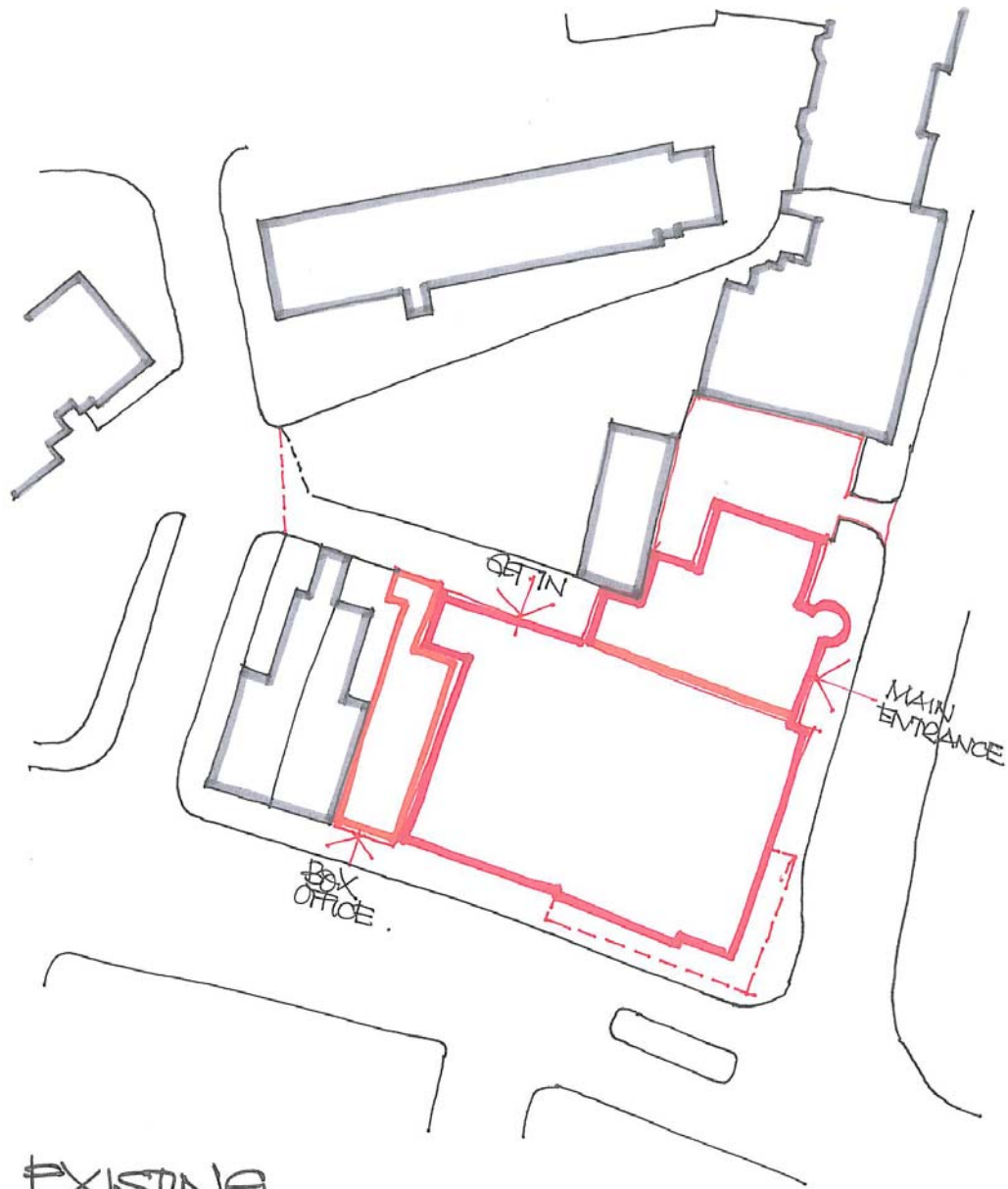
The purpose of this document is to examine the options that may be available for the redevelopment of the Civic Theatre. It is clear from an initial appraisal that the front of house spaces have a number of major operational problems which may be summarised as follows:

