

Appendix L: Refurbish / Extend / Replace Proposals (2014 study)

INTRODUCTION

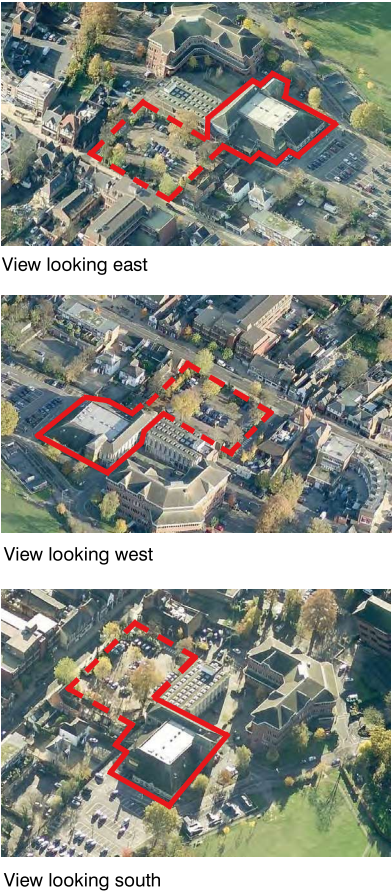
Context for the Proposal

The Harlington Centre opened in 1972 as a civic complex offering a main hall, meeting rooms and offices. The main hall was originally marked out as badminton courts. A major fire in 1991 destroyed the roof to the main hall. Renovation work included the linking of the library building and the Harlington Centre to create a new reception area and coffee shop. The building was further modified in 1997 to cover the old bin storage area and create a small split level gymnasium.

There was no real focus to the purpose of the building and by 2010 the running costs of the centre had escalated and the usage fallen dramatically.

In 2010 Hart District Council (HDC) transferred the building to Fleet Town Council (FTC), based on a short-term lease because of the potential for a redevelopment of the whole Civic Office area. Following 18 months of concerted efforts by HDC, HCC and FTC in designing a new civic complex, the initiative collapsed with the withdrawal of the developer. FTC took the initiative to employ a professional manager to re-brand, market and run the “Harlington” and bring the facility back to being the entertainment and community heart of Fleet.

The original building and the fit out were not of the highest quality and services are starting to fail. The roof leaks water and the building fabric leaks heat. Users of the Harlington supported the programme of events and community functions, but voiced that the seating, lighting and sound to the theatre were poor, the toilets not up to standard and too small. If no serious investment is made in repairing or refurbishing the building, services will progressively fail and the building will consequently close.



View of Gurkha Square from Fleet Road - The Harlington is shielded from trees and vegetation

- The loss of the Harlington will have significant impacts on the community
- The loss of the only significant entertainment facility in Hart
 - The loss of the only major meeting venue for the larger community groups
 - A loss of parking revenue to HDC
 - An impact on the night economy through loss of trade from Harlington visitors
 - Impact on the library that relies on the Harlington for its heating.
 - Another empty building affecting the character of Fleet

HDC does not have the financial resources to take back the building and bring it up to modern building standards.

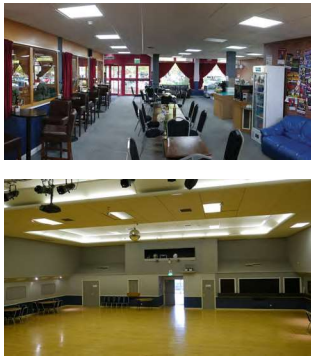
FTC has taken the initiative to explore the options to repair, refurbish or replace The Harlington. These boards set out the options, identify the benefits, the constraints and the cost implications within the framework of the Local Town Council Tax set at £99.81 (for band D households) per annum. The additional money raised outside the precept to run the Town Council has been ring fenced for the Harlington. This ring-fenced amount allows the achievement of all three options for the stated period of the loans with no further increase to this element of the Council Tax.

