

2.03 Heritage

The site sits within the Regents Canal Conservation Area, which extends along Chalk Farm Road as far as the Roundhouse. The latter is listed Grade II* (see below) and has two associated structures: a cattle trough (located in front of the site) and a drinking fountain (located in the wall around the corner in Regents Park Road), both listed Grade II. Further to the east, the former Horse Hospital (together with its ramps and boundary wall) are listed Grade II*.

The London stock brick wall that runs along the back of pavement on the south side of Chalk Farm Road once formed part of a continuous wall that ran from Camden Lock Place (formerly Commercial Place) to the Roundhouse. (The curious photograph of a bison below gives an impression of how the wall once looked in its central section). It was built to retain fill deposited during the formation of Camden Goods Depot and to provide a level area for the North London Line tracks. The wall would originally have run in front of the Roundhouse too but a section was removed by Gilbeys during the 19th century.

In the 1970's a new commercial building, designed by Seifert, was constructed on the application site. The perimeter wall that ran in front of the site was kept, but reduced in depth and height along the building's frontage and new openings were made in it. The old wall was approximately 5.5m high at this point (as is the remaining section at the north-east corner of the site), whereas the section running along the majority of the boundary is only 3.5m.

In the late 1980's, the disused goods yard was made accessible from Chalk Farm Road with the construction of a new roadway under the North London Line, enabling development of the huge area beyond for housing and for a superstore. The construction involved the demolition of a significant section of the old retaining wall. The gap was filled with a petrol station and two new road junctions.

The wall to the west side of the Roundhouse adjoins the listed building and, although it has had new openings inserted, appears to have been maintained at its original height. It continues around the corner into Regents Park Road with the listed drinking fountain.

The changes made to the wall in the latter part of the twentieth century have had a major impact on its appearance and character and have greatly diminished its significance in this location. For further detail, refer to the Heritage Appraisal by KM Heritage.



Photograph by Fay Godwin, entitled 'Bison at Chalk Farm, London' (taken from book 'Bison at Chalk Farm and Other Snaps' published in 1982), showing central section of 'great wall of Camden' as it looked before majority of it was removed for construction of new access road



Remaining section of original retaining wall at east end of site



Grade II listed cattle trough in front of site



Remaining section of original retaining wall with Grade II listed drinking fountain in Regents Park Road

