The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama

'Phase 5' – Studio 1 Redevelopment

Planning Statement Deloitte LLP



Real Estate

The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama – 'Phase 5' Planning Statement

November 2014



Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Background to the Proposals	2
3	Site and Surroundings	5
4	Proposed Development	7
5	Statement of Community Involvement	10
6	Key Planning Considerations	12
7	Planning Obligations	20
8	Conclusions	21
Арр	endix 1: Site Plan	22
Appendix 2: Exhibition Boards		23
Арр	endix 3: Exhibition Questionnaires	24

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Deloitte LLP in support of a planning application, submitted on behalf of The Royal School of Speech and Drama (Central) ("The Applicant"), for the redevelopment of its Studio 1 building, College Crescent, Swiss Cottage, Camden ("The Site").
- 1.2 Central is seeking full planning permission for:

"Demolition of studio building and fire escape staircase, erection of ground plus three storey building with basements and mezzanine levels, comprising rehearsal and performance studios, teaching and academic floorspace (Class D1), cycle parking, plant and associated works."

1.3 This Planning Statement sets out the planning justification for the proposed development and assesses the development against the Development Plan for the area and relevant material considerations.

Application Documents

- 1.4 The application includes or is supported by the following documents which has been agreed with the Local Planning Authority:
 - Application Forms and Ownership Certificate;
 - Site Location Plan;
 - Existing and proposed plans, sections and elevations prepared by Tim Ronalds Architects;
 - Design and Access Statement prepared by Tim Ronalds Architects;
 - Daylight/ Sunlight Assessment prepared by Devla Patman Redler LLP;
 - Basement Impact Assessment prepared by Price & Myers and GEA Ltd;
 - Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Sandy Brown Associates;
 - Aboricultural Survey prepared by Sylva Consultancy;
 - Sustainability Statement prepared by Max Fordham;
 - Energy Statement prepared by Max Fordham;
 - BREEAM Pre-assessment prepared by Price & Myers;
 - Transport Statement prepared by Iceni;
 - Outline Construction Management Plan (as part of the Transport Statement);
 - Waste and Refuse Management Plan prepared by Central;
 - Statement of Community Involvement (as part of this Planning Statement).

Structure of the Planning Statement

- 1.5 The remainder of this Statement is structured as follows:
 - Section 2 explains the background to the proposals;
 - Section 3 describes the Site and surrounding area;
 - Section 4 explains the proposed development;
 - Section 5 describes the community and stakeholder engagement that has informed the scheme;
 - Section 6 assesses the scheme against planning policy and relevant material considerations;
 - Section 7 sets out the Section 106 and planning obligations Heads of Terms; and
 - Section 8 summarises the key planning considerations and explains why planning permission should be granted.

2 Background to the Proposals

Introduction to The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama

- 2.1 Central was founded at the Royal Albert Hall in 1906. Since this time it has sustained a reputation for innovation and excellence in the theatrical and performing arts. By 1956, Central had outgrown its facilities at the Royal Albert Hall and purchased the lease to the historic Embassy Theatre and former Hampstead Conservatoire buildings, at its current home in Swiss Cottage (see Section 3 for a description of the Site and the wider Campus).
- 2.2 Central became the first drama college to be embraced within the formal Higher Education sector and was anointed as the Centre for Excellence in Training for Theatre in 2005. Subsequent funding from HEFCE enabled the natural expansion of the School to create the 'West Block' in 2005, which provided new studios and workshops to complement the existing facilities and respond to the students' evolving needs.
- 2.3 In 2005, Central was invited to join the Federation of Colleges which forms the University of London. Central was considered to complement the University's provision of arts specialisation as a preeminent school of theatrical performance. Membership of the University has also enabled Central to establish a programme of practice-based research which is unique in the network of drama conservatoires in the UK.
- 2.4 In 2012, Central was accorded Royal Title in recognition of the impact made by the School on behalf of British dramatic arts worldwide.
- 2.5 Central has a global reputation for delivering world class teaching and training and having a direct impact on the arts and performance industries.
- 2.6 Approximately one-third of students study acting at Central, and the School has a roster of world renowned acting alumni including Laurence Olivier, Judi Dench, Julie Christie, Vanessa Redgrave and Harold Pinter, to name but a few. Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders attended Central's Teacher Training course.
- 2.7 Central also offers an unusual breadth of disciplines including many unique courses such as puppetry and object theatre, lighting and sound design, costume design, stage design and construction, and writing for stage and broadcast media. Many of these courses are not offered at other Higher Education institutions in the UK, and Central's alumni are recognised as technical experts worldwide and fundamental to West End theatre production.
- 2.8 Central understands the importance of investing in its facilities and evolving to meet the growing needs of staff and students in the performing arts. During the 1990s, Central carried out a major development programme. The Embassy extension opened in 1994 and accommodated new workshop and teaching facilities. The East Block opened in 1997 and provided a library, offices and teaching space. The refurbishment of the Embassy Theatre was completed in 2002. Finally, the West Block opened in 2005 and provided 11 teaching and rehearsal studios.
- 2.9 Central makes a significant impact in terms of public benefits locally with a wide range of performances, seminars, lectures, festivals and exhibitions open to local residents and the general public each year. The School also has an active and on-going involvement with local schools and community groups.

Current Conditions

2.10 Central's facilities have long been considered to be amongst the best in the UK. However, the facilities are becoming cramped and it is essential that Central evolves to respond to the changing demands of staff and students and modern academic standards.

- 2.11 The School's campus is operating above its maximum capacity. This often creates difficulties with timetabling the large number of courses and limits the flexibility of teaching courses offered.
- 2.12 To meet its existing needs, Central rents out a large amount of floor space across London (see figure 1 below). The off-site accommodation is located entirely within Central London and, as such, is very expensive for the School to rent on a short-medium term basis. As the space is not bespoke it cannot always adequately meet the students' specialised needs and limits the type of teaching that can be undertaken.
- 2.13 The off-site accommodation is located a considerable distance from the main campus, requiring students and staff to travel across London for various classes and creating timetabling problems. The distance of this off-site accommodation from the main Swiss Cottage campus is also undesirable for students who feel that these spaces lack a sense of cohesion within the School's wider creative community.
- 2.14 Aside from being undesirable to students and located a considerable distance from the main campus in Swiss Cottage, Central's off-site rental costs are very expensive.