- No public lift in the building to negotiate levels
- Original entrance on Parkgate now virtually disused due to accessibility issues with steps
- Late 1980s extension moved the main entrance around the corner into Borough Road thus diminishing the streetscape presence of the theatre
- General lack of public presence on Parkgate compounded by the poor access
- Windows and doors are all generally “blind” or closed and do not provide a sense of attraction or welcome
- Too many changes in level internally, not DDA compliant
- Too many corridors and staircases with a lack of general congregation space
- Some facilities located incorrectly to cause public flow problems e.g. merchandising
- Conservatory bar far too small for stalls and unable to generate significant revenue income against staffing costs
- The scenery get-in currently set at right angles to the access road is a major problem and delays get-ins incurring additional staffing costs

In consequence a number of options have been examined to address these issues. It is clear that all options require acquisition of additional adjacent premises and therefore carry a capital expenditure costs which has also been examined in broad terms.

KEY:

-  : CIVIC THEATRE
-  : FOH + BOH.



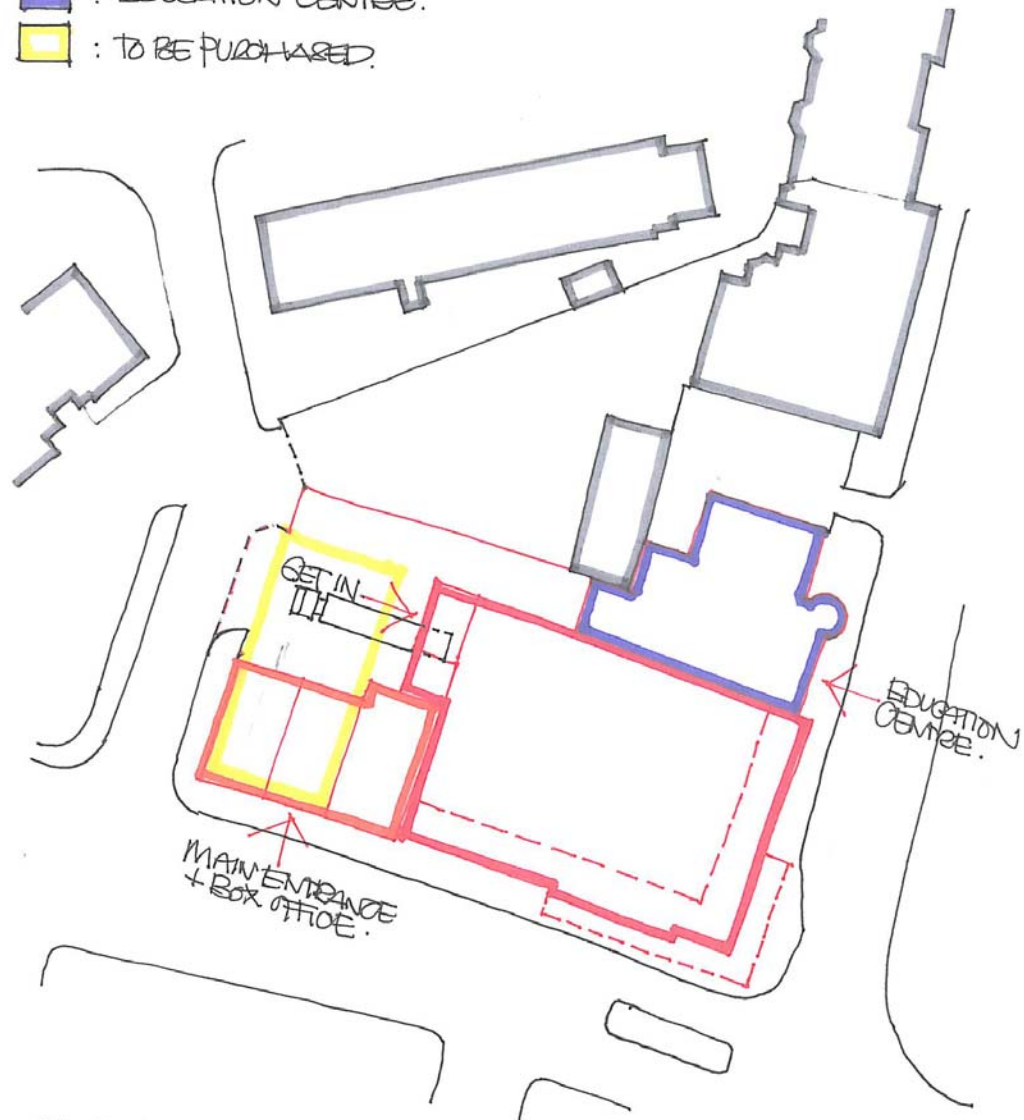
Existing

This plan shows the existing footprint. There could be some limited internal reorganisation and streamlining but it would not resolve the key issues identified in the introduction.

- The main entrance is still around the corner in Borough Road
- No additional front of house space is acquired
- Access issues will only be partially addressed but the usable internal space would be reduced even further
- The get-in is not addressed

KEY:

- : CIVIC THEATRE
- : F&H + B&H
- : EDUCATION CENTRE.
- : TO BE PURCHASED.



OPTION 1:

