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Westminster Kingsway College
16-077-E02

Insertion of windows and refurbishment of Regents Park Centre
Design and Access Statement





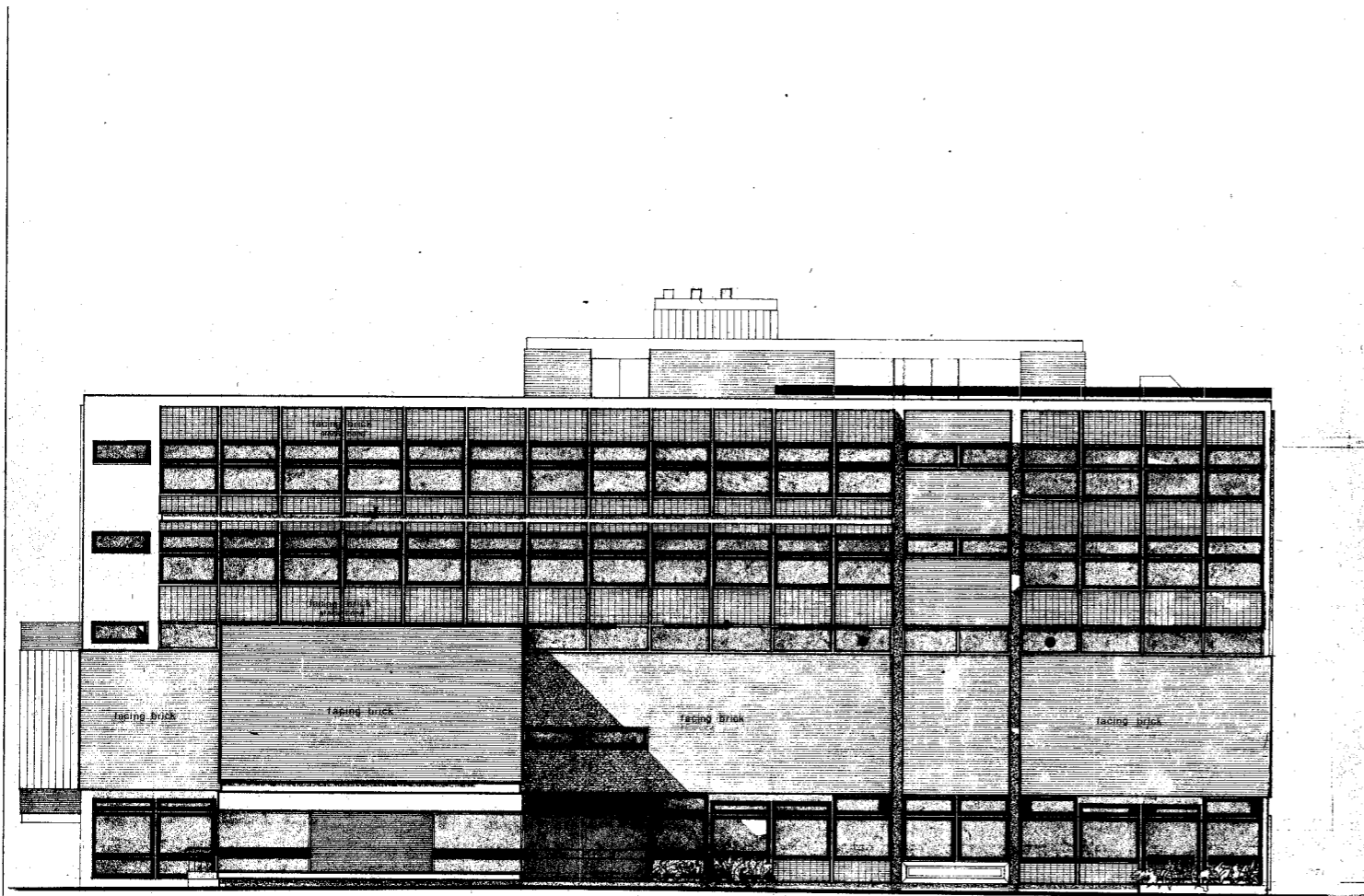
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Design and Access Statement

The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to support the detailed planning application for the insertion of first floor windows to facilitate the internal refurbishment of the Regents Park Centre. It is to be read in conjunction with the drawings and supporting statements also submitted as part of the application.



Original Entrance Elevation drawing by Lewis Solomon, Kaye and Partners (from WKC archive)



View of main entrance from Longford Street with Bucklebury Residential Tower in background



2.0 Site Context

2.1 The building

The Regents Park Centre building is a 4-storey reinforced concrete frame structure, expressed partly in elevation and generally clad in blue masonry of some 3,300m². Its first floor is double height in nature albeit with two small mezzanine areas running north south connected to the central northern stair and separately to the eastern stair.

The main body of the building extends east west with a 2-storey projection, containing a double height black box theatre at first floor level projecting forward of the front elevation towards Longford Street. This is located at its west end to create an L shape plan at lower levels providing some emphasis to the main pedestrian entrance at ground level immediately to the east.

It was constructed in 1967 using architect Lewis Solomon, Kaye and Partners (later changed to Sidney Kaye, Firmin and Partners) with small-scale internal modifications since. It is not listed, nor located in a conservation area and is approximately 42m long by 30m wide at its widest points. The floor-to-floor heights are 3.15m for ground, second and third floors and 5.7m at first floor.

It is functional in appearance and represents an educational building of its time. The elevations are broken up by the horizontality of the single-glazed metal windows with the stair cores and some expressed concrete frame creating vertical emphasis. The ground floor anodised aluminium finished windows are continuous along its main frontage, extending from floor level to a head level of some 2.55m.