Increased Competition

- 2.15 Training for the performance arts, across the world, is becoming ever more competitive. Where Britain once held a commanding position, other countries are moving forward. New academies and schools are opening and expanding in USA, Canada, and Australia as well as in Europe. Full funded scholarships are often made available and new remarkable facilities are being built worldwide.
- 2.16 Other colleges nationally are also expanding with new state of the art theatres, studios and workshops. The Guildhall School of Music and Drama has recently opened a major new complex, supported by the Corporation of London, and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama has just opened a substantial and impressive range of performance spaces.

Central's Vision

- 2.17 Central's as a world-leading institution in the theatrical and performing artsseeks to place students at the centre of the School's work by enhancing the student experience and evolving to meet their changing and growing demands.
- 2.18 Central understands the importance of continuing to invest in its campus and to ensure its students benefit from state of the art facilities. The pressure on the quality of facilities is intensifying and Central is now seeking to respond to the growing competition, both nationally and globally. This approach will ensure Central maintains its world class reputation to attract the best talent and produce the best alumni. The commitment to investing in its facilities is demonstrated by the School's past development programmes outlined in paragraph 2.8.
- 2.19 Crucial in delivering this vision is reduction of Central's reliance on off-site accommodation. As set out above, this accommodation is very expensive and unpopular with students who have to travel away from the Central community to often unsuitable spaces in different areas of London.
- 2.20 Central therefore wishes to consolidate more of its students on its Swiss Cottage campus, which will significantly enhance the student experience and reduce costs and pressures of renting off-site accommodation.
- 2.21 There is therefore an urgent need to provide high quality and bespoke teaching and performance space, fitting to the School's world-leading reputation. This space will help meet Central's existing needs rather than allow for growth.

2.22 It is imperative that new facilities are developed on the Swiss Cottage campus to allow Central to stay within Camden and continue its social and cultural impact in the local area. Central has therefore undertaken a comprehensive review of the Swiss Cottage campus to assess where new accommodation can be provided.

Central's Requirements

- 2.23 Central has carried out a robust need assessment, involving extensive consultation with staff to determine what type of accommodation is required to meet their immediate needs and allow the School to consolidate on the Swiss Cottage campus. The process identified a significant lack of large studios and highlighted the problems of substandard off-site space.
- 2.24 The assessment also identified that the existing staff facilities are of poor quality and the offices are overcrowded and too small (some offices are as small as 4sqm per person). Better offices are needed if Central is to continue to attract and retain the best staff.
- 2.25 The study identified that the requirements set out below are needed to meet the School's immediate needs and deliver Central's vision for the short-medium term. These facilities are needed to provide adequate accommodation for Central's existing student numbers and do not allow for the growth of the School.

Central's Immediate Needs	
5 large studios	Teaching/ rehearsal studios
2 teaching/ meeting rooms	For group tuition
6 offices	For sole occupation, suitable for teaching
Shared office space	To accommodate a minimum of 12 staff
Support spaces	Dressing rooms, showers, storage and WCs

2.26 The need assessment also identified the School's longer term aspirations to create an improved entrance, enhanced catering facilities and to create a 'Student Centre' to provide centrally located social space. This longer term need will not be accommodated by this planning application, but demonstrates Central's strategic approach to investing in its facilities.

3 Site and Surroundings

The Central Campus

- 3.1 Central's Swiss Cottage Campus measures approximately 0.47 hectares and comprises a variety of buildings of differing age, architectural style, construction and condition, including a number of temporary and portable structures. The Site is situated in a prominent location at the southern end of Finchley Road at the corner of Eton Avenue, College Crescent and Buckland Crescent. It is near the Swiss Cottage gyratory intersection and within 50 metres of the Swiss Cottage Underground station.
- 3.2 The Central Campus can be divided into several elements:
 - the original Victorian three storey main school building fronting Eton Avenue, with large theatre wing at rear, facing gardens of Buckland Crescent;
 - the "Embassy extension" to the west side of the Site, built and extended in 1990s following several permissions;
 - the redbrick "east block" comprising teaching and ancillary rooms east of the school in Eton Ave, built during the 1990s;
 - vacant site occupied by portacabins to the west of the School comprising a café and studios;
 - the glazed West Block (also historically known as Phase 4) which fronts College Crescent, built in 2005; and,
 - the timber clad Studio 1 building on the corner of Buckland Crescent and College Crescent.
- 3.3 The current application is referred to as the 'Phase 5' development. The application site is that of the existing Studio 1 building. This site is located at the corner of College Crescent and Buckland Crescent at the northern end of the Campus. It is bound by Buckland Crescent to the north; 51 Buckland Crescent to the east; the West Block building to the south; and College Crescent to the west.

The Surrounding Area

- 3.4 Whilst land uses in the surrounding area are varied, the area is characterised by residential, town centre retail, theatre and performance arts uses and Central's own higher education campus. Retail uses can be found to the west of the Site on Swiss Cottage high street beyond Finchley Road and also the Odeon IMAC cinema island site to the south. The area to the east of the Site comprises primarily residential uses. The nearest public open space is found 100m south of the Site, south of Hampstead Theatre.
- 3.5 Directly opposite the Site are large eleven-storey blocks of flats and offices on Finchley Road. To the north is a seven-storey 1930s block of flats (Northways, Finchley Road) and to the south is a six-storey office block (100 Avenue Road). The north of the Site adjoins Buckland Crescent, which has three storeys with basement, classical-style villas. To the north of this are higher five-storey and basement blocks of flats in College Crescent. Eton Avenue is stopped up and pedestrianised at its junction with Finchley Road. It has an entrance to the Swiss Cottage tube station. The road at this end and outside the school frontage contains fine mature plane trees.
- 3.6 The Site abuts to its north and east the Belsize Conservation Area, which comprises residential properties in Adamson Road and Buckland Crescent.
- 3.7 The Site has a TfL Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 6a, indicating excellent access to the location by public transport. Swiss Cottage Station is situated less than 50m from the Site and it is served by a number of bus routes running along Finchley Road. The Site is well served by cycle routes.
- 3.8 A Site Location Plan is provided at Appendix 1.