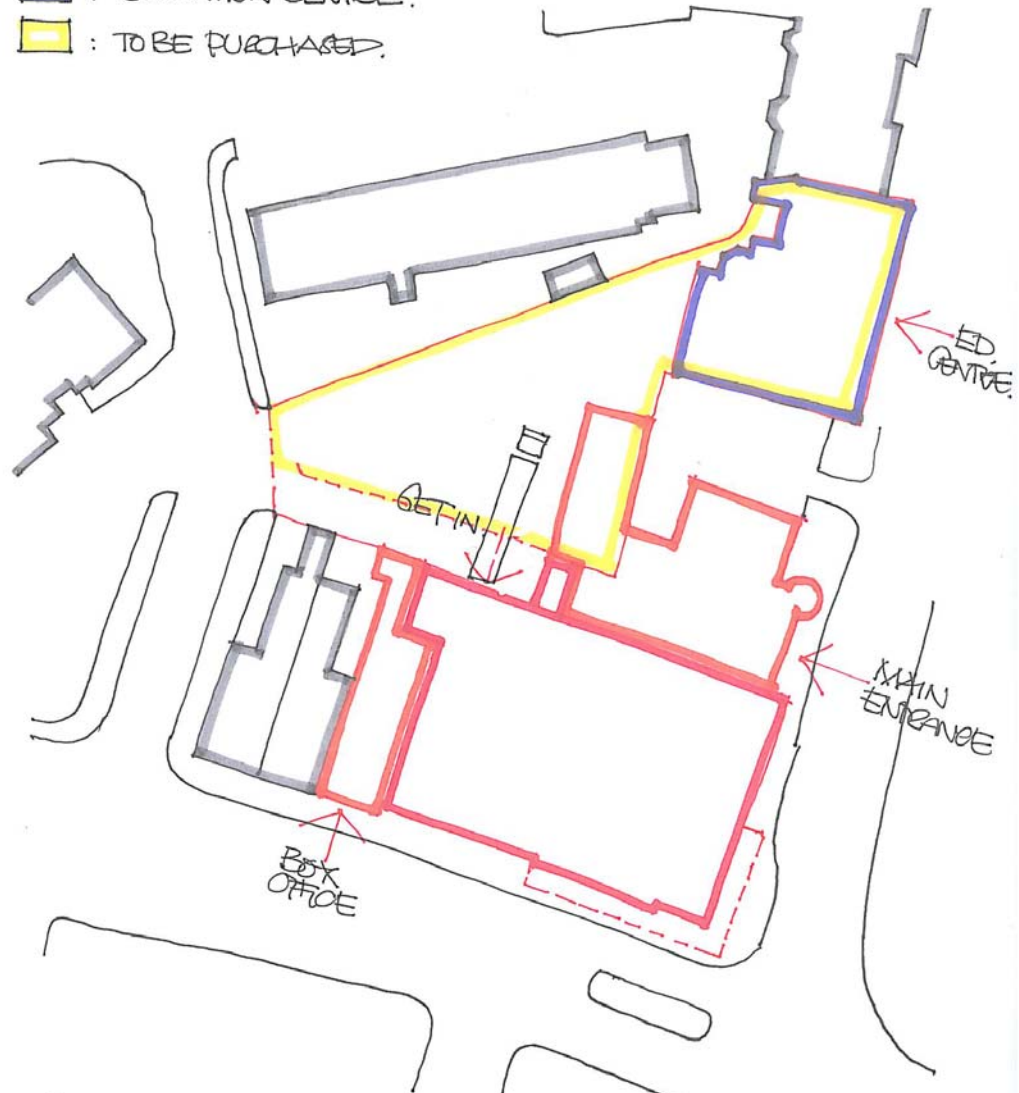
*PURCHASE 77/79 AND 81/83 PARKGATE

Option 1

- The main entrance is relocated onto Parkgate by acquiring the freehold of 2 additional shop units. This creates a wonderful street presence with large windows at ground floor to create an alluring attractive environment for patrons
- Access is level with the pavement into the theatre
- New dressing rooms, etc. are created on 1st and 2nd floors of the shop units allowing dressing rooms to be removed to create extensive Foyers on Theatre front related to the existing window pattern thereby enlivening the façade.