View of rear elevation from Stanhope Street



View of two-storey theatre projection to west of Longford Street adjacent existing Chapel



2.0 Site Context

2.2 The site

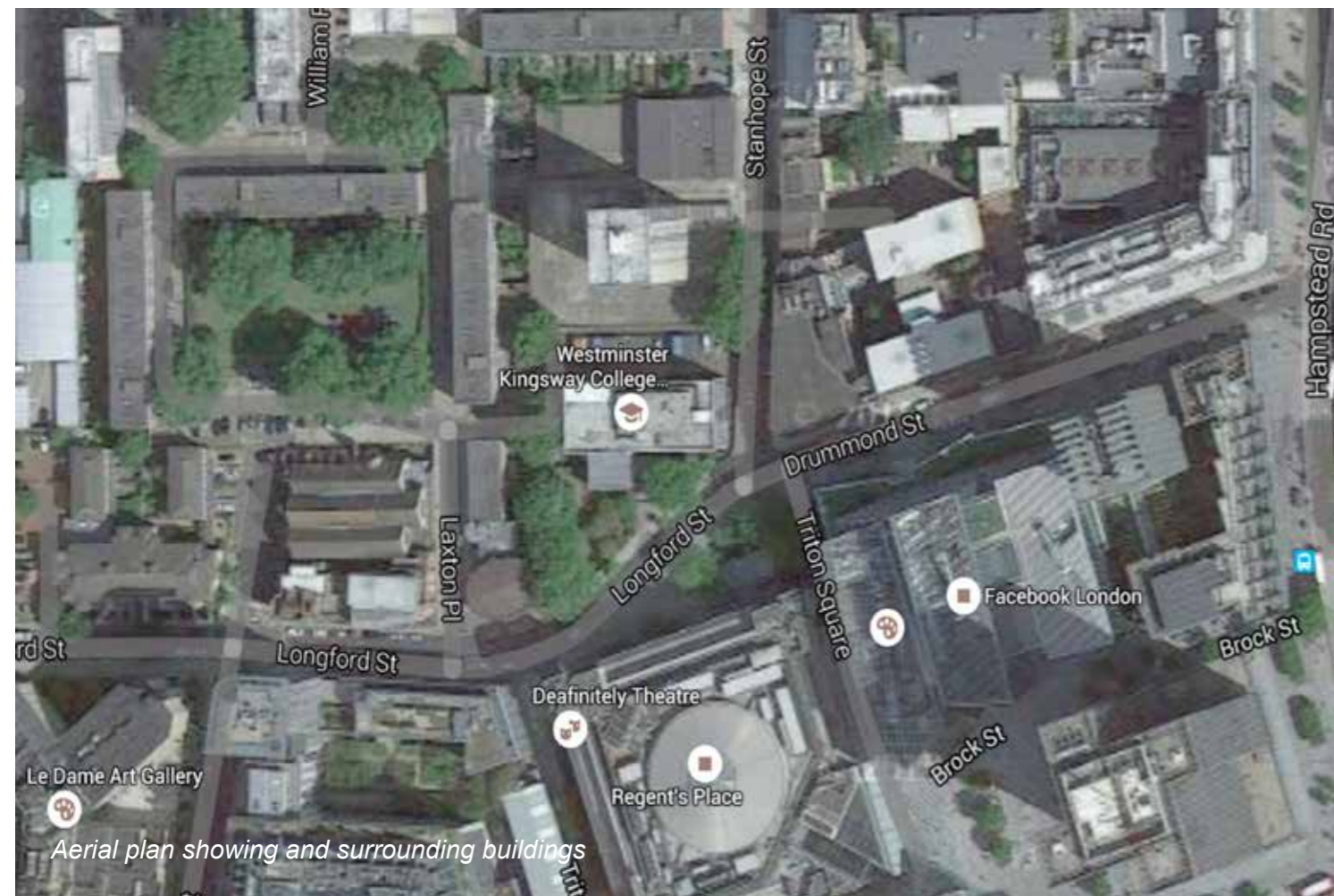
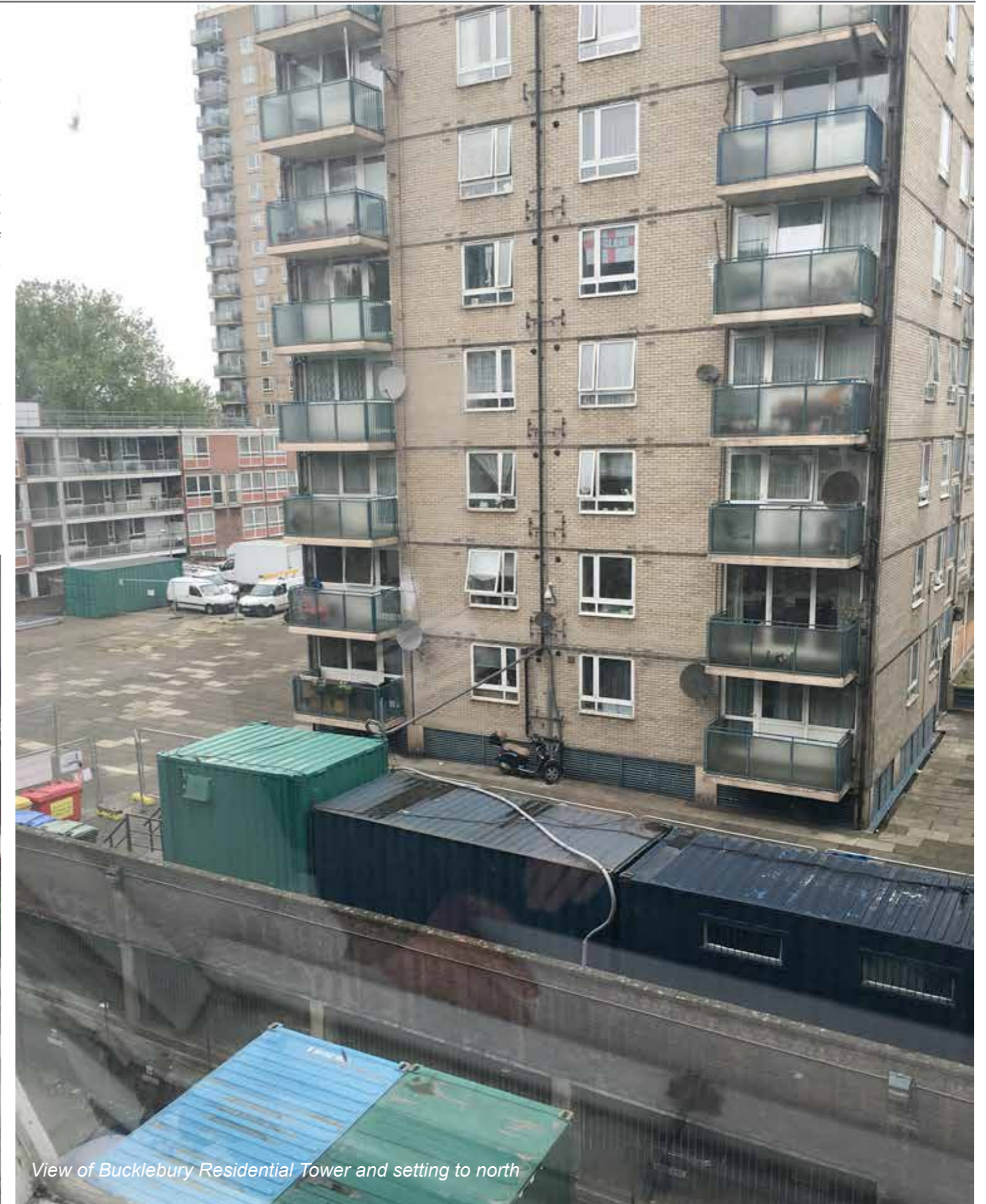
The site comprises an area of some 2360m² with the building set back from Longford street and site frontage accommodating a number of groups of mature trees that form an important part of the setting. The individual trees to the west have been recently pollarded to improve natural daylight to its neighbours at their request. The building setbacks to the college boundary are around 20m to the west, 13m to the north and 3m to the east.