Site Description

- 3.9 The freehold of the Site is owned by London Borough of Camden; Central is a long leaseholder. The Site is currently occupied by Studio 1, a two storey timber clad building providing a mix of rehearsal and performance space for the School (Use Class D1). This was originally intended as a temporary structure.
- 3.10 The building currently provides 382 m² Gross Internal Area (GIA).
- 3.11 The existing building is not physically linked to the other buildings on the Campus and is accessed via the existing service yard which serves the School to the south of the site.

Site Allocation and Designations

- 3.12 The Site is situated within the Swiss Cottage Town Centre and adjacent to the Belsize Park Conservation Area.
- 3.13 There are no environmental designations on the Site.

Planning History

- 3.14 An outline planning application was submitted in February 2001 for the fourth and fifth phase of the School's masterplan (Planning Application Ref: PWX0103160R2). For clarity, the Phase 5 described in that 2001 application is not the Phase 5 subject to this current application (Studio 1), but instead referred to the site on the corner of Eton Avenue and College Crescent.
- 3.15 This proposed a mixed-use development proposed additional space for the School as well as affordable housing. On 6 December 2001 the LB Camden Planning Committee agreed with the officer's recommendation and approved this scheme, subject to a legal agreement to secure affordable housing.
- 3.16 The scale and massing which the 2001 scheme established and which LB Camden found acceptable, informed the detailed designs for Phase 4 (the West Block) and have to an extent informed designs for the current proposals. The proposals involved the redevelopment of the College Crescent frontage and part of the Eton Avenue frontage of the Campus for a 5-8 storey building.
- 3.17 There have been a series of planning applications approved by LB Camden over the past twenty years, pursuant to the implementation of the first 3 phases of the masterplan:
 - 1960-80s Various limited period planning permissions (now expired) for portacabins and wooden buildings on west corner site;
 - 17 January 1992 variation of earlier planning permission for alterations to fly tower and erection of four storey extension to Embassy Theatre and extensions to Studio theatre;
 - 29 April 1994 planning permission granted for four storey east wing building for teaching purposes;
 - 29 April 1994 planning permission granted for a four storey south block for café, theatre and teaching facilities (not implemented, planning permission renewed on 13 July 1999); and,
 - 6 December 2001 resolution to grant outline planning permission for 2,878sqm of education, 540sqm of A1, 578sqm of A3 and 3,362sqm of residential floorspace.

4 Proposed Development

Description of Development

4.1 Planning permission is sought for:

"Demolition of studio building and fire escape staircase, erection of ground plus three storey building with basements and mezzanine levels, comprising rehearsal and performance studios, teaching and academic floorspace (Class D1), cycle parking, plant and associated works."

4.2 Plans showing the Site in its existing and proposed form have been submitted with the application.

Proposed Uses

4.3 It is proposed that the development will comprise spaces totalling 2,213sqm GIA as identified in the following table:

Level	Use	Gross Internal Area (sqm)
Basement 2	Studio, plant and store	216
Basement 1	Dressing rooms, facilities and toilets	80
Ground	Studio and meeting rooms	219
Ground Mezzanine	Temporary gallery, board room, store	128
Level 1	Studio, store toilets, offices, plant	221
Level 1 Mezzanine	Changing facilities and offices	94
Level 2	Studio, store toilets, offices, plant	221
Level 2 Mezzanine	Changing facilities and offices	94
Level 3	Studio, store toilets, offices, plant	149
Other	Circulation and internal walls	180
Total		2,213

Student and Staff Numbers

4.4 The proposed development is not intended to facilitate an increase in admissions or staffing numbers. The additional facilities will however allow Central to consolidate its activities on the Swiss Cottage campus in fit for purposes spaces instead of using off-site facilities. This will help Central to optimise programmes and learning opportunities for students and maintain its worldwide reputation.

- 4.5 The proposed development is not intended to facilitate an increase in admissions or staffing numbers. The additional facilities will however allow Central to consolidate their activities on the Swiss Cottage campus in fit for purposes spaces instead of using off-site facilities. This will help Central to optimise programmes and learning opportunities for students
- 4.6 On completion, these additional facilities will allow c. 40 additional students per day to use the campus facilities. This consolidation of facilities on site will reduce the amount of travel required around London and improve student experience.

Design

- 4.7 The proposed development involves studios at the rear of the Site, to the south, with smaller scale teaching and academic spaces facing onto Buckland Crescent and College Crescent. The new building will connect to the existing West Block.
- 4.8 Mezzanine storeys and double height spaces are incorporated in the building, to reflect the requirements of the School for flexible teaching space. As a result, the studio element of the building only is 19.7m in height about ground level. However, it will not be taller than the adjoining West Block (c. 20m above ground level).
- 4.9 The exterior of the building is proposed to use painted stucco, to create a link with the stucco architecture of the Belsize Conservation Area. The proposed development will create a transition in both scale and materials between the glass curtain wall of Central's West Block building and the stucco terraces and villas of Buckland Crescent and College Crescent.
- 4.10 For further information regarding detailed design please refer to the Design and Access Statement and application drawings prepared by Tim Ronalds Architects accompanying this submission which describe the design concept..

Energy and Sustainability

- 4.11 Central has set out a clear vision and target for delivering sustainability on the Site.
- 4.12 The approach for the Studio 1 redevelopment is to deliver a number of sustainability benefits:
 - Reducing the amount of waste generated during demolition.
 - Minimising the embodied carbon footprint of new construction.
 - Reducing vehicle movements and emissions from construction traffic.
 - The use of an increased level of building envelope insulation and piped services, low energy lighting and electrical appliances, high specification lighting control, water saving appliances and low air permeability of the building.
 - Provision of 150sqm of high efficiency solar panels to offset 26% of carbon emissions of the building.
 - Achieving a 28% baseline improvement through the energy saving and onsite generation technologies proposed, increasing to 32% when the office lighting savings are fully accounted for.
- 4.13 This approach ensures that the scheme will achieve a BREEAM Excellent Rating.