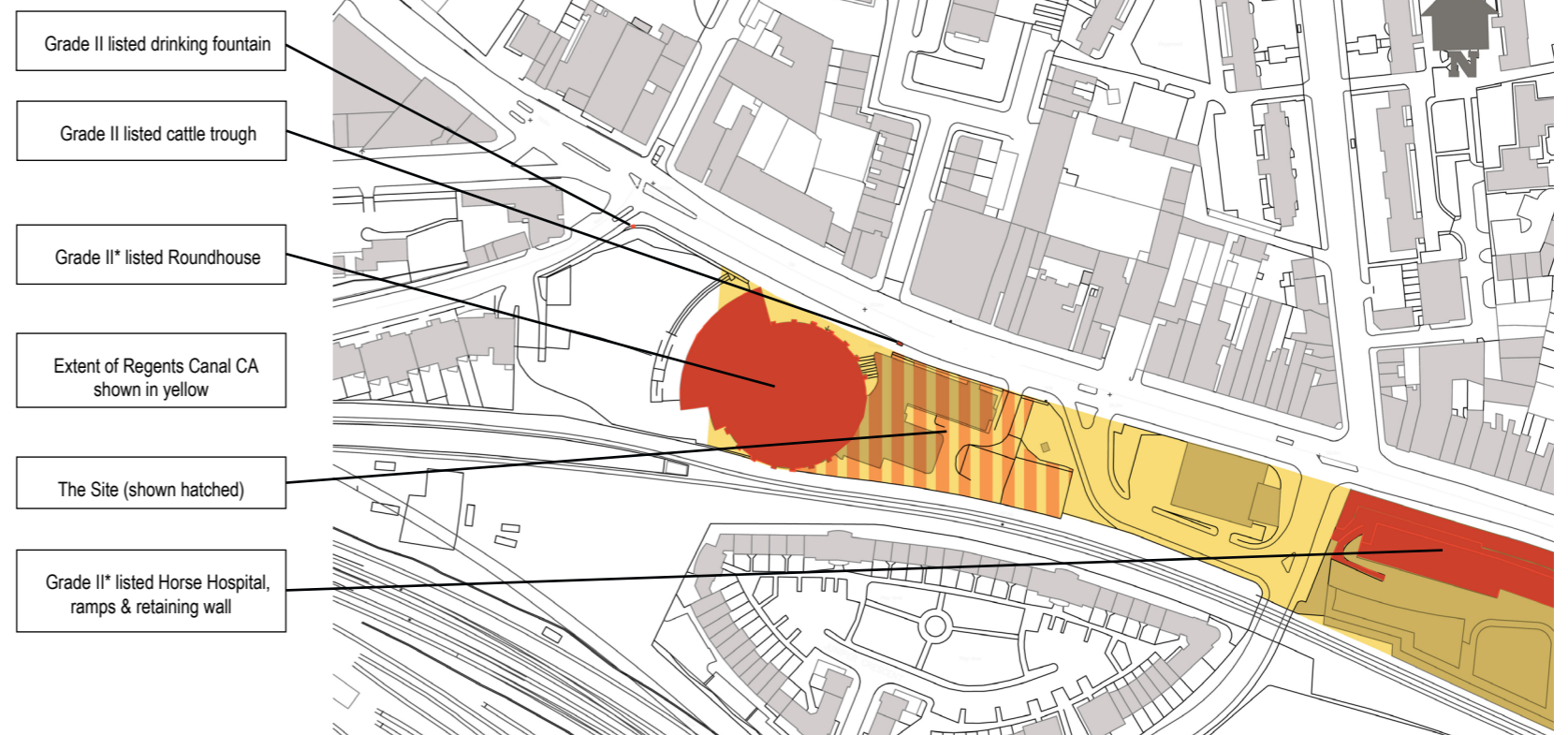


Inside view of retaining wall to 100 Chalk Farm Road showing how wall has been reduced in depth and rebuilt



Section of same retaining wall from street showing it lowered and rebuilt

Heritage: Conservation Area & Listed Structures



2.03 Heritage (continued)



Left: various views of the Roundhouse as it appears today

The Roundhouse

Immediately to the west of the site lies The Roundhouse. It was designed and built in 1846 as a steam-engine repair shed but within a few years rapid advances in technology meant engines had become too long to be turned and stored there, and by the 1860s it had become a storage shed for corn and potatoes. In 1869 the building was leased to W&A Gilbey Ltd. as a bonded warehouse for wines and spirits. The railway tracks inside the building were removed and a wooden gallery was added to carry vats of maturing whisky and brandy. A loading bay and two double doors were built on the Chalk Farm facade. The building continued as a secure bonded warehouse for nearly a hundred years, until Gilbey's finally gave up its use in 1963. spellt thiss way

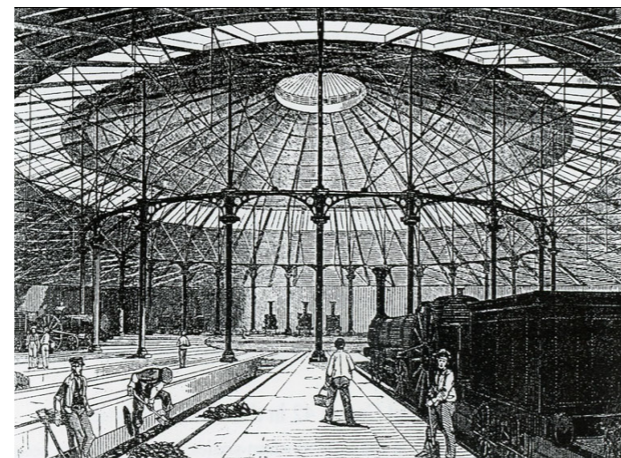
It is a good example of mid-19th century railway architecture, with elegant and robust detailing and innovative use of cast and wrought iron.