The general locality comprises a 2-storey blue brick chapel to the southwest, 3 and 4 storey brick residential properties to the west on Laxton Place that back onto the college, a 19-storey residential tower block known as Bucklebury to the north and a 5-storey brick mixed use office building immediately to the east on Stanhope Street. The south of Longford Street has been redeveloped relatively recently with contemporary 6, 10 and more storey offices in glass and stone cladding.

2.3 Access and movement

The building's main pedestrian entrance is off Longford Street to the south. Car parking for 11 cars exist, although 4 are used at present for temporary storage containers, to the rear with access off Stanhope Street and a gated access via Laxton Place. There are 15 uncovered cycle parking hoops adjacent the main entrance.

The site is well connected by public transport with Great Portland street tube station on the Metropolitan line located some 400m or so to the southwest.



View of Bucklebury Residential Tower and setting to north



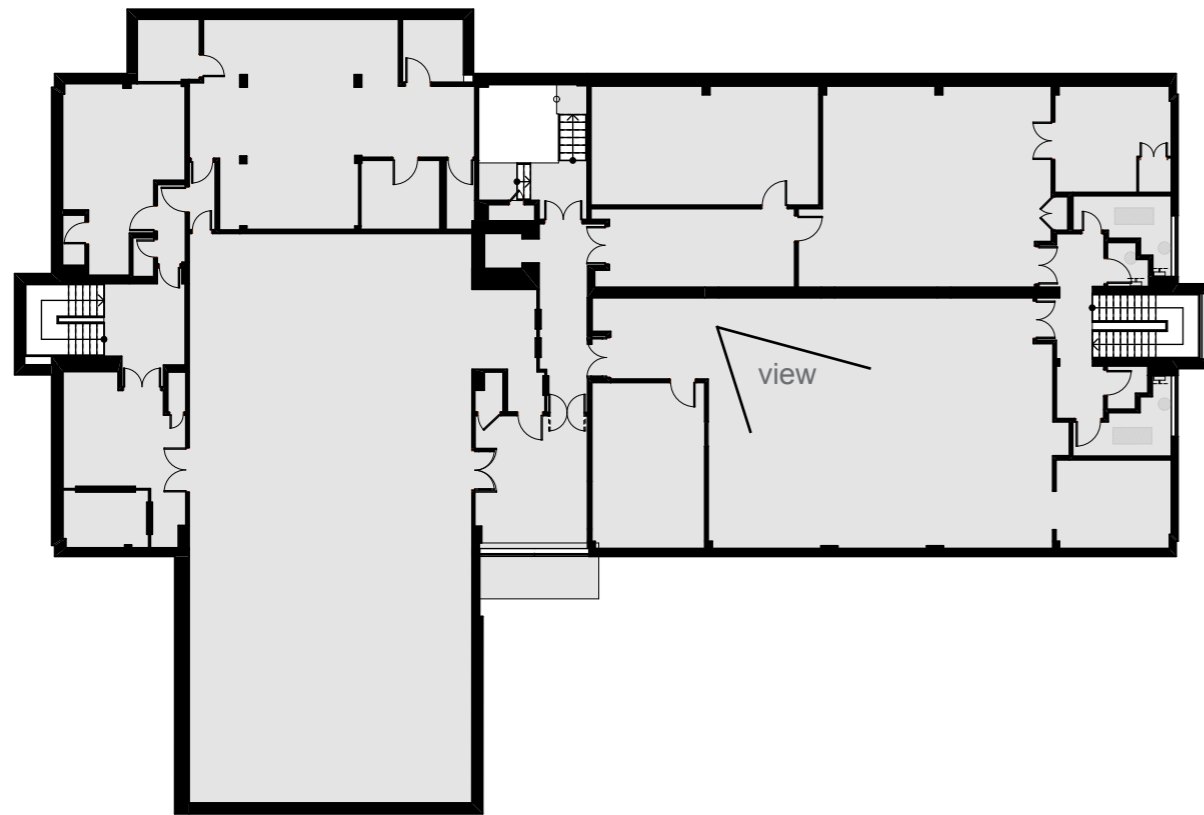
3.0 Existing and Proposed Use

3.1 Existing Use

Education is the primary use of the building including a number of different sized classrooms and ancillary support spaces such as a café, reception, offices and toilets. In addition, there is a nursery at ground floor to the west that provides childcare for students, staff and the local community.

The first floor is generally a series of three double height spaces. At the west end of the building is a black box theatre space, which is currently used for chair and table storage with further ancillary stores to the west and north of it. At the east end of the building a former activity studio and dance studio exist that incorporate only high-level windows from 4.5m at sill to 5.4m at head level. These windows are manually operated via a teleflex system and provide limited air movement and ventilation to these two principal spaces. Furthermore they provide little connection to outside and add little to the quality of the environment for the current open plan office users.

Higher up the building the floor layouts comprise a central circulation route with general teaching classrooms and support facilities either side.



Existing first floor plan

3.2 Proposed Use

City and Islington and Westminster Kingsway Colleges are merging on 1st August 2016 to become the Central London Colleges Group. As a result:

1. The two colleges are bringing their Executive Group together in one geographically central, well-connected location. 5 Executive offices are needed, together with secretariat space for 3 people, filing, photocopier facilities and access to a large meeting room.
2. Central London College Training Division are locating here with focus on skills agenda and employer participation that requires the building to be reinvigorated internally with need for meet and greet spaces, a large open plan office and mixture of 7 different sized meeting rooms for employers.