Photography: Google Maps & Bing Maps

SITE ANALYSIS



The Harlington



Existing cafe and Main Hall



Access issues

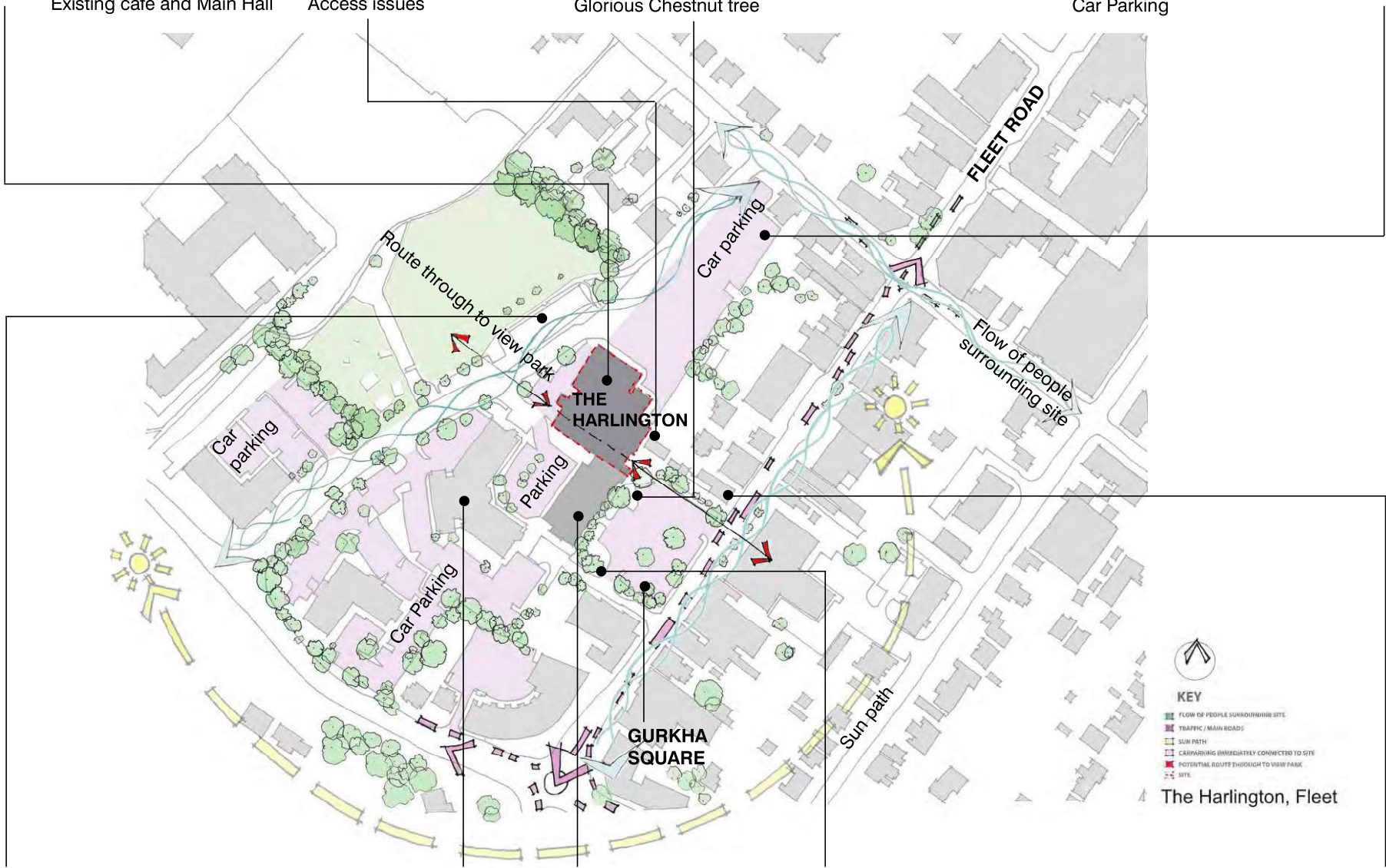


Glorious Chestnut tree



Car Parking

- The existing Harlington Centre is set back from Fleet Road and hard to distinguish from its surroundings during the summer months when the trees are in leaf
- The Harlington's frontage tends to be subservient to the Library and therefore tries to compete with a brightly coloured frontage, which is not very attractive
- The approach to The Harlington's main entrance is across a cluttered hard brick car park area rather than a calm civic square
- The War Memorial is similarly surrounded by parking bays detracting from the dignity of the setting
- The approach to the front entrance of the Harlington requires the negotiation of some unsightly steps or a circuitous ramp enclosed by ugly dwarf walls
- There is little direct access to The Views on the North side of The Harlington, except via more hard car parking areas around the far side of the Library and Council's offices
- The Views is a largely hidden amenity away from the life flowing along Fleet Road, although it has a skate board park much enjoyed by younger members of the community
