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Former Royal High School, 5 - 7 Regent Road Edinburgh EH7 5BL – Planning Application: 15/03989/FUL

The Scottish Civic Trust wishes to object to the above application.

We believe that the proposals do not enhance the existing listed buildings and surrounding area. Rather the design and form of the proposed new buildings will have a substantially negative effect on the character and landscape of this important setting, blocking important views of the Royal High School, the Nelson Monument and Calton Hill.

The old Royal School is regarded as one of Scotland's most important historic buildings. We believe that the integrity of Thomas Hamilton's design will be seriously compromised by the addition of two modernist wings. We believe that the area around the buildings has been kept free from development to maintain the setting and the views from various aspects across Edinburgh. The proposal is not compatible with the character of the existing building and surrounding landscape and appears to overwhelm and diminish rather than complement it.

The Scottish Civic Trust also supports both ICOMOS-UK and Historic Scotland (now Historic Environment Scotland) in their assertions that the proposals will have an adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site. The combination of open space and important buildings such as the National Monument, Observatory and former Royal High School offer a classic and iconic view of Edinburgh that has been used repeatedly in paintings and photographs of the city. The site reminds us of Edinburgh and indeed Scotland's significant role in the Enlightenment and the aspiration to create uplifting, inspirational public buildings.

The Scottish Civic Trust agrees with ICOMOS-UK that the unique synthesis of landscape and architecture around Calton Hill is one of the key factors in determining the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site and that the current proposal puts this quality at serious risk.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN PELAN
Director