The proposal maintains its current curriculum offer and nursery facilities at the site, while enhancing the quality of its ancillary office provisions for College Executive use and attracting employers through upgraded Central London College Training (CLCT) Division offices and meeting, training spaces.



View: Existing double height space as open plan office



4.0 Description of proposed development: Internal works

4.1 Ground Floor

Improvements to floor finishes and wayfinding only will be made to the ground floor reception and staircase leading to the first floor. The principal entrance arrangement will remain in its current form.

4.2 First Floor

The main area of work is to refurbish the first floor spaces of the Regents Park Centre and stems from the removal of the ticket office and opening up the existing circulation space off the central stair for employer meet and greet. Internal glazed screens will work in tandem with new external windows at first floor and create glimpses of external views from this space.

The CLCT training and meeting spaces are to be placed in the northeast part of the plan and constitute 7 enclosed meeting rooms and informal discussion space. The central 14 person meeting rooms will be used for more private meetings and incorporate ceilings, but the first 4 to the northern edge will take benefit from the double height space and be supplemented by three 1.8m wide by 2.1m high ppc finished, thermally broken double glazed aluminum window units. These will incorporate both fixed and opening lights to enhance natural ventilation and daylight at low level within the space.

The northeastern meeting space is placed below the existing mezzanine and will require a window unit to ensure good functionality of space, natural ventilation and daylighting.

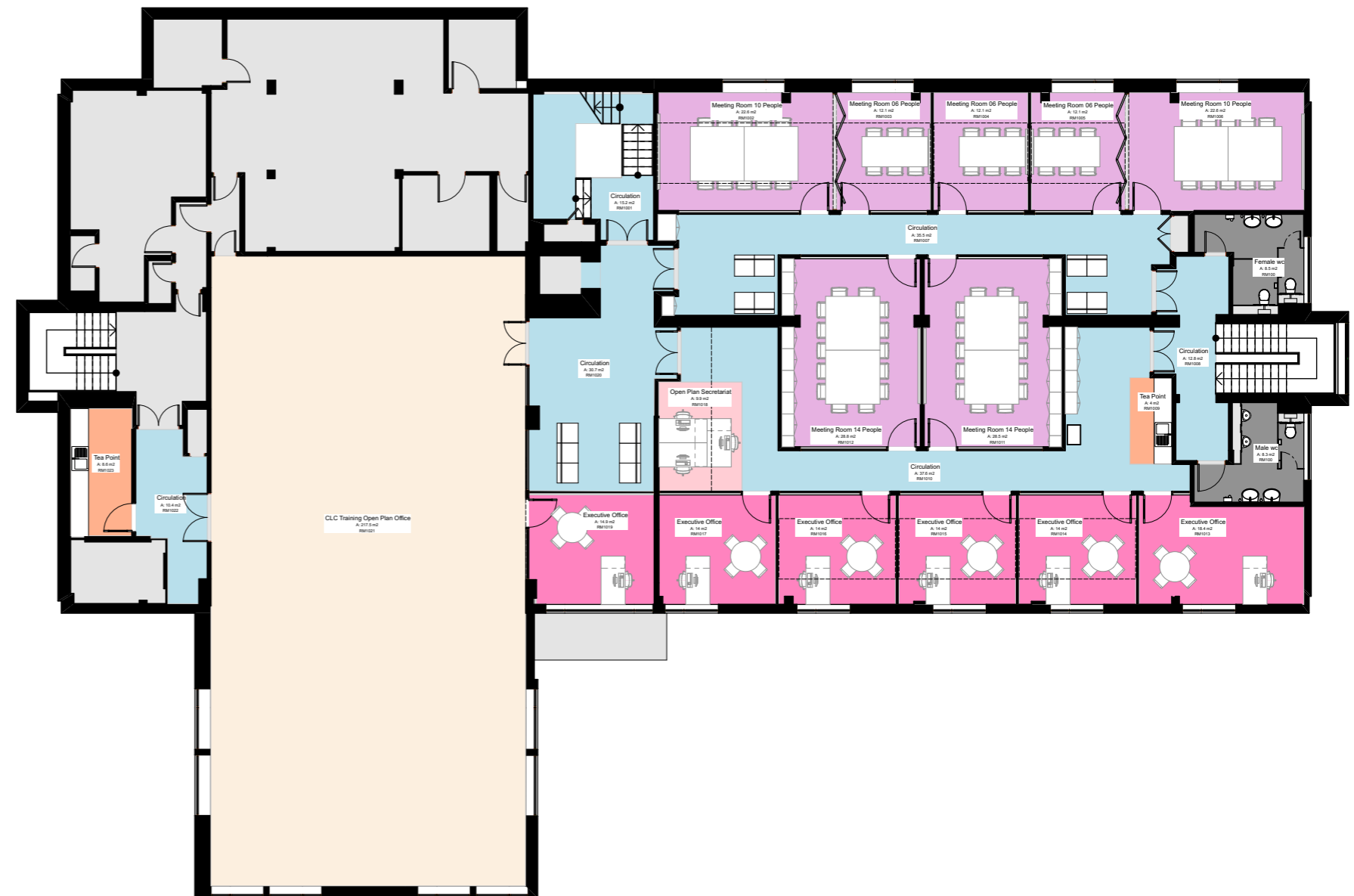
The existing toilets to the east will be refurbished to a good standard as elsewhere with improvements to ventilation.

The Executive Group will be accommodated in the southeastern part of the plan and comprise 5 Executive offices, three of which are open at high level to the double height spaces and the remainder having ceilings by virtue of being under the mezzanine floors above. We are proposing a window unit as above to each of the spaces that incorporate both fixed and opening lights to enhance natural ventilation and daylight at low level within the space.

These offices will be used more regularly than the CLCT meeting rooms and so are located to the southern frontage with views out over Longford Street rather than to the north towards the Bucklebury tower block. An open plan secretariat space together with filing, photocopying and support facilities are located in the connecting space open to the double height volume with access to both central 14 person meeting rooms to the north.

The works also include the repurposing of the redundant theatre on the first floor into high quality open plan office space for the Central London Colleges Training facility. The space will be refurbished to accommodate this provision and it is proposed to insert 8 window units as above in total to the theatre to provide natural daylight - 4 in the south, 2 in the east and 2 in the west elevations.

A Manager's office overlooking this open plan office will be located below the mezzanine level off the meet and greet space. The existing high level strip windows above the main entrance will have their sill height lowered to improve amenity. Finally a small kitchenette will be located to the west off a small circulation, escape route to the western staircase. This room will not have any windows.