- The external elevations of The Harlington are visually cold and uninviting
- The rear elevations of The Harlington are scarcely recognizable as a cultural centre and stranded in yet more extensive areas of hard car parking
- Fleet Road is relentlessly linear in form with the life of the community coursing mainly along this route. Gurkha Square provides the one opportunity to open up this linearity and create a focus for the community
- Gurkha Square faces South creating a sun trap which could be enjoyed by the public as a place to stop, rest and enjoy



The Skateboard Park



Hart District Council



The Library



War Memorial in Gurkha Square



W.C. Baker & Son Ltd - Context of street

Photography: Burrell Foley Fisher LLP & David Fisher, Aldershot, Farnham & Fleet Camera Club (AF&FCC)

THE EXISTING BUILDING

Existing building fabric and infrastructure slowly decaying as a consequence of an historic lack of preventative maintenance - generally the building is tired and dated



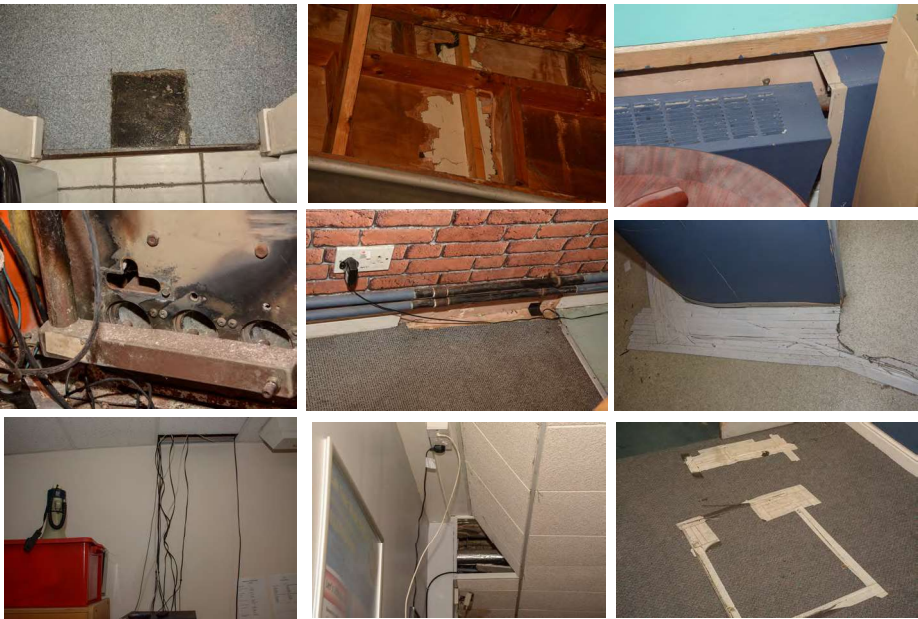
Obsolete and inefficient services and boilers (some have already failed and the rest are in a precarious condition)



Lack of storage spaces and adequate office facilities for staff



Heating system, pipes, electric wiring, and building fabric finishes need replacement