Access

- 4.14 The building's primary point of access will be from Central's main access off Eton Avenue. A fire escape route will be provided onto Buckland Crescent.
- 4.15 The building will create a fully accessible teaching and working environment for staff and students. Central is committed to monitoring and identifying the needs of current and future users with disabilities, and responding by incorporating necessary changes into new developments. This is covered in more detail in the Design and Access Statement, which accompanies this application.

4.16 Servicing will continue to be from Eton Avenue with some occasional use of the existing service yard accessed off Buckland Crescent.

Sustainable Transport

- 4.17 The proposed development will be entirely car free.
- 4.18 The Site is well served by public transport with Swiss Cottage Station within close proximity and numerous bus routes running along College Crescent and Finchley Road.
- 4.19 Central currently provides 38 cycle parking spaces on its Campus. In accordance with LBC's adopted standards, Central proposes to provide 18 spaces under this application to meet the requirement generated by the proposed uplift in floorspace (based on the provision of 1 space per 250 m² floorspace for both staff and students). Central is proposing to safeguard an area for the potential provision of extra cycle spaces.
- 4.20 Showers and lockers will be provided.
- 4.21 The use of sustainable modes of transport by staff and students is already very high, with the vast majority of staff and students using Studio 1 accessing the building by walking, cycling or using public transport.
- 4.22 A Transport Statement prepared by Iceni accompanies this application. A site-specific outline Travel Plan will be secured through the Section 106 legal agreement.

5 Statement of Community Involvement

5.1 This section summarises the consultation that has been undertaken during the evolution of the proposals and how it has influenced the design of the scheme.

Consultation Overview

- 5.2 Central has sought to engage with key stakeholders throughout the design development, including consultation with statutory consultees from an early stage and communication with the local community.
- 5.3 During the development of the design, the team developed a comprehensive stakeholder strategy. This included pre-application consultation meetings with the LBC Planning and Highway Authorities, Residents Associations and Local Councillors. Extensive consultation was also carried out with students and staff at the school.
- 5.4 A public exhibition was held on 23 and 25 October and invitations were sent to over 400 local residents and businesses as well as local stakeholders and community groups such as the Belsize Conservation Area Advisory Committee.
- 5.5 The feedback from key stakeholders is summarised below.

London Borough of Camden

- 5.6 LBC officers were consulted through a series of pre-application meetings held between February and November 2014. The focus of discussions at each of these meetings is listed below:
 - First pre-application meeting Strategy and Principles 12 February 2014
 - Second pre-application meeting Design Workshop 1 25 June 2014
 - Third pre-application meeting Design Workshop 2 18 July 2014
 - Fourth pre-application meeting Design Workshop 3 7 November 2014
- 5.7 The Applicant submitted detailed design information to LBC in advance of pre-application meetings.
- 5.8 Design Workshops 1 and 2 focused on space requirements to meet the project brief, impacts on the adjoining Conservation Area and neighbouring buildings.
- 5.9 As the proposals evolved, discussions concentrated on height, massing, bulk and the proposed form and materials of the elevations.
- 5.10 Design Workshop 3 focused on finalising the detailed design including elevations and materials. This was influenced by feedback from the results of public exhibition. Please refer to the Design and Access Statement supporting the application for additional details of how the design has evolved in response to LBC Officer feedback and wider consultation.

Public Exhibition

5.11 A detailed local community and stakeholder strategy was drawn up and agreed with the LPA in terms of the catchment area of addresses who were invited to the exhibition. Attendants at the exhibition were invited through personal invitations and consultation letters.

- 5.12 A number of exhibition boards were on display at the event, which presented the development proposals for the Phase 5 Studio 1 redevelopment in written and visual form.
- 5.13 The four exhibition boards can viewed at Appendix 2 of this Statement.
- 5.14 Those who attended the public exhibition were invited to leave comments through a feedback form. The form gathered opinions on the proposals, its design and also left space open for further comments.
- 5.15 A copy example of the feedback form can be found in Appendix 3.
- 5.16 17 people attended the exhibition and of these 8 completed a feedback form. Attendees were asked if they supported the development proposals. Of those who attended and completed the form 100% reported they supported the proposals.
- 5.17 The feedback form gave attendees the opportunity to leave a written comment to accompany their view. The accompanying feedback showed a theme of strong support for the design, regarding it as attractive in appearance and recognition was given to the development's fit with the surroundings through its design and scale.
- 5.18 Attendees were asked if they supported the development's design. 75% of respondents stated their support. The remaining 25% left the design feedback box blank. However all of those who left the box blank had previously stated via the prior comment box that they supported the design.
- 5.19 The feedback forms then gave respondents the opportunity to provide general comments. Most respondents left the response box blank however further comments were collected from two participants.
- 5.20 Of the two participants one respondent reported that they were not happy with the basement development that was included in the design. However, as explained in Section 2 of this Statement, the construction of basement is vital to the feasibility of the development in order for Central to meet its urgent operational needs.
- 5.21 The second respondent highlighted what they perceived to be the opportunity for a solution to be found for a small neglected piece of land lying next to the proposed development, described as a *'dumping ground for rubbish, cars etc.'* when implementing the scheme. It was unclear to which land this referred. However, there are no such areas on the Central site and the proposal will be part of a well maintained wider school site.

Public Exhibition Summary

- 5.22 Overall it is considered that a successful and effective consultation exercise has been undertaken in respect of the Studio 1 proposals at Central. The consultation allowed local residents and key stakeholders to have their say and to engage with the School and its design team.
- 5.23 Those who attended the consultation were found to support the development and gave merit to the quality of the design.
- 5.24 Central will continue to engage with and update key stakeholders and the local community throughout the application process.

6 Key Planning Considerations

6.1 This section considers the Scheme against the Development Plan for the area and relevant material considerations.

Planning Policy Framework

- 6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.3 The Development Plan for the area comprises the London Plan (2011), Further Alterations to the London Plan (2014), the Camden Core Strategy (2010) and Development Policies DPD (2010).
- 6.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012), the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG, March 2014), draft Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP, 2013) and Camden Planning Guidance (updated 2013) are material considerations.
- 6.5 The London Plan sets out broad development policies for London and as such we have concentrated on policies set out in the Local Development Framework and Camden Planning Guidance to assess the detailed proposals.

Principle of Development

- 6.6 There is support for the expansion of education facilities at a national, regional and local level.
- 6.7 NPPF paragraph 72 states:

"The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools."