Proposed first floor plan

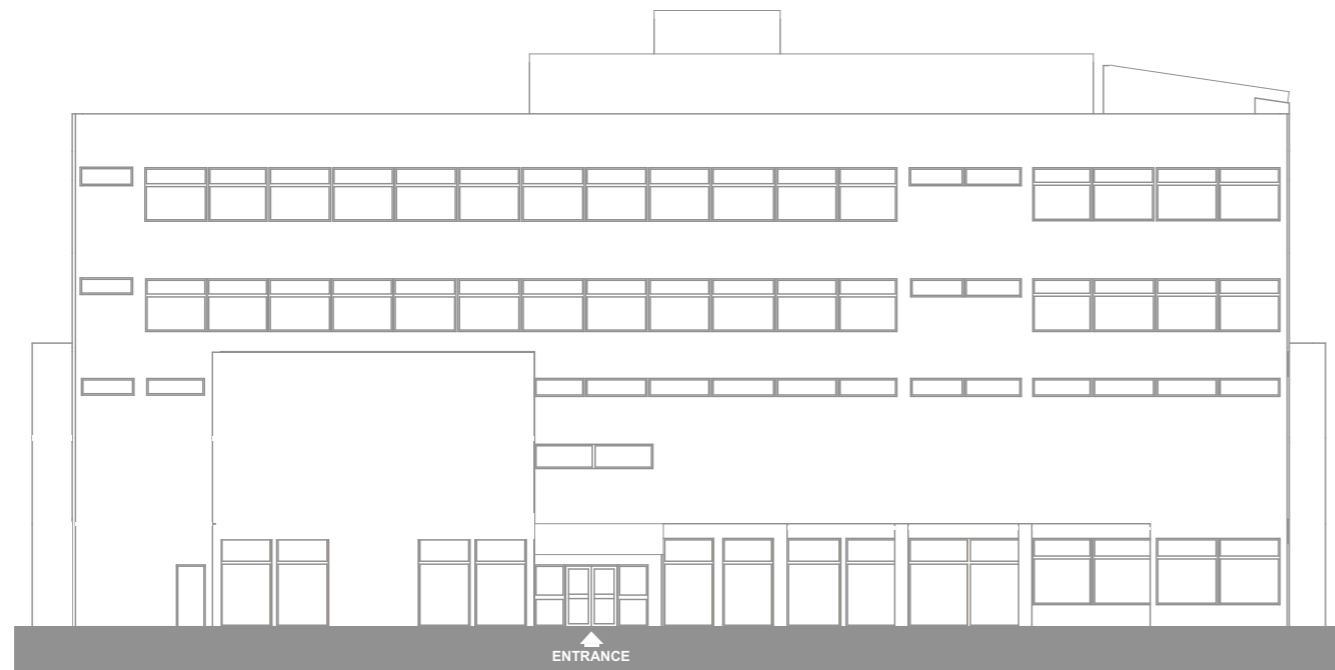


5.0 Description of proposed development: External works

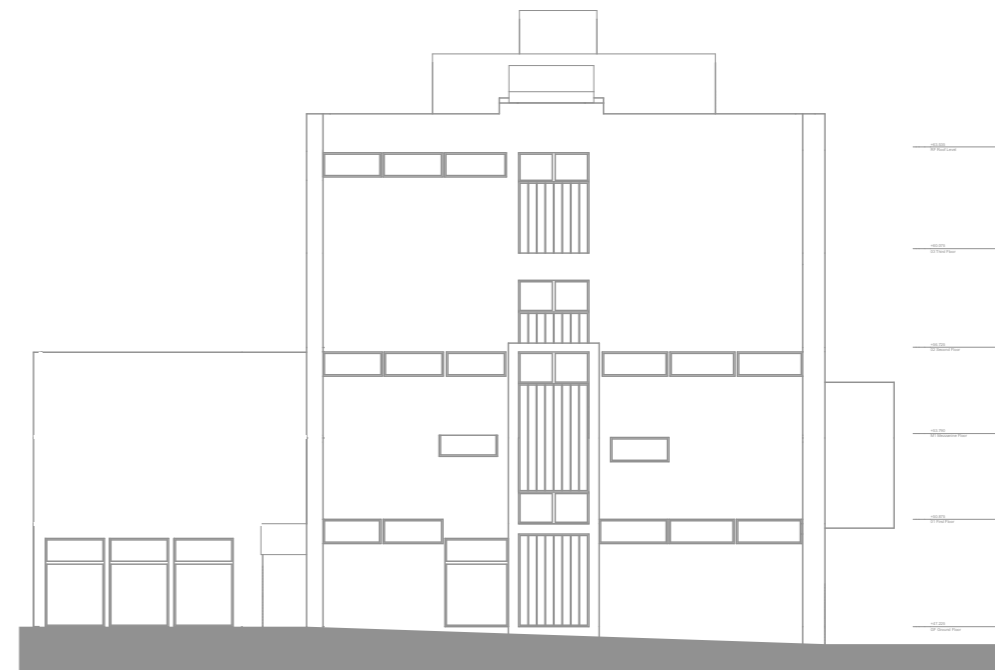
5.1 Additional first floor windows.

To improve the work environment additional window openings are to be formed to provide more natural light. The new openings are to the north and south elevations and to the east, south and west elevations of the Theatre – we are proposing 17 new window units in total, together with minor modification to the first floor strip windows above the main entrance. The existing elevations are shown below for reference.