Auditorium lighting damaged



Accessibility issues need to be addressed to meet current legislation



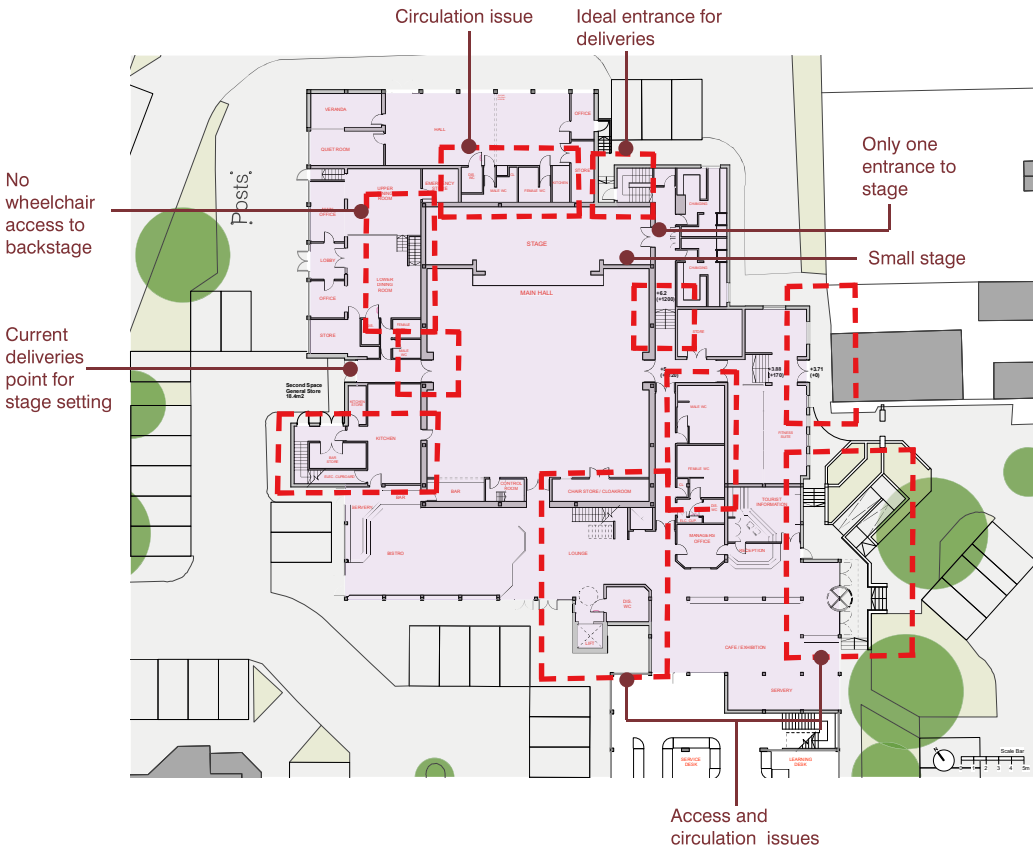
Water damage to lighting from leaking roof



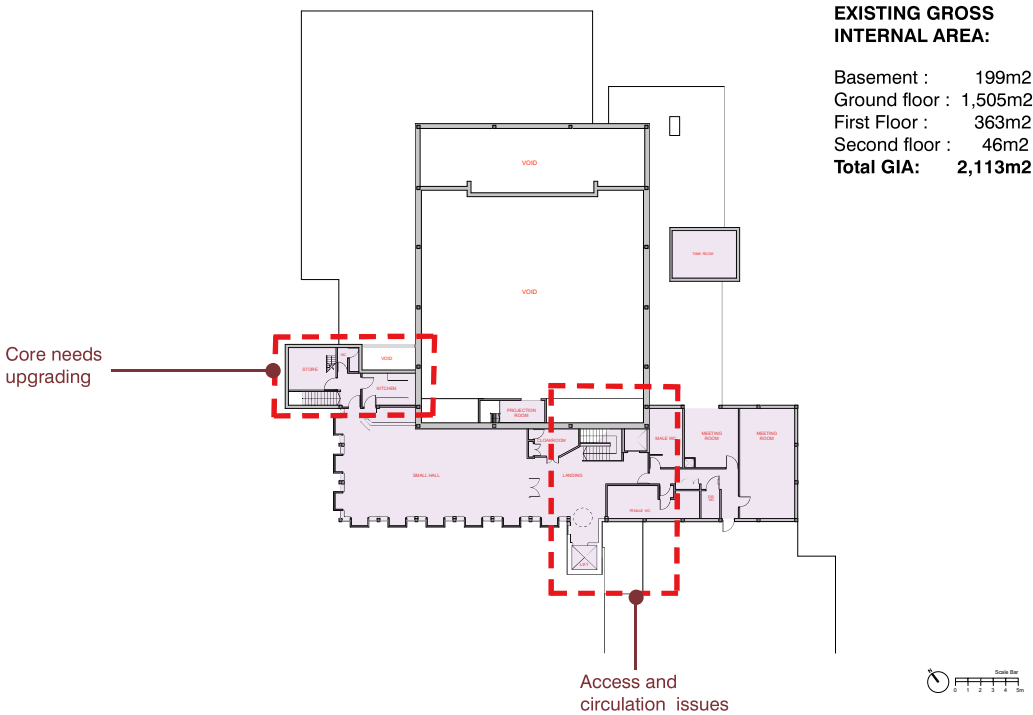
Toilets - in poor condition with damaged facilities, and too small