The Roundhouse has a Grade II* listing, last amended in 1999. The listing description reads as follows:

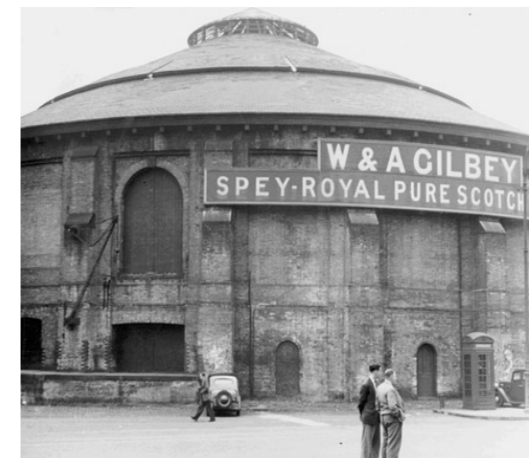
Formerly known as: Warehouse of W & A Gilbey Ltd CHALK FARM ROAD. Goods locomotive shed, now theatre. 1846-7. By Robert B Dockray. For the London and North Western Railway. Built by Branson & Gwyther. Converted for use as a theatre 1967 and 1985. Yellow stock brick. Low pitched conical slate roof having a central smoke louvre, now glazed, and bracketed eaves. Circular plan 48m in diameter. Buttresses with offsets mark bays each having a shallow, recessed rectangular panel. Former entrances and windows with round-arched heads.

INTERIOR: roof carried on 24 cast-iron Doric columns (defining original locomotive spurs) and a framework of curved ribs. Believed to retain original flooring, turn table and fragments of early railway lines. Wooden gallery probably added by Gilbeys, late C19.

Since the description was last updated, the building has undergone complete restoration, conversion and extension into a world class arts and cultural venue (see opposite).



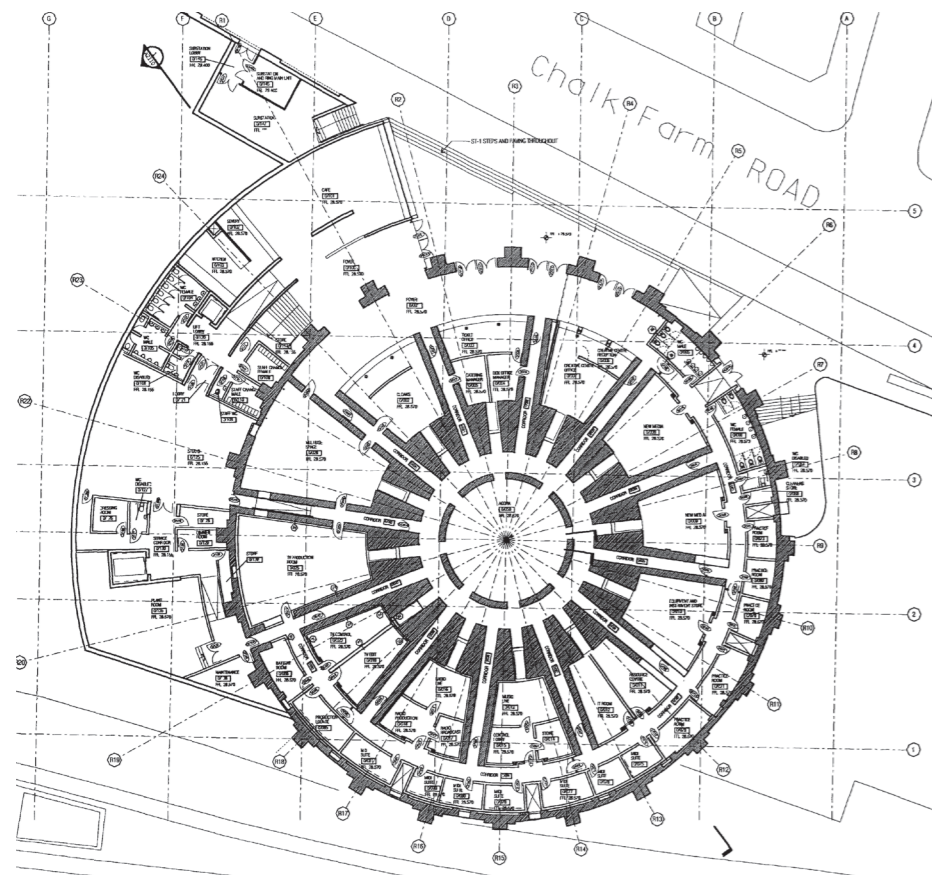
Contemporary engraving showing the interior shortly after the building was completed (from The Illustrated London News 1847)



