

## **Report to CABINET**

# **Acquisition of Strategic Asset**

### **Portfolio Holder:**

Councillor Shah, Cabinet Member for Growth

**Officer Contact:** Emma Barton, Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**Report Author:** Maria Cotton, Assistant Director Place Making

**Date:** 20 October 2025

---

### **Reason for Decision**

To seek Cabinet approval for the acquisition and demolition of a property on Yorkshire Street, Oldham to support the wider regeneration of the area and the continued creation of a cultural quarter in this part of the town centre. Details of the property are noted in part B of this report while legal, commercial and financial negotiations are in flight. The details of the acquisition will soon be in the public domain, but cannot be shared publicly at this time.

### **Recommendations**

Cabinet members are requested to approve:

- The acquisition the property on Yorkshire Street, Oldham – utilising external grant funding designated for this specific purpose.
- The demolition of the building following acquisition.
- The creation of a new public square on the cleared site to improve the setting and visibility of the cultural quarter.
- Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive, Place, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Growth, to finalise negotiations, legal documentation, procurement and final cost estimates, demolition, and delivery of the public realm scheme.

**Acquisition of Strategic Asset****1 Background**

- 1.1 Oldham Council accepted Community Regeneration Partnership funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 24 March 2025 (ESR-03-25).
- 1.2 An allocation of £2,500,000 (two million, five hundred thousand pounds) was identified to acquire property in support of the implementation of the Cultural Co-operative model and the redevelopment of Fairbottom Street / Yorkshire Street to ensure the future success of the Coliseum Theatre.

**2 Proposed Acquisition**

- 2.1 The Council has committed significant investment into the new Oldham Coliseum Theatre as a cultural anchor for regeneration. Improving its setting and visibility is critical to maximising cultural, social, and economic benefits.
- 2.2 There is a vacant property located on Yorkshire Street in a prominent position, which has historically negatively impacted on the theatre experience and added to the lack of visibility of the theatre entrance, compounded by the proximity of a number of late night venues.
- 2.3 The acquisition and subsequent demolition of the property on Yorkshire Street, provides an opportunity to transform a neglected and vacant site that currently contributes to negative perceptions of the town centre.
- 2.4 As the property has been commercially on the market for some time with no interest registered, it is proposed that after acquisition the vacant property is demolished to enhance Yorkshire Street and improve the attractiveness of the area by improving sightlines and act as a gateway to the theatre creating a welcoming arrival space for visitors.
- 2.5 The creation of a high-quality public square will provide outdoor performance space and opportunities for community events, further enhancing the offer of the theatre and supporting the Oldham Cultural Strategy.

**3 Options/Alternatives**

- 3.1 There are two options:

Option 1: acquire the property, demolish the property and re-purpose the void space into a quality public square.

Option 2: do not acquire the property, risk the property falling into further disrepair given the continued lack of commercial interest, or risk the building being re-purposed for a use not compatible with the aims and vision of the Cultural Co-operative / Cultural quarter in this part of the town centre.

---

## 4 **Preferred Option**

- 4.1 Option 1 is the preferred option which will improve the outcomes for the cultural quarter and delivers on the external funding grant allocated for this purpose in a compliant way.

## 5 **Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders and the High Street Accelerator Partnership Chair.
- 5.2 Responses identified the improvement of the theatre setting and visibility as a priority.
- 5.3 The Chair of the High Street Partnership supports the removal of this derelict building and investment in a new public space.

## 6 **Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The total cost association with the acquisition of the property and the subsequent redevelopment of the site will be capital expenditure and will be a charge against the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) grant to support the Cultural Co-operative model and the redevelopment of Fairbottom Street/Yorkshire Street. This will leave £1.526m of CRF funding available to support the other priorities identified for the Cultural Co-operative model.
- 6.2 The ongoing maintenance and other revenue costs associated redeveloped space will be additional to the current budget provision for the Town Centre. Consequently, budget provision will need to be identified or working practices adapted to absorb the costs of the ongoing maintenance requirements.

James Postle

## 7 **Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Acquisition to be completed under the Council's powers for land and property acquisition in support of regeneration (Local Government Act 1972, Section 120).
- 7.2 Demolition and public realm works will require planning consent and compliance with environmental and health and safety legislation.
- 7.3 Legal due diligence and full surveys will be completed prior to acquisition and it is important that these are completed prior to any offer being made so that no more is paid than a reasonable market price.

Alex Bougatef

## 8. **Procurement Implications**

- 8.1 Procurement advice will be followed in respect of the demolition works and public realm works

Fiona Greenway

## 9 **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

- 9.1 A full EIA has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 1 to this document.

## 10 **Key Decision**

- 10.1 Yes

---

11      **Key Decision Reference**

11.1      RBO-10-25

Report to be considered in private and was not published in the Key Decision Document due to special urgency procedure rule 14 in the constitution.

Report has been shared with Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, Cllr Junaid Hussain

12      **Background Papers**

12.1      None

13      **Appendices**

13.1      Appendix 1 EIA Assessment