- The outbuildings and extensions in the rear yards of the shop units are demolished and get in access is improved significantly to the rear
- The existing 1980s front of house space is reconfigured and improved with education facilities in which to deliver an education and heritage programme in line with HLF requirements.

KEY:

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- : F&H + R&H
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OPTION 2:

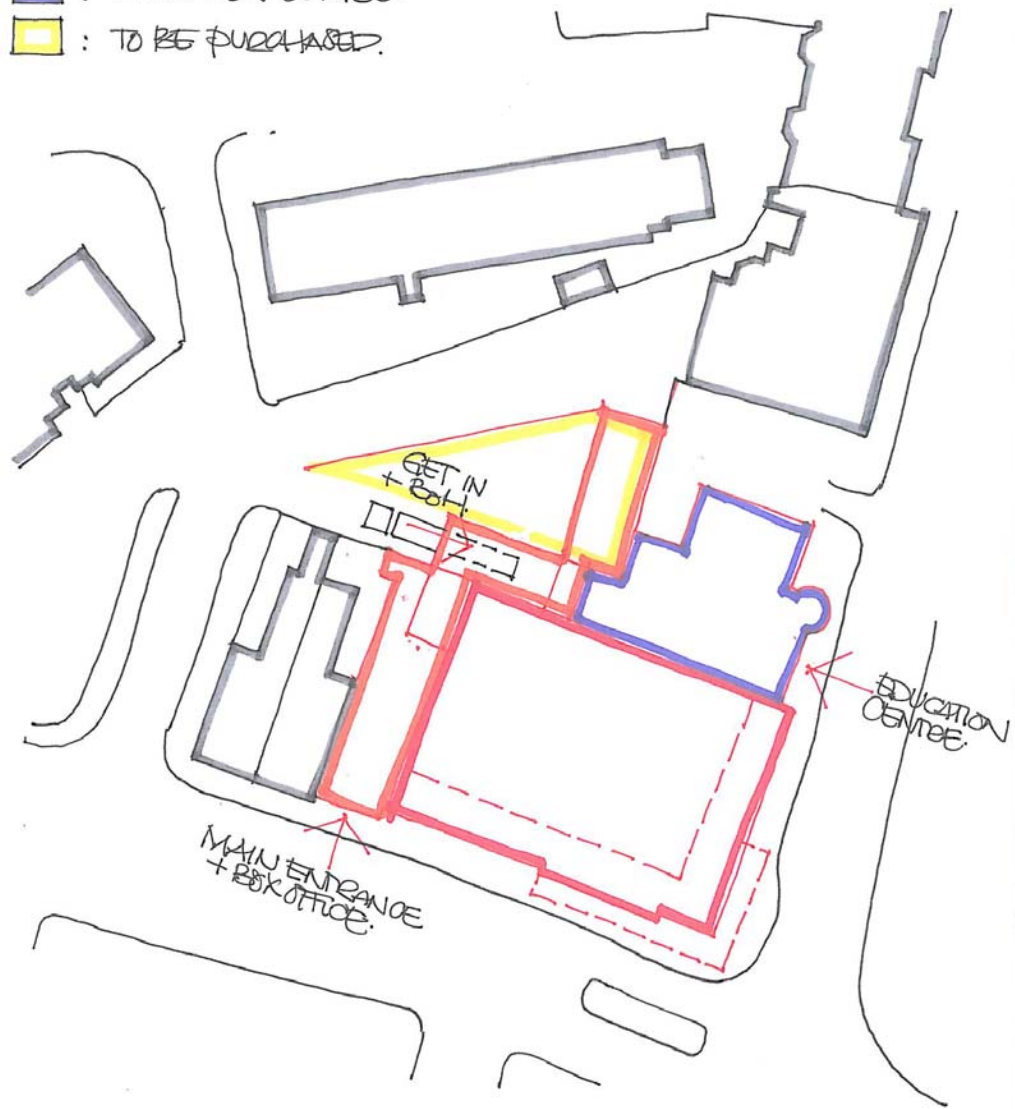
* PURCHASE 9 BOROUGH STREET + YARD.