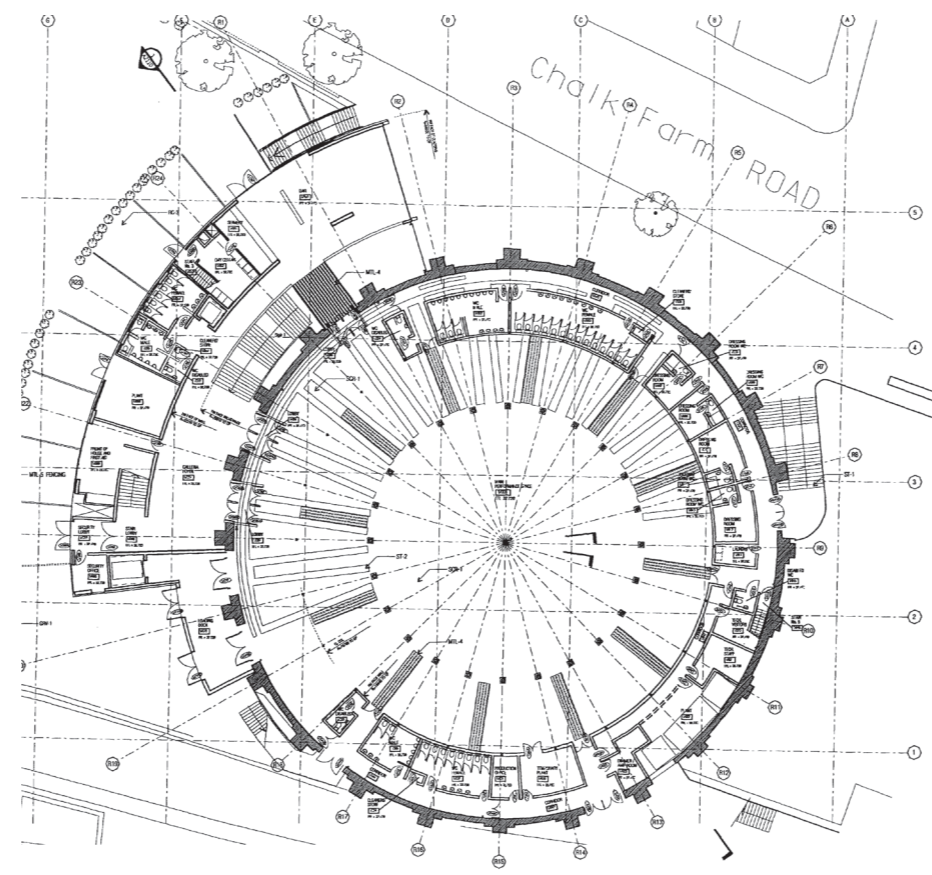
Photograph of the Roundhouse from Chalk Farm Road in 1954