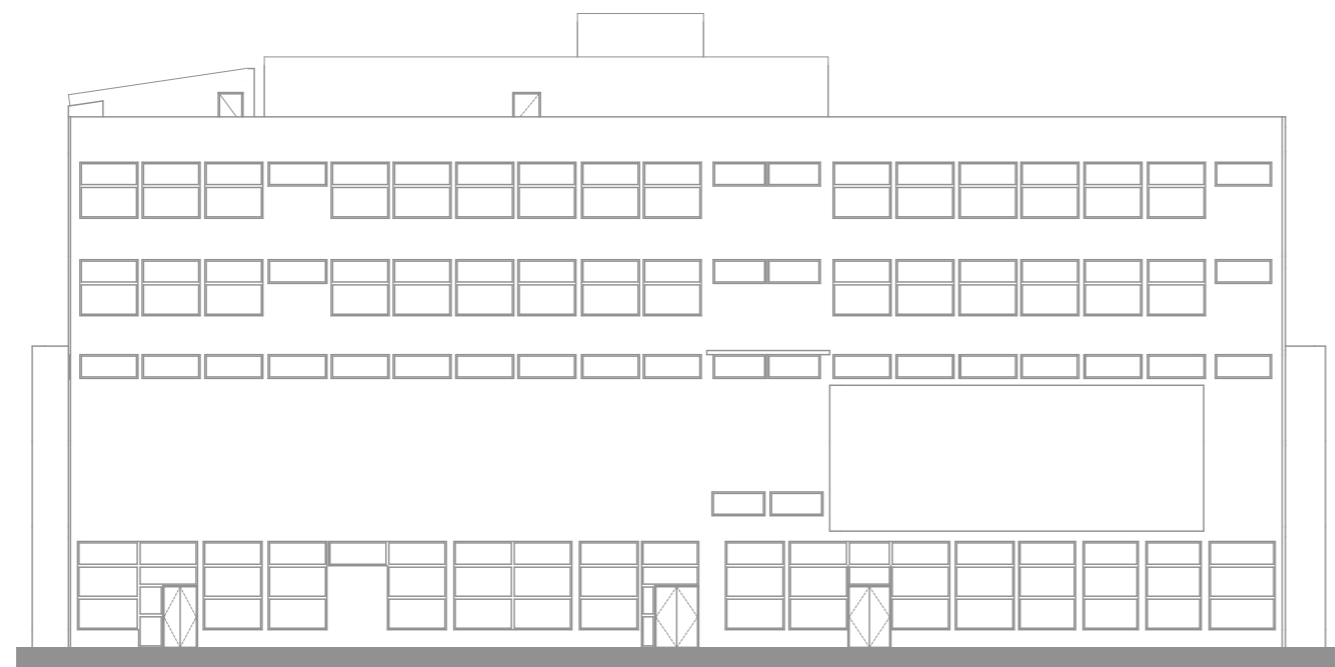
The new window units will be placed to create a regular rhythm in keeping with the current fenestration pattern and be 1.8m wide by 2.1m high ppc finished, thermally broken double glazed aluminum window units. These will incorporate both fixed and opening lights.



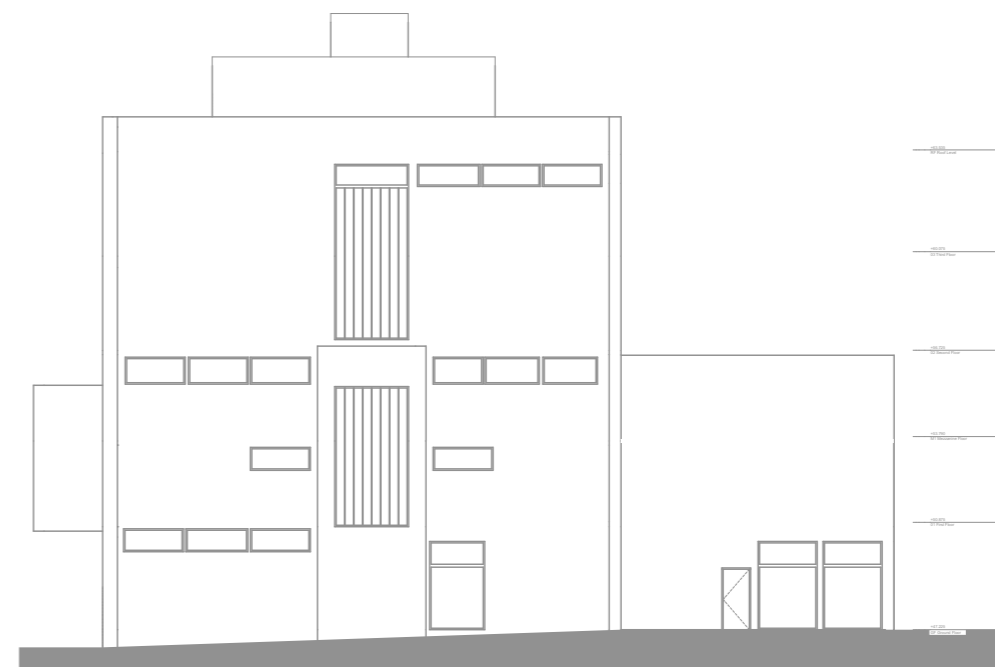
Front Elevation (South)



East Elevation



Rear Elevation (North)



West Elevation

NOTE:
Drawings produced based on third party information and record data, which may be inaccurate. Verification shall be obtained by independent professional survey.

