The Steel Coleman Davis Partnership took part in an interview in 1997 and were unanimously selected from a short list as designers and quantity surveyors after a two stage selection process.

The Theatre Manager Liz Leyshon had defined the existing buildings shortcomings and produced a design brief that fully addressed the problems. It was important to produce a building of quality that would act as a catalyst for fund raising.

There needed to be a new foyer, bar and box office with the required admin and back up facilities. A scene dock and actors entrance, a rehearsal space equating to the area of the stage, a recording studio and meeting room. The existing basement and back stage dressing rooms were also to be improved and refurbished. Access for disabled performers and patrons was a mandatory requirement of the Lottery application.

The Theatre name is displayed high on the wall of the stair tower, angled to relate to the existing theatre and to face the direction most people approach the building from. The angular jutting prow of the glazed bar area reveals the building interior and positively beckons people inside. The new entrance, surmounted and sheltered by a glazed meeting room is prominent and brightly lit. The covered walkway adjacent to the road side is intended as shelter for queuing cinema goers and is expressed elevationally as a pierced screen. This architectural device gives order to the facade and resolves the conflict in geometry generated by the site and the existing theatre as well as supporting the building.

Internally a double height top lit space is used for art displays against the old theatre external wall.