6.8 London Plan Strategic Policy 4.10 - New and Emerging Economic Sectors - states:

"The Mayor will, and boroughs and other relevant agencies and stakeholders should... give strong support for London's higher and further education institutions and their development, recognising their needs for accommodation and the special status of the parts of London where they are located..."

6.9 London Plan paragraph 3.52 acknowledges that London's universities make a significant contribution to its economy and labour market. It states that:

"London's universities make a significant contribution to its economy and labour market (Policies 3.18 and 4.10)."

- 6.10 The Council promotes growth and appropriate development at highly accessible locations, such as Swiss Cottage (Policy CS1). It seeks development to make full use of the Site, taking into account quality of design, its surroundings, sustainability, amenity, heritage and transport accessibility.
- 6.11 The provision of new facilities for Higher Education institutions is supported by Policy CS10 which states:

"The Council will work with its partners to ensure that community facilities and services are provided for Camden's communities and people who work in and visit the borough.

b) supporting the higher education sector in Camden and balancing its requirements with those of other sectors and the local community. In assessing applications for higher education use, the Council will ensure that such developments are sensitive to their surroundings, take into account the cumulative impact on the balance and mix of uses in the area, protect residential uses, the local environment and the amenity of, and services for, the residential community and other users of the area and their future needs."

- 6.12 The Site is located within Central's Swiss Cottage campus and will replace the existing 'Studio 1' building, which is currently used as rehearsal and performance space. It will be located adjacent and link into the 'West Block' building.
- 6.13 The Site is highly accessible, with a PTAL rating of 6a and is within the Swiss Cottage Town Centre. It is therefore considered a suitable location for the expansion of educational uses.

Mixed Use Development

- 6.14 Policy DP1 states that the Council will require a mix of uses in development where appropriate. The Policy states that in the Swiss Cottage Town Centre up to 50% of all additional floorspace should be provided as housing.
- 6.15 No non-residential uses are specifically excluded from this requirement. However, a number of other factors are identified in the policy, which should be taken into account when considering whether a mix of uses should be sought and the scale and nature of any contribution to the supply of housing. This includes the character of the area; whether the additional floorspace is needed for an existing user; the economics and financial viability of the development; and any other planning objectives considered to be a priority for the Site. All of these factors are relevant in this case and the most pertinent factors are considered in turn below.

Character of the Area

- 6.16 The Site is part of Central's Swiss Cottage campus and will replace the existing 'Studio 1' building, which is currently used as rehearsal and performance space. It will be located adjacent to and link into the 'West Block' building. As explained in Section 2 of this Statement, Central has limited land available to meet the needs of their students and consequently rents substandard off-site accommodation across London. Sites within the campus should be prioritised for teaching and educational uses.
- 6.17 Central forms part of an emerging 'cultural quarter' in Swiss Cottage along with the Hampstead Theatre, Swiss Cottage Library, the Odeon IMAX cinema, the market and the leisure centre all close by. It is considered that the creation of new educational space further complements the surrounding area. It will secure the long-term future of Central at Swiss Cottage in Camden.

Meeting Central's needs

- 6.18 Paragraph 1.23 of the supporting text states the Council may not seek housing or other secondary uses where a development is required to accommodate an existing user on the site (unless the development involves additional floorspace that is surplus to the user's requirements).
- 6.19 It is essential that Central is able to develop land within its campus and improve existing building, to maintain its position as a world leading institute in the theatrical and performing arts.
- 6.20 Chapter 2 sets out the background to the proposals and the needs assessment undertaken to inform the Studio 1 redevelopment proposals. Central needs to invest into its facilities to respond to growing national and global competition. It is seeking to consolidate it students on the Swiss Cottage site and reduce its

reliance on expensive and substandard off-site accommodation which is unpopular with students. It is therefore imperative that new facilities are developed on the Swiss Cottage campus to allow Central to stay within Camden and continue its social and cultural impact in the local area.

6.21 The Studio 1 redevelopment proposals will provide state of the art teaching and performance space and new offices, which will improve Central's offer to help maintain and enhance its position as a word leading institute. The proposal includes the minimum floorspace required to meet Central's immediate needs and already includes the provision of two basement storeys. The provision of residential uses within the Campus would limit the potential for redevelopment and replacement of educational facilities now and in the future: it would make the Phase 5 proposal unfeasible and unviable.

Funding

- 6.22 Central is an Exempt Charity, regulated and part publicly funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Of the overall cost of the scheme, it seeks to raise £2m to set alongside its own investment from reserves and raised through a business loan. Raising more than £2m will enable Central to reduce its call on reserves and/or borrowing requirements, further protecting the School's future in times that will undoubtedly bring further changes to education funding.
- 6.23 The remainder of the funding for capital projects, which is not provided by HEFCE, will be secured through fundraising and development activity.

Summary – Mixed Use Development

6.24 It is therefore considered there is a strong basis for an exception to Policy DP1 in this instance in accordance with the factors a) to j) of the Policy and the supporting text.

Design and Heritage

- 6.25 The Site is located adjacent to the Belsize Conservation Area and adjacent to 51 Buckland Crescent, which is identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Policies CS14, DP24 and DP25 seek to ensure that development proposals meet the highest standards of design, respect local context and character, and resist development that would cause harm to the setting of a Conservation Area.
- 6.26 Policy CS14 states:

"The Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;

b) preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;

c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;

d) seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible;

e) protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views."

6.27 Policy DP24 states:

"Policy DP24 - Securing high quality design

The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;

b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;

c) the quality of materials to be used;

d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;

e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;

f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;

g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;

h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and

i) accessibility."

6.28 Policy DP25 states:

"In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will:

a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;

b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;

c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;

d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and

e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage."

- 6.29 Whilst the Site is not located within the Belsize Park Conservation Area, it is considered to be within its setting. The proposal provides an opportunity to enhance the setting of the Conservation Area by replacing the existing building with a new high quality design of building which reflects and integrates with the surrounding context and expresses the function of the building. The character and setting of the Conservation Area has been carefully considered at an early design stage and the impact of the proposals on its setting has been tested extensively during the design process. As set out in Section 5 of this Statement, there has been close engagement with LB Camden planning and design/ conservation officers and also local stakeholders at public exhibitions.
- 6.30 It is considered the submitted scheme provides a sensitive and considered approach that positively responds to the character, materiality and setting of the Conservation Area whilst creating sufficient additional floorspace to meet Central's immediate needs on a heavily constrained site.