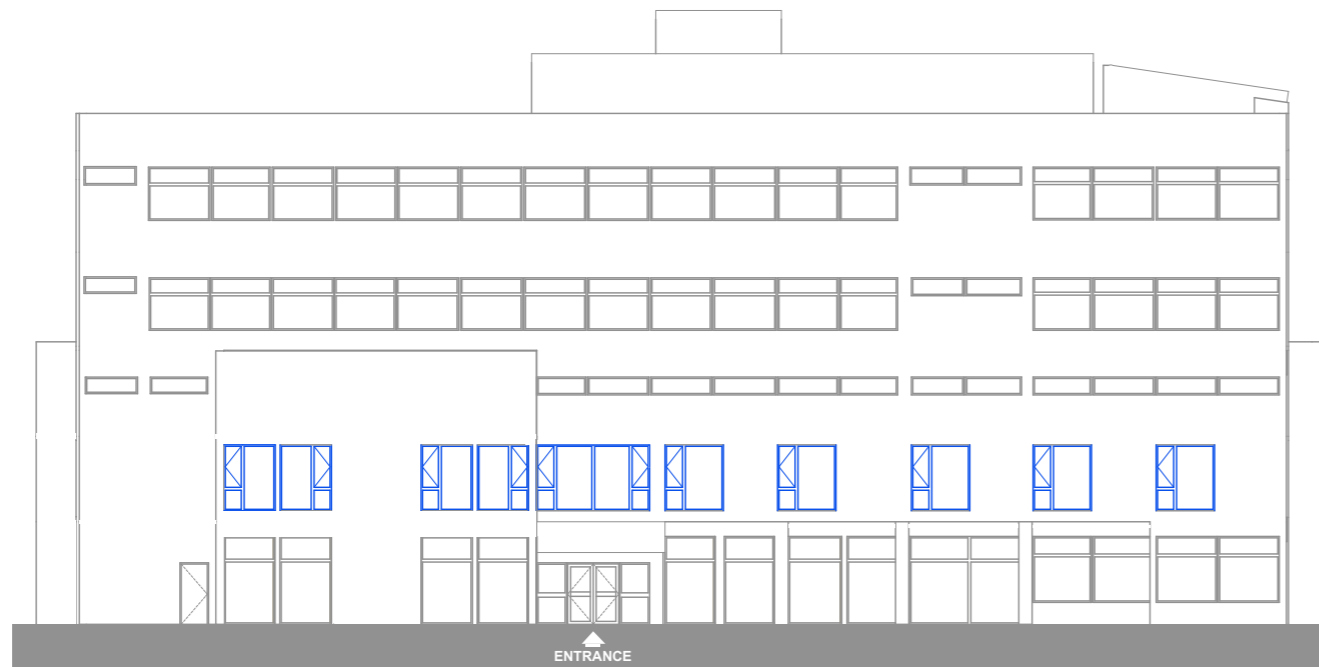


5.0 Description of proposed development: External works

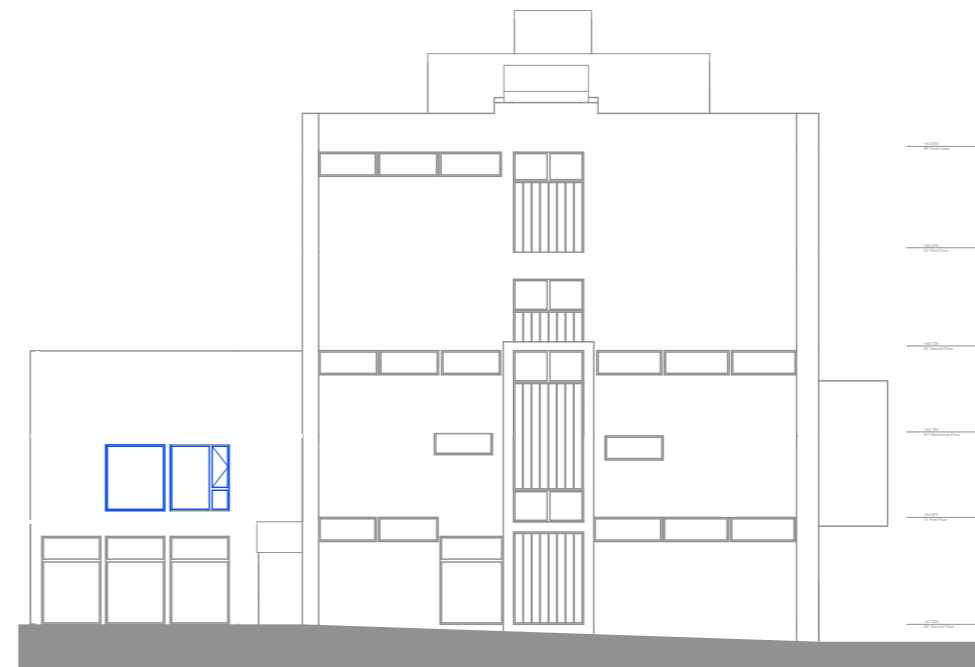
5.1 Additional first floor windows.

The brands and identifies of Westminster Kingsway and City and Islington Colleges will be retained, and a third division – the Central London Colleges Training (CLCT) – will provide a focus for apprenticeships, employer engagement and work based learning. Any signage to suit CLCT branding is yet to be defined and is excluded from this application.

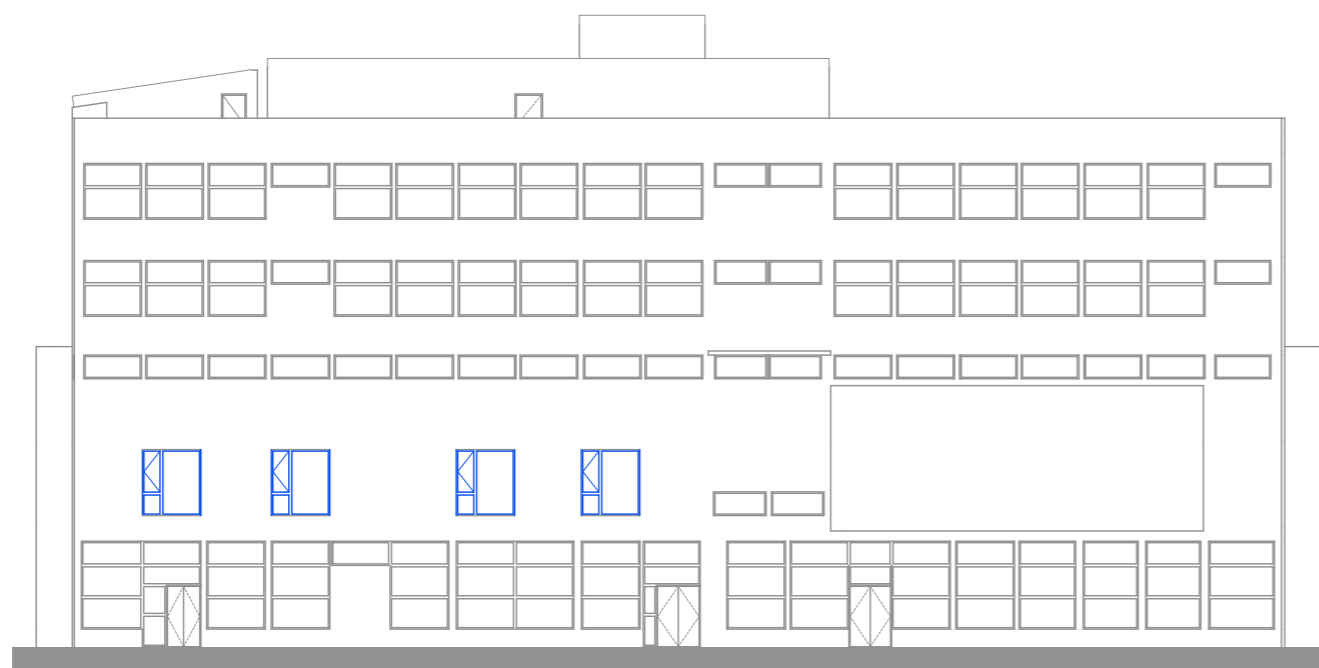
In summary, the proposed development illustrated by the elevations below represent a modest change to the external appearance of the building.