Option 2

- Purchase the freehold of 9 Borough Road and attached rear yard. The building provides a large amount of additional floor area but it is currently a double height space which would require sub-division but could be developed as the Education/Studio Theatre location with additional funding.
- It would take the street presence even further away from Parkgate and not resolve the access issues into the theatre.
- It would develop a “split site” for the establishment effectively occupying 2 separate buildings which is not helpful for an organisation of this kind.
- Back of House facilities can be repositioned into the 1980’s extension but links with the main Theatre are poor.
- Mechanical and electrical services would to some extent be duplicated on a split site
- Get-in is addressed with the acquisition of the yard area to the rear

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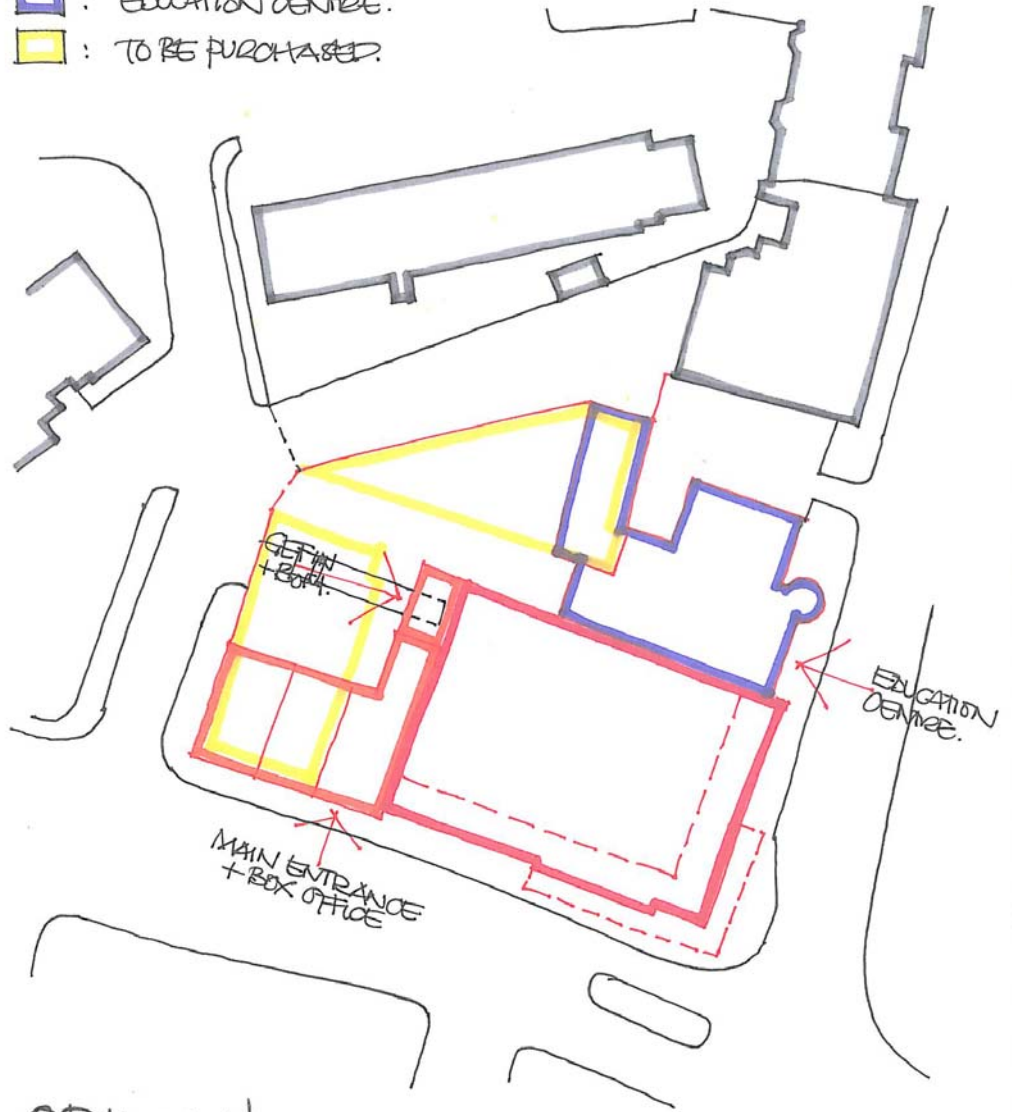
OPTION 3:
* PURCHASE PART USED + OUTBUILDING.

Option 3

- Purchase the freehold of part of the rear yard attached to 9 Borough Road and a semi-derelict building currently sited in this portion of the yard. This could be demolished or refurbished for technical storage etc.
- Introduce a new entrance for the public through the existing box office at street level. This would resolve the access issues partially but would not create a significant street presence on Parkgate or provide any additional front of house space
