

**Michael Gaunt**

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**From:** "Michael Gaunt" [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 15 January 2015 14:53  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** "Meg Ryan" [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Application Reference 2014/7413/P to Camden Council Planning Committee

Dear Ms Heavey,

I am attaching my statement of support for the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama's application to Camden Council's Planning Committee concerning the improvement of their teaching and performance spaces on the Buckland Crescent side of their property.

Yours sincerely, [REDACTED]

Michael Gaunt

Professor Michael Gaunt FRSAMD  
Chair, The Society for Theatre Research

15/01/2015

Ms Eimer Heavey,  
London Borough of Camden,  
5, Pancras Square,  
London, N1C 4AG

**Royal Central School of Speech & Drama's Planning Application to Camden Council**  
**Application Reference 2014/7413/P**

I should like to add my support to the above Application to Camden Council from The Royal Central School of Speech & Drama for the following reasons:

RCSSD is a College of Higher Education with a long tradition in providing excellence in theatre training since its foundation as a dramatic school – as the Central School of Speech Training & Dramatic Art - at the Albert Hall in 1906 by its first principal Elsie Fogerty: it was one of the UK's first full acting courses

Miss Fogerty was supported by the actor Sir Frank Benson who became the School's President. Sir Frank had acted with Sir Henry Irving and from 1886-1916 had managed the Shakespeare Festival in Stratford-on-Avon.

From the first days of its foundation to the present RCSSD developed an international reputation for quality and excellence by progressively providing students with training in Stage, Stage Management, Speech Therapy and Teaching.

Today RCSSD's range of courses is greatly expanded and includes courses in Acting, Voice, Movement, Creative, Design & Production, Drama & Applied Theatre. Because of its great success this dynamic School in Eton Avenue is running out of teaching and performing spaces: success breeds its own challenges! RCSSD is acutely aware that it needs to upgrade an outdated studio, in addition to creating essential additional teaching, rehearsal and performance spaces in order to maintain educational and training excellence. This need is best expressed in the institution's own words:

"These improved facilities will more adequately cater for our existing cohort of students and will assist us in continuing to attract the very best staff and students."

Late last year I was able to view the designs for the proposed improved facilities and meet the architect. I was impressed by what I saw and heard especially in relation to the awareness of and respect for the local community. The aesthetic quality and practicality of the building designs I saw without doubt will satisfy the present needs of RCSSD. They have been designed to compliment the surrounding architecture in Buckland Crescent. Importantly, I believe the completed work will be an attractive visual addition to the neighbourhood.

I am a regular visitor to RCSSD. The institution is extremely well led, has an excellent administration team, a first rate faculty and the students' work I have audited over the years is of the highest quality. RCSSD is now poised to take the next step to complete its buildings programme.

I support the their Application without reservation and I do hope that Camden Council will give its full support to the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama at this significant moment by giving its approval to the proposed developments.

Professor Michael Gaunt  
Fellow of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama  
Chair, The Society for Theatre Research  
Formerly Chair, The Conference of Drama Schools (now Drama UK)

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