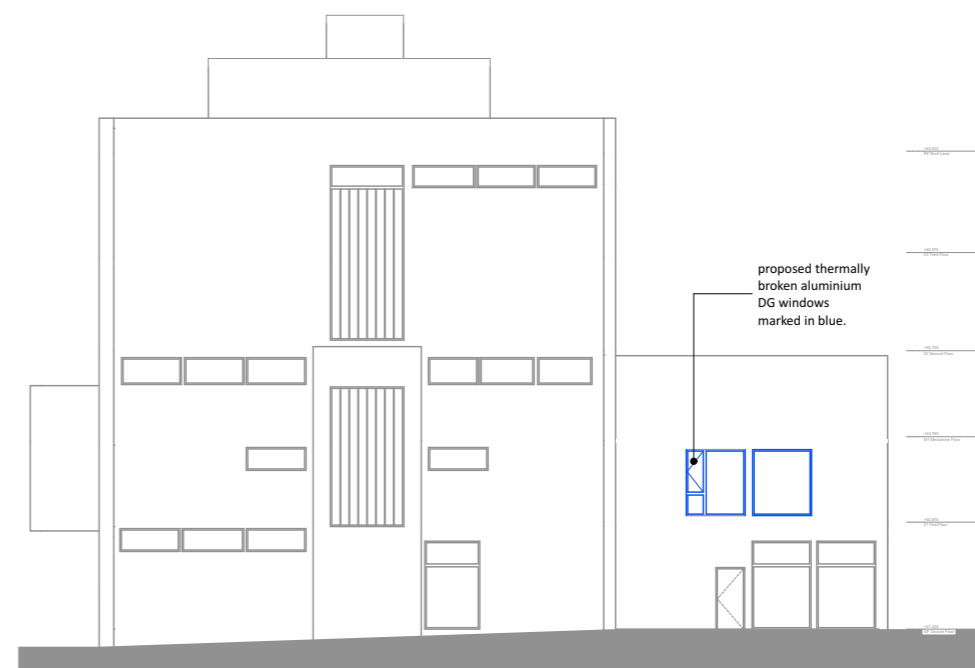
Front Elevation (South)



East Elevation



Rear Elevation (North)



West Elevation

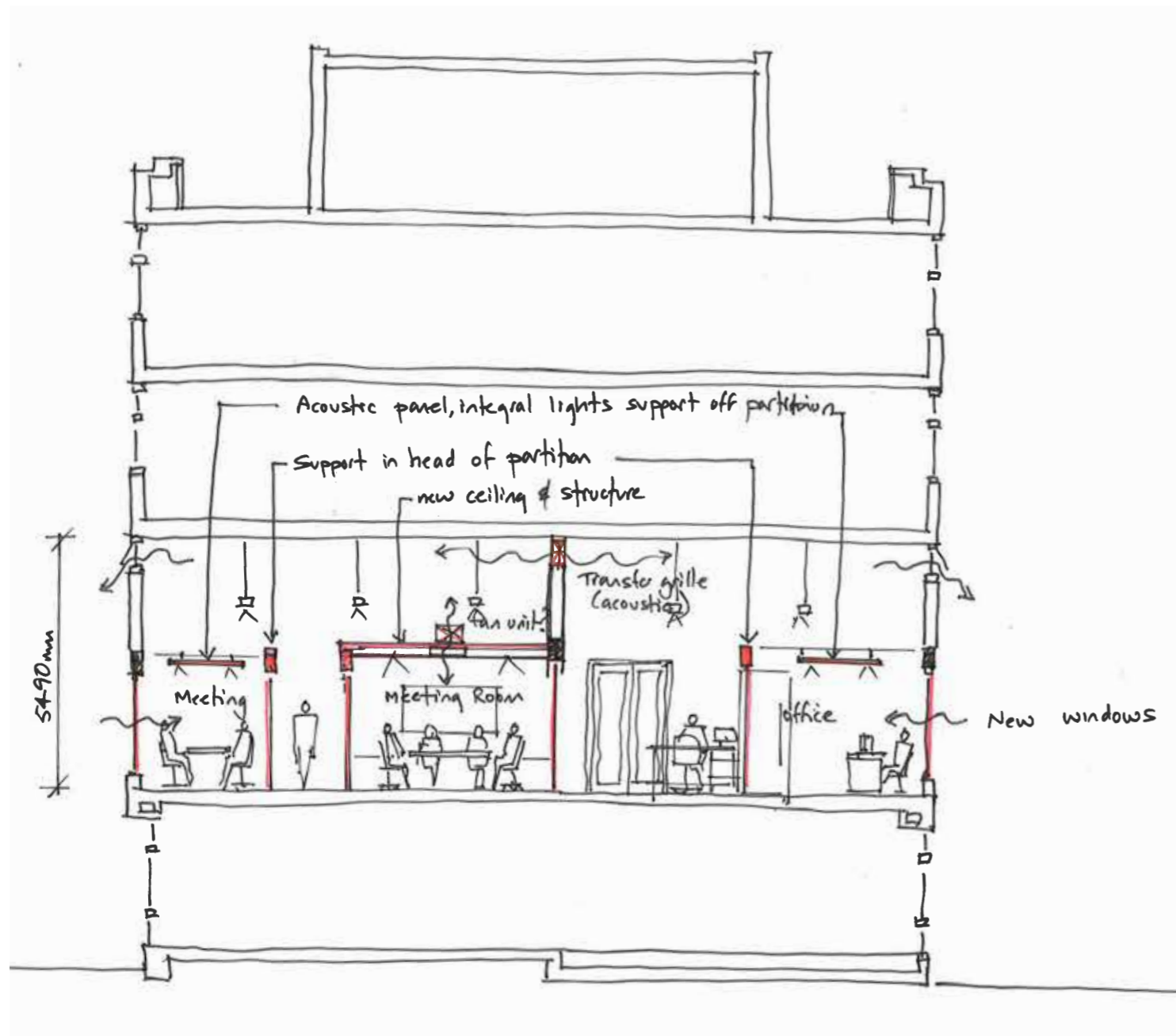
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6.0 Sustainability

6.1 Improving the working environment

Through the proposed development works we are making the following improvements:

- Thermal performance of windows through the addition of 17 ppc finished, thermally broken double glazed aluminium new window units
- Enhanced natural ventilation and daylight to existing office spaces
- Better use of the existing accommodation, such as the repurposing of the theatre space
- Flexibility of use by access to a greater variety of spaces



Proposed sketch section



Example of punched windows with fixed and opening lights