- 6.31 The existing Studio 1 building is outdated, at the end of its useful life, of very poor architectural merit and detracts from the setting of the Conservation Area. The proposals seek to replace this outdated building with a building of high quality architecture that respects and relates to the surrounding properties. The materials (primarily painted stucco) and design proposed are in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area. The proposals will aesthetically improve the site considerably and will thus contribute towards improving the general quality of this part of Swiss Cottage for the benefit of those working, studying and visiting the area. It is therefore considered the proposals significantly enhance the setting and appearance of the Conservation Area and are in accordance with Policy DP25.
- 6.32 The Site lies at a transition point between two distinct character areas. It is located between the busy Swiss Cottage gyratory and the quieter residential street of Buckland Crescent. The former is dominated by modern taller buildings (eleven and seven storey blocks of flats and offices) and the latter largely characterised by three storey residential properties. As illustrated in the supporting Design and Access Statement, the design of the proposal has taken cues from the surrounding townscape to ensure it is in fitting within the streetscape and successfully responds to its position as a transition site. The layout and scale of the proposed building takes cues from other corner buildings in the immediate area where the entrances to streets are demarcated by bookend buildings on the corner. The design does not seek to replicate the exact form or architecture of the residential properties on Buckland Crescent, but uses them as reference points to mediate between the old and the new.
- 6.33 The proposed parapet line facing Buckland Crescent is no higher than existing neighbouring terraces and matches exactly the opposite bookend building on the corner Buckland Crescent and College Crescent. The taller studio element of the proposals will be set back from Buckland Crescent and College Crescent.
- 6.34 The studio element is set back from Buckland Crescent and is only visible from a small number of local views. The studio element is visible behind the proposed main building in the view looking west on Buckland Crescent; however, this view looks out of the Conservation area (rather than into) and is therefore considered to be a less important view. The studio element is also only visible from nearby local views and will not be visible in longer views down Buckland Crescent.
- 6.35 The design seeks to create variety and visual interest in the facade through the use of materials and detailing to reflect the more traditional context of Buckland Crescent. The building will positively engage with the streetscape and includes an element of ground floor glazing to create visual interest and allow the public to appreciate the use of the building.
- 6.36 As set out in Section 5 above, there was an overwhelming positive response from local residents at the public exhibition. Residents appreciated how the design of the proposals is sympathetic to, and takes design cues from, the adjacent terraces on Buckland Crescent. Residents acknowledged that the Site lies between two distinct character areas and considered that the proposals successfully respected this transitional location.

Public Benefits

6.37 The proposals will provide significant public benefits, which are material considerations when assessing the impact of the proposals. These are summarised below:

Role of Central

- 6.38 Central has a global reputation for delivering world class teaching and training and public presentation, having a direct impact on the arts and performance industries. Its alumni include world famous actors and renowned technical experts that are fundamental to West End productions. In 2012, Central was accorded Royal Title in recognition of the impact made by the School on behalf of British dramatic arts worldwide.
- 6.39 Central also offers an unusual breadth of disciplines including many unique courses such as puppetry and object theatre, lighting and sound design, costume design, stage design and construction, and writing for

stage and broadcast media. Many of these courses are not offered at other Higher Education institutions in the UK, and their future may be vulnerable if Central cannot provide new facilities on the Swiss Cottage campus. Central places great importance in the diversity of its offer and seeks to retain its specialist courses if possible.

6.40 It is imperative that new facilities are developed on the Swiss Cottage campus to allow Central to stay within Camden and continue offering world class training courses to students and producing high quality alumni. The Phase 5 proposals will provide Central with essential new facilities to meet their immediate needs as well as to continue to attract the highest calibre of staff and students.

Role in Camden

- 6.41 Central's campus is an important aspect of the 'cultural quarter' at Swiss Cottage alongside the Hampstead Theatre, Swiss Cottage Library, the Leisure Centre, the IMAX cinema and the market. Most local residents have strong affection for the School and consider it to be a key local landmark in the civic hub at Swiss Cottage.
- 6.42 Central makes an important contribution to the local area and has excellent relationships with local public services, such as the market, library, leisure centre and Community Centre, as well as with area traders and the local parish church. Central offers a wide range of performances, seminars, lectures, festivals and exhibitions open to residents each year.
- 6.43 Central also has a rich outreach programme of works with local school and community groups, including a vibrant Saturday school and a range of summer schools that are open to children and young people from the local area. These contributions are highly valued by local residents and are considered to be a significant public benefit.
- 6.44 The Phase 5 proposals will provide Central with the additional space needed to grow its youth work programmes and to contribute more comprehensively to the cultural offerings in the local area, including the expanded provision of an affordable and diverse calendar of programming available to local residents.

Sustainability

- 6.45 The proposals will deliver the sustainable redevelopment of previously developed land and as such are inherently sustainable. This is consistent with the clear vision and targets that Central has set across its buildings, to improve sustainability across the entire Swiss Cottage campus.
- 6.46 Policy DP22 expects non-domestic developments of 500 m² of floorspace or above to achieve a "very good" BREAAM rating. The Studio 1 building redevelopment is currently expected to achieve BREEAM Excellent.
- 6.47 The Sustainability Statement prepared by Max Fordham which accompanies this submission sets out Central's wider sustainability objectives for the Studio 1 Site.
- 6.48 The proposals will enable sustainability benefits to be realised with regards to:
 - Energy Efficiency;
 - Water Efficiency;
 - Sustainable Use of Materials;
 - BREEAM;
 - Biodiversity;
 - Sustainable Urban Drainage; and
 - Adaption to Climate Change.
- 6.49 On the basis of the information provided in the Sustainability Strategy, the scheme fully complies with Policy CS13 which states that:

"The Council will require all development to take measures to minimise the effects of, and adapt to, climate change and encourage all development to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction and occupation."

