

ROYAL HOLLOWAY
University of London

ESTATES STRATEGY
2003

FINAL DRAFT
February 2003.

**ESTATES STRATEGY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The College has set out its academic strategy for the 2002-07 in the *Corporate Strategy 2002*. The *Estates Strategy* indicates how the College intends to manage its physical assets to support the academic strategy.
2. The College has a large freehold campus at Egham on the south-western edge of London, with a number of adjacent parcels of land, and two buildings in central London held on lease from the University of London. Most of the main campus is in the Green Belt. Within the planning period, the College does not envisage relocation from the Egham site, but it will consider alternative accommodation in central London for its activities there. Like most British Universities, Royal Holloway has suffered from chronic underfunding of its physical estate and has to address serious problems of backlog maintenance. Its development over the next eight years is regulated by a massive Development Plan agreed with Runnymede Borough Council and embodied in a Section 106 agreement in June 2002.
3. As noted in the introduction to the main document, it is difficult to create Estate plans with a 10-year horizon that cater for an academic strategy which, because of the context of UK higher education, is reviewed on a three-year cycle. Moreover, while the strategy aims to be flexible, to accommodate changes in the internal and external environment, it is probably true that the last twelve months have seen more rapid change in the institution's perception of its own needs and opportunities than did the preceding three years. The favourable result in the 2001 RAE, the upturn in student recruitment in 2002 and the resulting improvements in the financial position have combined to expand the range of strategic opportunities in the Estate, strengthening the College's ability to focus a developing *Corporate Strategy* conceived around successes. These changes have also created additional flexibility to help the institution cope with expansion in areas of strength.
4. The main and underlying academic drivers are identified in the *Corporate Strategy* and are objectified in the strategic aims laid out in Section 6.3 of that document. These drivers include:
 - the advance of sophistication in science and technology, impacting on the full range of disciplines
 - the development of new methods, environments and resources in teaching and learning, and new ways of integrating extant patterns of activity

- the increased range of areas in which the importance of interaction between researchers and students, or fellow researchers, is now recognised as essential for effective research
- the emergence of new types of student and ‘knowledge customers’, including business and industry, with new types of need

Key objectives embedded within the *Strategy* thus aim to:

- maximise the research, teaching and knowledge transfer benefits arising from integrated physical provision
 - provide high-quality fit-for-purpose space for teaching and research
 - provide space for academic growth
 - optimise flexibility of provision and increase the utilisation of the estate
5. Although many of the developments supported by the *Estate Strategy* have been signalled in the past, it is now clear that the *Strategy* will support investment across a broader range of academic activity. This in itself brings significant gains, but it also multiplies the scope for integrated solutions and the benefits to which such solutions can be expected to give rise. A specific example is provided by the School of Biological Sciences, whose rejuvenation in the wake of its RAE performance creates new potential for planning integrated science. Similarly, the proposed Library Extension Building will promote integration between resources for scholarship and research and new and more flexible modes of delivery and learning across disciplines, while permitting the creation of new specialist facilities in vacated space in the Founders Building.
 6. An important focus in the Estates Strategy is thus on making the estate fitter for purpose and on accommodating increased levels of research activity with corresponding increases in the number of research staff. The College plans significant development of third stream activity, but expects that most of this will be sited away from the main campus. Further academic activity will be accommodated by more intensive use of the existing campus. More generally, it will be necessary to retain maximum flexibility in the functionality of space, to cope with short-term changes as well as with the longer-term life-cycles of academic activities. The College does not at present hold redundant land which it believes could better be sold for development, and it keeps under review all those of its holdings which are not in the Green Belt.
 7. The principal elements of essential capital requirements within the planning period are:
 - Re-provision of a highly-serviced Integrated Science Building, incorporating the School of Biological Sciences, with which a number of other science departments will be collocated

- A Library Extension Building in which all library functions would be consolidated, providing additional reader-spaces, space for stock, and scope to expand library and information services for students
 - Provision of further and better-equipped teaching and research space for the three departments concerned with the performing arts: Drama, Media Arts, and Music.
 - Provision of further and better-equipped space for expansion of postgraduate and premium fee activity in the School of Management
 - Provision for further generic research space (not highly serviced) to allow for planned net expansion in research grant and contract activity across the College.
 - Expansion of student facilities
 - Replacement of Athlone, Cameron and Williamson Halls (the ‘New Halls’), which are approaching the end of their useful lives as halls of residence and have already been written off as impaired assets.
8. A number of other academic and non-academic needs have been identified as highly desirable:
- a large auditorium suitable for public performance and large academic conferences
 - completion of all phases of the planned sports facilities on Noble’s field
 - re-provision of accommodation for the College’s Administration
 - the replacement of temporary buildings with permanent structures
9. The College Council has already authorised the development of student residences on the East Field, to be completed in September 2004, and a development of flats north of the A30, which will replace the accommodation in the existing New Halls. The capital cost will be supported by revenue from lettings.
10. The College has considered a number of options for the timely and effective fulfilment of other essential and highly desirable requirements. The preferred option remains to provide a limited amount of new building, spread over the coming seven to eight years, accompanied by a series of judicious moves, of which some will take place relatively soon in order to maximise the College’s broader strategic flexibility. This will provide for some of the identified academic needs; others will be met by moves to fill the space vacated by those who move into new build. It will be necessary to seek funding for

capital build from a variety of sources. The HEFCE formula allocations, which are expected to follow on from the Science Research Infrastructure Fund and the initiative to provide capital funds for Arts and Humanities research, will be an important source. But it will also be necessary to seek donation funds and to set aside a larger share of the College's recurrent income, both to fund new developments and to bring the level of spending on the recurrent costs of the estate to a realistic level. To that end, the academic strategy of the College for 2003 onwards is likely to specify an increase in student numbers and fee income in certain departments, which will therefore require additional space and other facilities. Other sources of funding may include institutional reserves, capital receipts, and borrowing against the College's main account income. In accordance with the College's financial strategy, extensions to halls of residence and any other development, such as an auditorium forming part of a conference centre, which would have an independent income stream could be funded either by borrowing or by a public-private partnership.