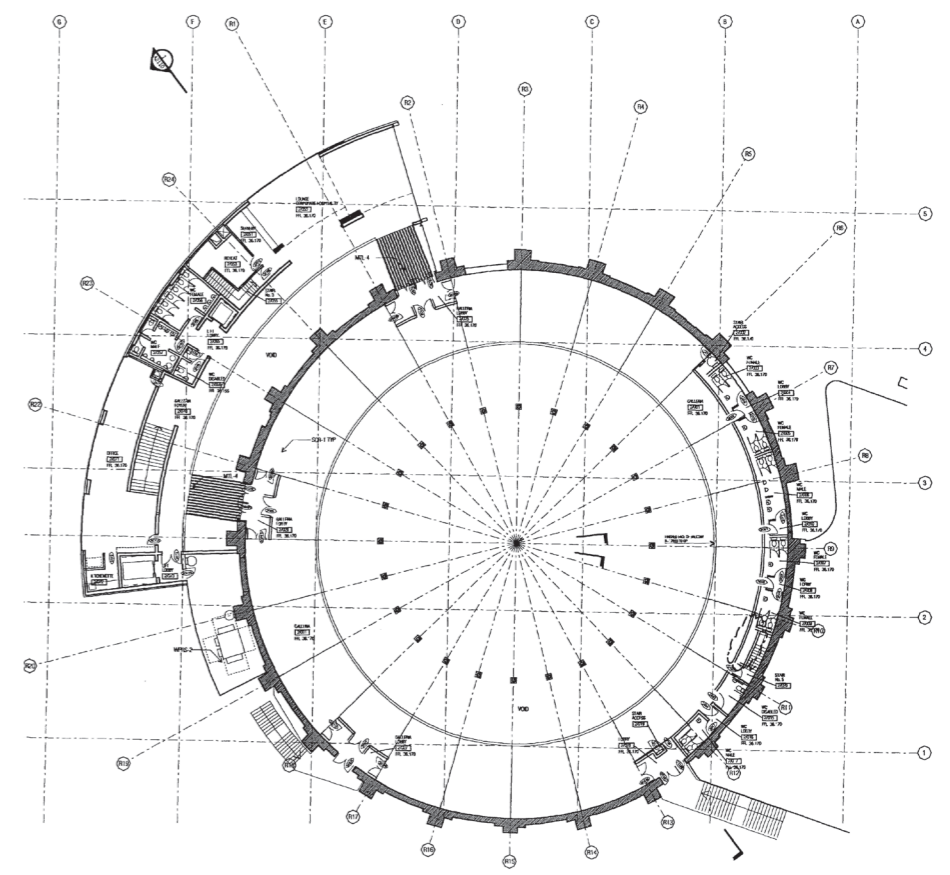
Photograph of the Roundhouse c 1974 (with the new 100 Chalk Farm Road in the background)



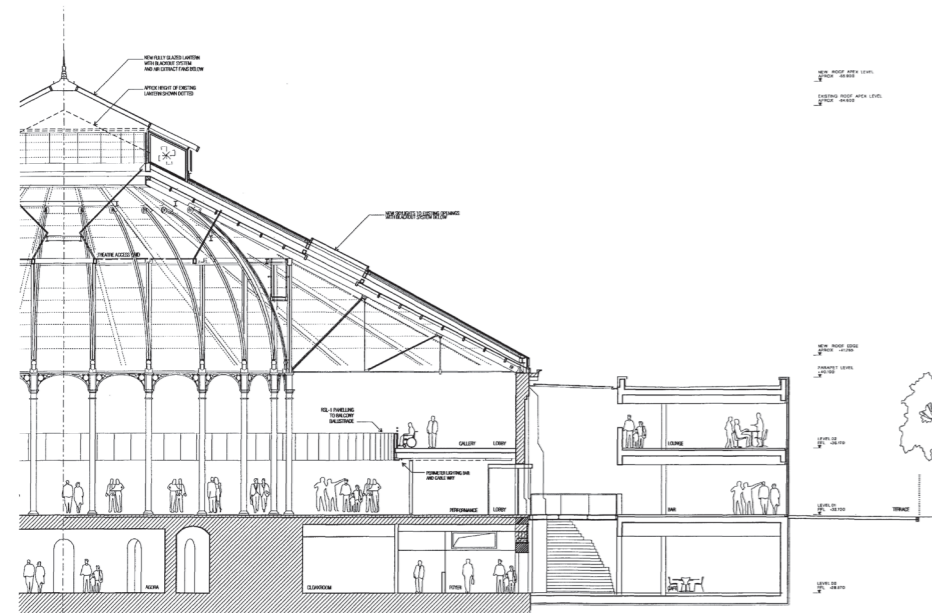
Proposed ground floor plan of the Roundhouse by John McAslan & Partners