Transport

- 6.50 Policy DP16 states that the Council will seek to ensure that development is properly integrated with the transport network and is supported by adequate walking, cycling and public transport links. The Site has an excellent PTAL rating (6a) and benefits from easy access to Swiss Cottage station and a number of active bus routes, as well as cycling and walking routes and nearby shops and amenities.
- 6.51 Policies CS11 and DP17 endorse walking, cycling and public transport which are already heavily used by Central staff and students. A policy compliant amount of 18 cycle parking spaces will be provided onsite.
- 6.52 In accordance with DP17, the Council will resist development that would be dependent on travel by private motor vehicles. It is proposed that the Studio 1 redevelopment scheme will be entirely car free with no onsite parking spaces. As such, the proposals are also in full accordance with policies DP18 and DP19 which provide guidance on parking standards and managing the impact of vehicle parking respectively.
- 6.53 For full details please refer to the Transport Statement prepared by Iceni which supports this application.

Noise

- 6.54 In accordance with Policy DP28, measures have been taken to mitigate plant noise as detailed in the Noise Impact Assessment prepared by Sandy Brown Associates which supports this application. Policy DP28 states that the cumulative noise level emitted from all new plant should not exceed 5dB below the existing background noise level, when assessed at 1m outside the nearest noise sensitive façade, during the proposed hours of operation.
- 6.55 To ensure Policy DP28 is met, Sandy Brown Associate's Noise Impact Assessment surveyed current background noise levels across a 6 day period at nearby noise sensitive premises. The levels recorded in this survey allowed the appropriate sound limits to be set for the new development (in accordance with LBC).
- 6.56 The noise emissions that the new development will emit during the proposed hours of operation were found to be in line with the plant noise criteria when assessed at 1m from the nearest noise sensitive premises (being more than 5 dB below the current existing background noise level). They are therefore in line with Local Authority Criteria.
- 6.57 An assessment of noise emissions associated with the proposed plant selections along with recommended attenuation indicates that plant noise emissions would be in line with the Local Authority's standard criteria. Facade sound insulation performances have been specified such that noise egress associated with the operation of the studios is suitably controlled at the location of nearby noise sensitive receptors.

Daylight/ Sunlight

- 6.58 A daylight/ sunlight assessment by Devla Patman Redler has been carried out which assesses the likely impact of the proposed development on the main habitable rooms in neighbouring residential properties, in accordance with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidance, 'Site Layout for Daylight and Sunlight 2011.'
- 6.59 In terms of daylight, all but seven neighbouring windows currently comply with BRE guidance however the assessment demonstrates that this is due to the inherent design of the building and overhanging balconies, where the windows are located. When the neighbouring building is modelled without the overhanging balconies but with the proposed Phase 5 development, the number of windows experiencing losses is zero –

thus demonstrating that the proposals would not cause any adverse impact on daylight to the seven windows.

6.60 In relation to sunlight, not all the windows assessed for daylight qualify for sunlight analysis; nevertheless, the assessment confirms that all four living rooms in neighbouring properties that were tested are fully compliant in accordance with the BRE guidance on sunlight.

Basement Impact

- 6.61 The proposals involve the creation of two levels of basement and in line with Camden Planning Guidance CP4 and Development Policies DP27; a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) has been prepared by Price & Myers and GEA Ltd in support of this planning application.
- 6.62 The BIA concludes that whilst land stability as a result of ground movement should be recognised by the design team, GEA's analysis confirms that the ground movement is not significant. There is evidence to support that the proposed basement will not cause harm to the built or natural environment or local amenity, will not result in flooding of the area and will not cause the ground to be unstable.

Arboriculture

6.63 An Arboricultural Report by Sylva Consultancy assessed the condition of the existing three trees on the site. Each tree is considered to be of low quality and value and considered to be unremarkable with limited merit or with impaired conditions. The proposals involve the removal of two of these trees and it is judged that the proposed loss of these trees will not have a negative impact on the immediate surrounding environment.

Waste Management Strategy

- 6.64 A Waste Management Strategy prepared by the Applicant describes the measures to handle waste from the development. It is proposed to continue to use the current arraignments for the School, described below.
- 6.65 The majority of commingled recycling and general waste is collected by LB Camden from Eton Avenue, at the front of the main site. The collections are undertaken by a standard Veolia truck once a day, each weekday.
- 6.66 Workshop recycling and production waste is collected by company specialising in recycling, reclamation and hiring unwanted materials back to the entertainment industry. The service they provide is ad hoc, dependent on the level of unwanted materials needing disposal; however this service is currently utilised by Central once or twice a term. Servicing is by a 7.5t truck via Buckland Crescent, at the back gate entrance to the main site. Collections are typically undertaken between 10am and 4pm (Mon-Fri) and are of the 20 to 40 minute duration, dependent on load.

7 Planning Obligations

7.1 Central proposes to enter into a Section 106 legal agreement with LB Camden.

Section 106 Guidance

- 7.2 All development specific planning obligations are required to meet the legal tests, set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2010 (as amended by the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2014) which require planning obligations to be:
 - Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - Directly related to the development; and
 - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 7.3 Camden Planning Guidance 8: Planning Obligations (CPG 8) was adopted in September 2011 and sets out the Council's priorities for planning obligations. It provides guidance for planning obligations, which have been used to inform the Draft S106 Heads of Terms set out below.
- 7.4 LB Camden submitted their its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) draft charging schedule and supporting evidence to the Planning Inspectorate on 7th January 2014. The examination in public is due to take place in early 2015.

Planning Obligations

- 7.5 The following planning obligations are anticipated to be included in the Section 106 Agreement:
 - A site specific Construction Management Plan will be prepared (an outline is provided as part of the submitted Transport Statement).
 - A local employment and training strategy will be agreed, in consultation with LBC, and Central will endeavour to recruit construction apprentices working with the appointed contractor, in accordance with paragraph 8.17 of CPG 8.
 - A commitment to the Camden Local Procurement Code will be secured, to identify opportunities for local businesses during construction.
 - A site specific Travel Plan will be produced. This will consider options to promote sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling.

Monitoring

7.6 Central understands that a charge will be made for monitoring the completed legal agreement. This charge will depend on the number of clauses included in the legal agreement.