- The existing 1980s extension would be reconfigured to provide improved access but via Borough Road. It could not deliver the same level of Education and Heritage output required by HLF as it would be required for operational purposes in addition.

KEY:

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-  : BOH + F&H.
-  : EDUCATION CENTRE.
-  : TO BE PURCHASED.



OPTION 4:

* PURCHASE 77/79 AND 81/83 AND PART YARD + OUTBUILDING.

Option 4

- The main entrance is relocated onto Parkgate by acquiring the freehold of 2 additional shop units. This creates a wonderful street presence with large windows at ground floor to create an alluring attractive environment for patrons.
- The yards of the shop units are demolished and a new building attached to the rear of the shops to create an enlarged foyer and front of house space accessed from Parkgate.
- New dressing rooms, etc. are created on 1st and 2nd floors of the shop units allowing dressing rooms to be removed to create extensive Foyers on Theatre front related to the existing window pattern thereby enlivening the façade.
- Access is level with the pavement into the theatre
- The existing 1980s front of house space is reconfigured and improved with education facilities in which to deliver an Education and Heritage programme in line with HLF requirements.
- Purchase the freehold of part of the rear yard attached to 9 Borough Road and the semi-derelict building currently sitting on a portion of the yard. This could be demolished or refurbished for technical storage etc. This resolves the get-in problems and provides parking for lorries and trailers etc.