Proposed first floor plan by John McAslan & Partners



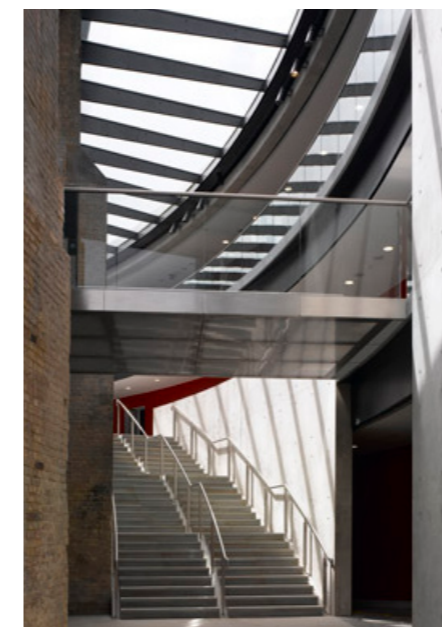
Proposed second floor plan by John McAslan & Partners



Proposed section through the Roundhouse and proposed extension by John McAslan & Partners



Photograph of the completed extension from the exterior



Photograph of the completed extension from the interior showing the main staircase

The lease on the Roundhouse came up for sale shortly after Gilbeys moved out. Around the same time, playwright Arnold Wesker was looking for a venue for the newly-established Centre 42, named after the trade union movement, Article 42, which stated that the arts should be for everyone. The lease was being bought by Selincourt & Sons whose Managing Director, Louis Mintz, was already a well-known patron of the arts. He was persuaded to donate the 16-year lease to Centre 42 in July 1964. It was to become a cutting-edge arts venue with theatre, dance and circus all performing there and people paying what they could afford for entrance. It hosted some of the most memorable performances of the 60s and 70s, including Jimi Hendrix, Pink Floyd, Peter Brook and The Living Theatre of New York.

Centre 42 closed in 1983 due to lack of funds, and a number of proposals to revitalise the building failed over the ensuing years. In 1996 The Norman Trust, led by local businessman Sir Torquil Norman, bought the building and set up the Roundhouse Trust to raise funds and to oversee its renewal.

Architects John McAslan + Partners were appointed to bring the legendary performing space back to life as a venue for the 21st century, whilst restoring the original features and providing a state-of-the-art creative centre for 11-25 year olds. In 2004 the Roundhouse closed for a £30m redevelopment. As part of the restoration, the circular glazed roof-lights were re-instated, allowing the public to see interior daylight for the first time in over 100 years. The New Wing, built alongside the main building, houses the box office, café, foyer and offices. The Roundhouse re-opened on 1 June 2006.

(Sources: The Roundhouse website; www.localhistory.co.uk; Off-Centre Stages - Fringe Theatre at the Open Space and the Round House 1968-1983 by Jinnie Schiele; John McAslan & Partners: LBC Planning database)

2.00 Site Analysis (continued)

2.04 Existing Context and Streetscene

The site sits in an area of great variety and contrast. The figure ground drawing below shows a range of building from small scale, traditional development, through to large scale structures and developments. Unusually for a location in such a built-up area, the existing grain includes large areas of open space on the south side of Chalk Farm Road.



Above: figure ground as existing, showing differences in grain on north and south sides of Chalk Farm Road

Historical development of the surroundings have led to the formation of several distinct character areas (see plan on right):

1 traditional, small to medium rise development on the north side of Chalk Farm Road, many with single storey extensions to 19th C houses set back from the street to form shops; some new development

2 higher rise, post-war council blocks - breaking uniformity of traditional street patterns