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN



EXISTING GROSS INTERNAL AREA:

Basement : 199m2

Ground floor : 1,505m2

First Floor : 363m2

Second floor : 46m2

Total GIA: 2,113m2

OPTION 1 - REPAIR

Essential refurbishment to meet current standards

Leaving the existing Harlington essentially as it is, with replacement of obsolete services (heating and lighting particularly), to bring the complex up to present day standards.

Windows and Roofs will be replaced to achieve current standards of thermal performance and insulation. Toilets and access systems will be updated to meet current accessibility legislation.

The Main Hall is a converted sports hall and in this option will remain as it is: the refurbishment will not bring it up to meet the quality of modern theatres. The Foyer and most backstage areas will also remain as they are now.



Site Plan - Option 1

The Harlington's facade hidden behind trees and vegetation in Gurkha Square



View from Fleet Road



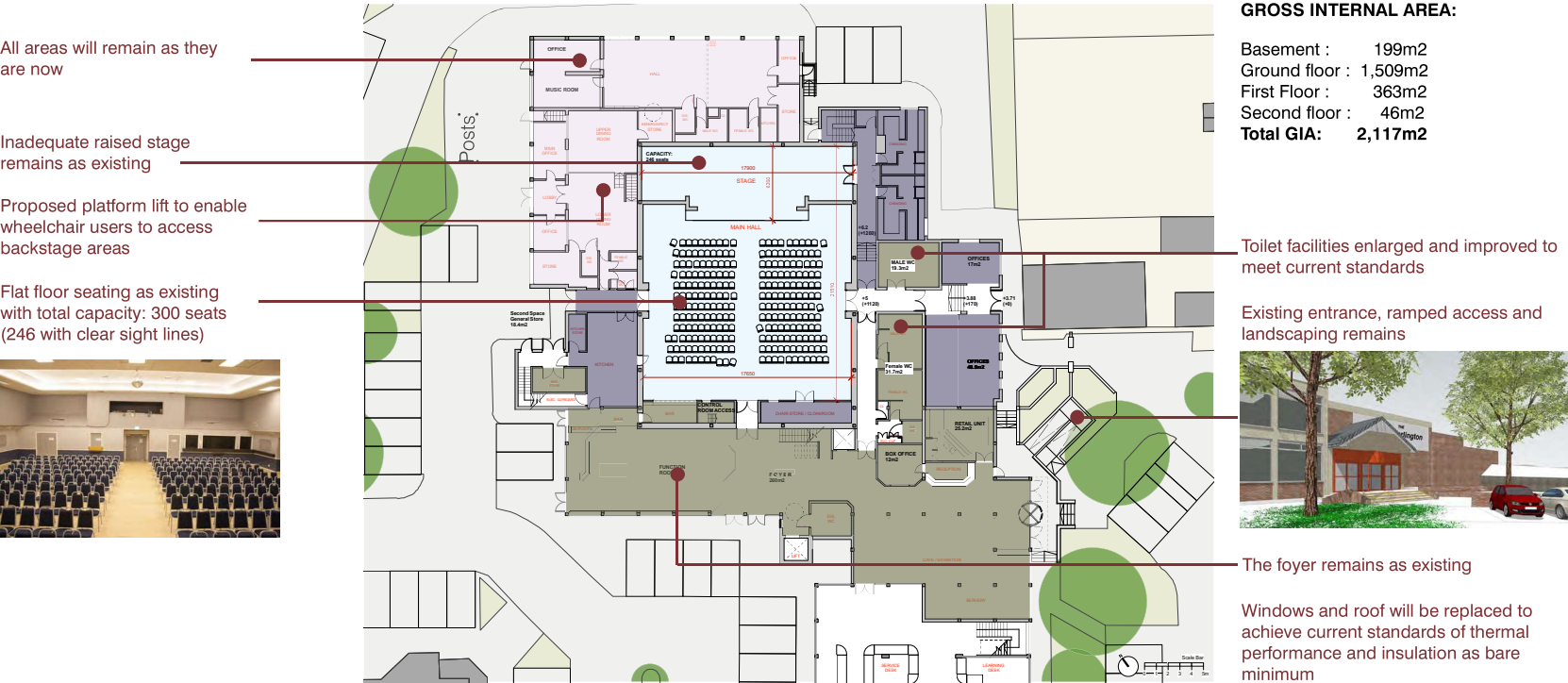
The Harlington's existing facade



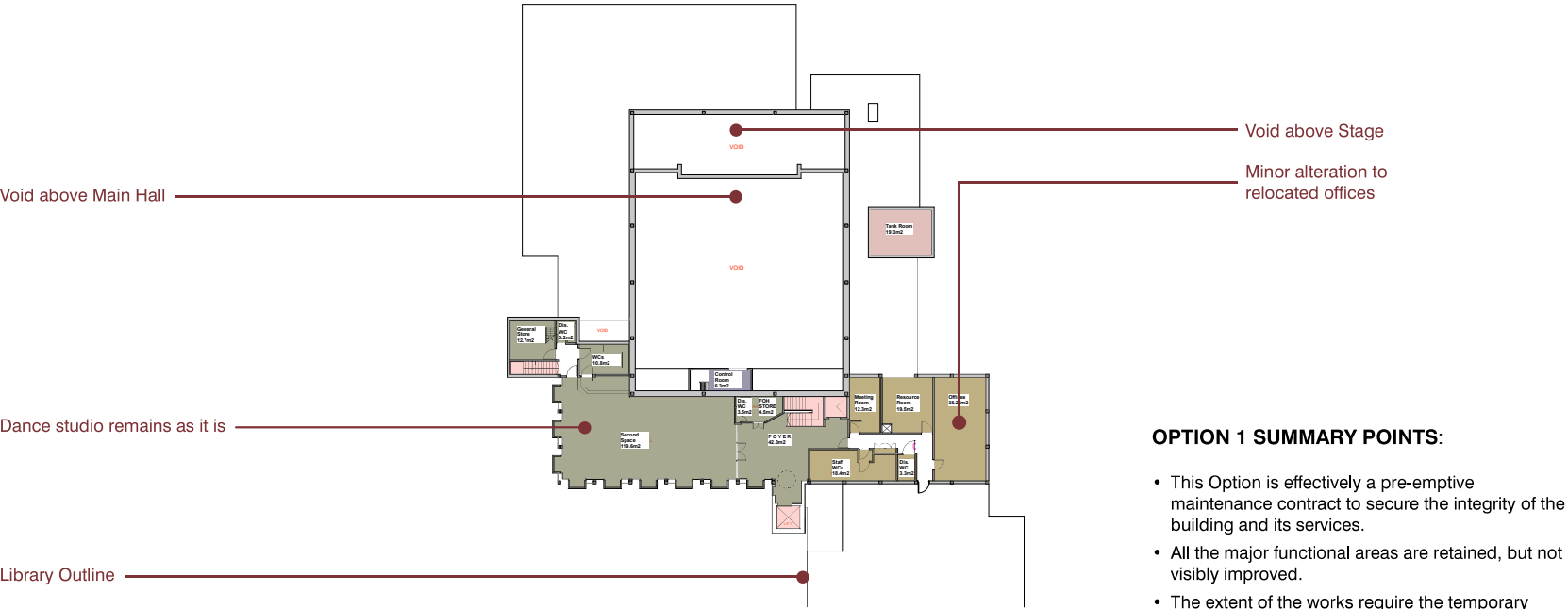
View of existing building

Photography: Burrell Foley Fisher LLP & David Fisher, Aldershot, Farnham & Fleet Camera Club (AF&FCC)

OPTION 1 - GROUND FLOOR PLAN



OPTION 1 - FIRST FLOOR PLAN



OPTION 1 SUMMARY POINTS:

- This Option is effectively a pre-emptive maintenance contract to secure the integrity of the building and its services.
- All the major functional areas are retained, but not visibly improved.
- The extent of the works require the temporary closure of the building.
- There is no external visual impact to the building.
- The total estimated cost of the work including Construction Costs, Contingencies Professional Fees and Inflation is £6.3m.
- The repayment of the loan will be 20 years based upon no increase in the current ring fenced Harlington precept.