Legal costs

7.7 Central will meet the Council's reasonable legal costs incurred preparing and completing the legal agreement.

8 Conclusions

8.1 Central is seeking planning permission for the:

Demolition of studio building and fire escape staircase, erection of ground plus three storey building with basements and mezzanine levels, comprising rehearsal and performance studios, teaching and academic floorspace (Class D1), cycle parking, plant and associated works.

- 8.2 The proposed development complies fully with the relevant policies contained within the Development Plan as set out in this report. It will deliver a number of significant planning benefits which are relevant to the determination of this planning application including:
 - The proposals represent the continuing investment by Central in its campus to ensure its students benefit from state of the art facilities. The pressure on the quality of facilities is intensifying and Central is now seeking to respond to the growing competition, both nationally and globally. This approach will ensure Central maintains its world class reputation to attract the best talent and produce the best alumni. The commitment to investing in its facilities is demonstrated by the School's past development programmes.
 - The proposals will enhance the setting of the Belsize Park Conservation Area by redeveloping the existing detrimental Studio 1 temporary building with a new high quality design which reflects the surrounding context and the site's relationship with the Conservation Area in terms of design and materials. The design respects the setting of the Conservation Area by stepping back the mass of the building at the Buckland Street frontage and through the use of a pallet of materials that reflects those used on the Buckland Crescent villas.
 - The building will create a greater sense of identity and public accessibility at a key corner site in the Swiss Cottage town centre and emerging 'cultural quarter.'
 - The proposals represent the more efficient development of previously developed land and will achieve BREEAM Excellent through a variety of sustainability and energy measures.
 - The building is located in a highly sustainable location and will be entirely car free. The existing cycle parking provision will be upgraded to provide 18 cycle parking spaces meeting Camden's cycle parking standards for the development.
- 8.3 The proposal is fully compliant with all relevant planning policies and will deliver a range of public benefits.
- 8.4 For the reasons set out in this Planning Statement, we consider that planning permission should be granted.

Appendix 1: Site Plan



Appendix 2: Exhibition Boards

The Royal Central School of Speech & Drama

The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama is one of the UK's leading drama, theatre and performance schools, attracting students from around the world. Central has been on its current Swiss Cottage site since 1957.

In recent years, the school has begun to outgrow its facilities, renting a number of off-site spaces around London. Central must now develop to secure its long-term future in Camden and offer the best possible facilities to prepare students for work in the industry.

Central has identified the following immediate needs:

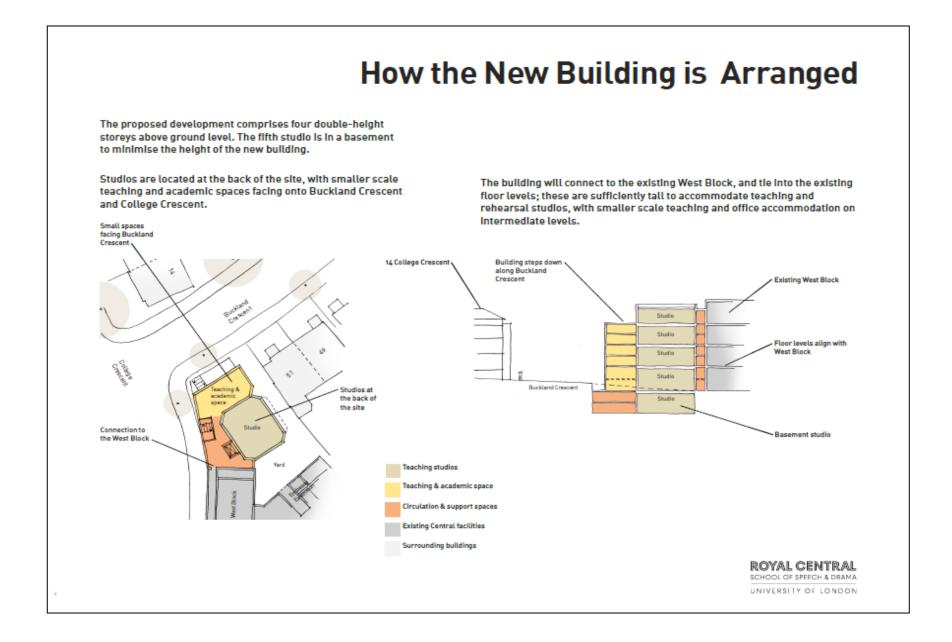
- 5 teaching and rehearsal studios, including 1 with dual use as a performance space and 1 focused on Television, Film and Broadcast Media
- 2 rooms for group tuition
- 6 academic offices suitable for teaching
- Shared office space for at least 12 staff
- Support spaces dressing rooms, storage & WCs







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The Application Site

The application site adjoins the Belsize Conservation Area and currently accommodates Studio 1, a timber framed temporary building which is coming to the end of its useful life.

Central's intention is to build a new building on this site which will enhance the Belsize Conservation Area, making a transition between the glass curtain wall of Central's West Block and the Victorian stucco villas of Buckland Crescent.



SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA

Central's Campus

Two parts of Central's campus have scope for development: one on Eton Avenue, and the other on the corner of College Crescent and Buckland Crescent (the application site).



Development of the Eton Avenue site is full of complications. A major gas main, high voltage electricity cables and water mains cross the site, and without the diversion of these services, significant development is impossible.

It follows that Central's immediate needs must be accommodated on the application site, for which the proposals presented here have been developed.

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Appendix 3: Exhibition Questionnaires

Feedback Form for the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama

Your details

Name	
Address	
Postcode	

This information will be analysed by us to determine the geographical coverage of the consultation exercise. We will not disclose your personal information to third parties.

Once you have considered the information on display please fill out this feedback form and leave it in the box provided. Alternatively, you can send the feedback to:

The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Eton Avenue, London, NW3 3HY, UK

Please provide comments by 7 November 2014.

1. How did you find out about the exhibition? (please tick all that apply)

Consultation Letter	Our Website/ Social Media
Newspaper	Word of mouth
Other (please state)	

2. Do you support the proposals?

Yes	No		Not sure	
Please let us know if	you have any additional o	comments:		
				(4)

3. Do you like the design for the proposal?

Yes	No		Not sure	
Please let us know if y	ou have any additional co	omments:		

4. Do you have any further comments you would like us to consider?

Yes			 No			

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

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