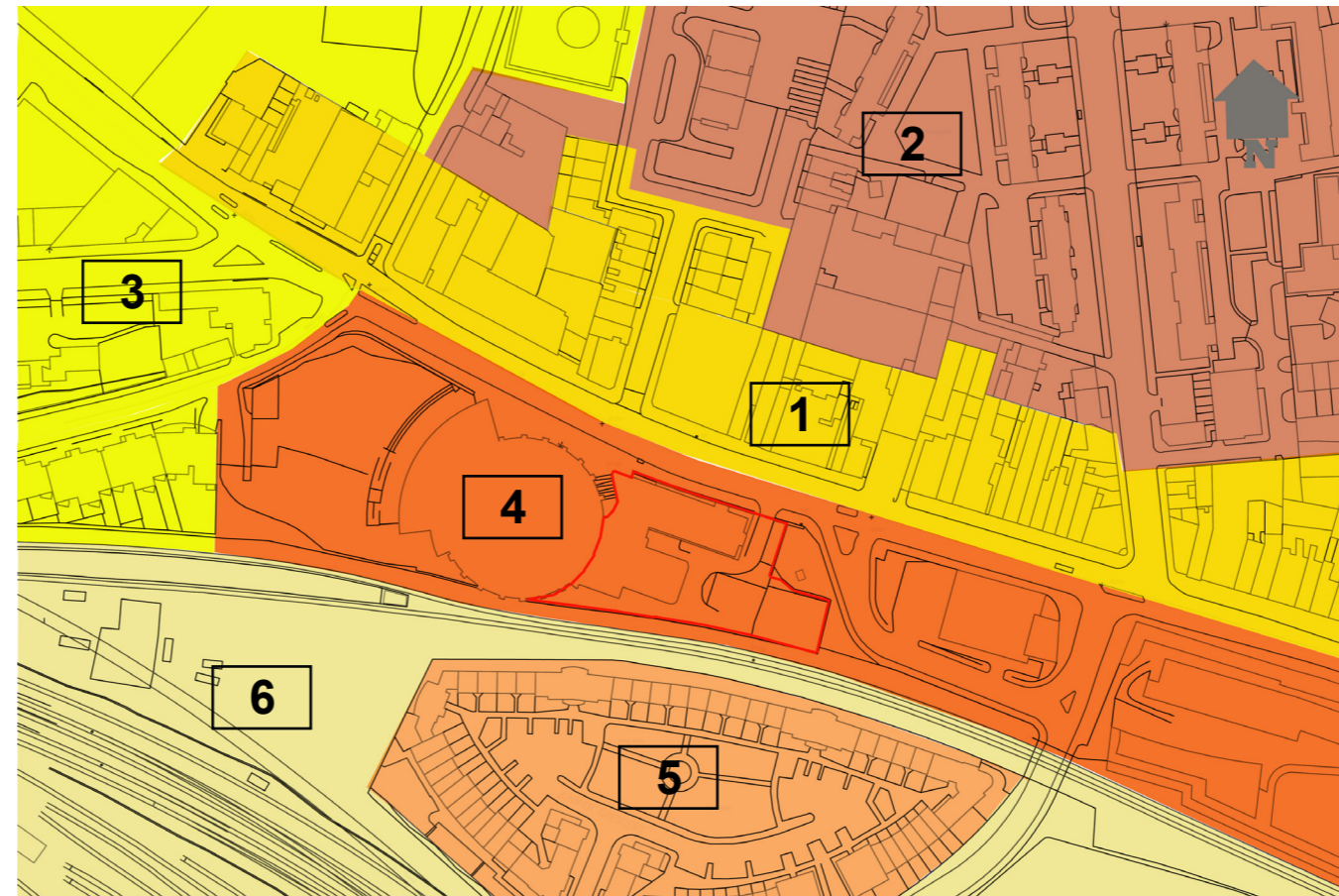
3 medium scale, mixed commercial and residential development including buildings with large footprints

4 large scale structures and spaces - little interaction with the street

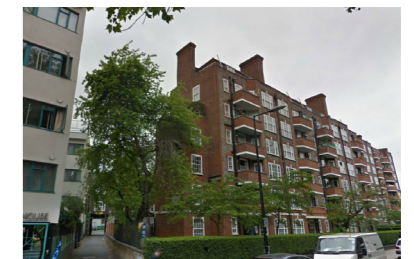
5 medium scale, new build residential - insular and inward-looking development

6 railway lands and former goods yard - elevated approximately one storey above Chalk Farm Road, flat and open

Character Areas



Character Area 1



Character Area 2



Character Area 3



Character Area 6



Character Area 5



Character Area 4