

### 3.02 Design evolution

A number of preliminary studies were produced with options for new buildings on the site. All included a transition, or intermediary, building next to the Roundhouse before stepping up to taller buildings. But they also set the former back from the pavement to create a new open space which will emphasise the importance of the listed building and provide a larger and improved 'breathing space'.

Some of these options are shown on the right:

Option 1 (top): this produces a stepped section and stepped plan to the street frontage building, opening up new views to the Roundhouse and deferring to the latter.

This was not pursued as it was considered that the stepped plan produced a relatively complex form, which takes attention away from the listed building

Option 2 (centre): this study looked at a simpler form with a slice taken from a 6-storey frontage building without a step in section - the intermediary building provides the transition from listed to new building.

This option was not pursued as it was considered that the step in scale of the proposal made too great a contrast with the listed building

Option 3 (bottom): this option combines elements of these two earlier studies - taking a simple form and removing a slice to open up space in front of the Roundhouse, but with the addition of a step in section to reduce the impact on the listed building. This study formed the basis of the design that was taken forward and developed for the application.

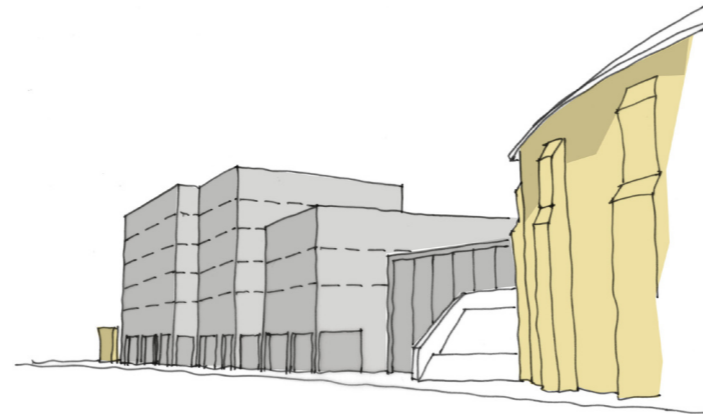
#### Preliminary feedback

We attended a pre-application meeting with Camden Planning Officers in March 2013 and received feedback as follows:

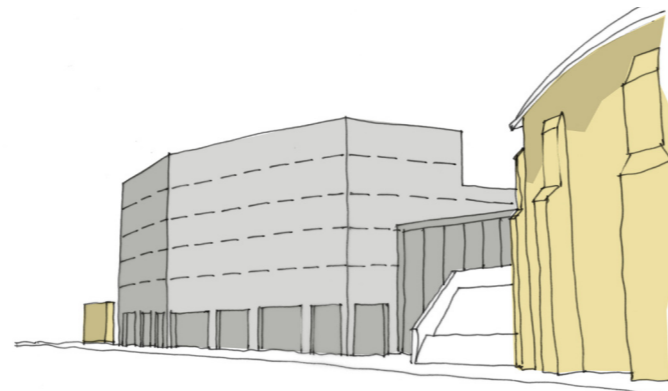
- no objection to loss of existing buildings
- key consideration is whether or not Roundhouse would be obscured from various (key) viewpoints
- some reservations about middle block and suggestion to reduce in height
- need to demonstrate how proposal impacts on historic fabric of Roundhouse
- proposed setback creating public open space is important
- height of eastern block less of issue, but should not be higher
- significance of wall to be fully explored
- advised involving English Heritage at this stage

Subsequently we met with English Heritage in early May and received the following advice:

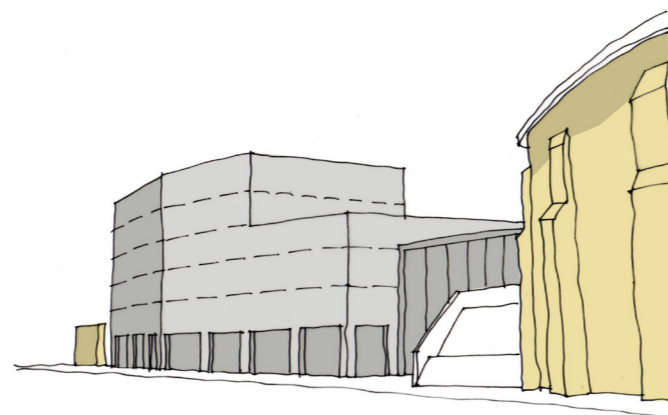
- removal of existing building welcomed
- any demolition directly affecting fabric of Roundhouse to be fully detailed
- more information required on historic and listed status of wall
- potential loss of wall to be weighed against benefits
- setting back of bulk of new build will enhance setting of Roundhouse in key views
- some concern over proposed loggia regarding detailing and impact on views



3D sketches showing early massing options: Option 1



3D sketches showing early massing options: Option 2



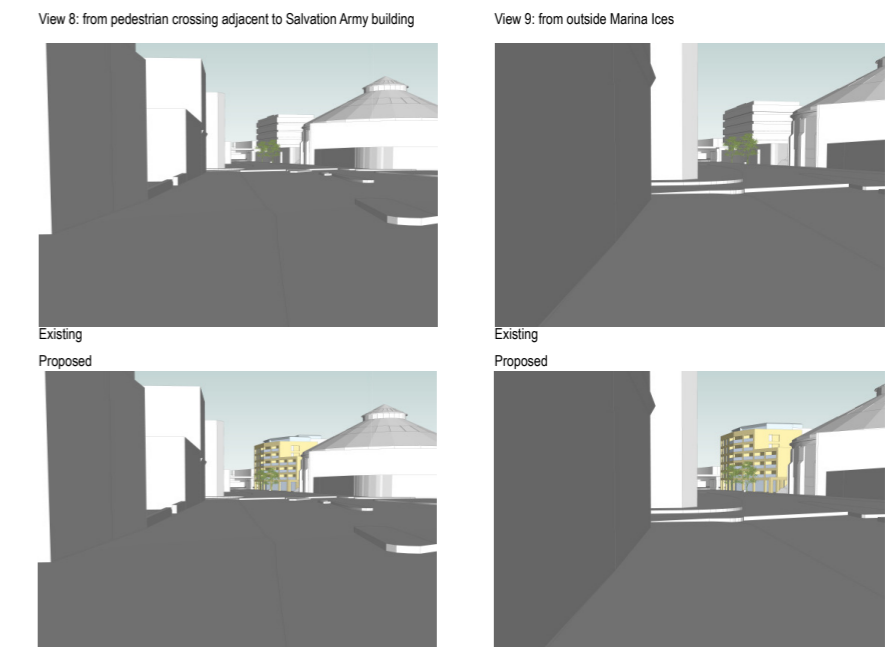
3D sketches showing early massing options: Option 3

The scheme design was considered further following receipt of the above comments and amendments were made.

These included removing the loggia in front of the Roundhouse's front steps following discussions with Roundhouse management, who were happy to see the existing full height security gates removed. This enabled the removal of the enclosing wall and replacement with a new, low wall to the steps topped with a glass balustrade, making an area that is currently hidden from view fully visible. This will further open up views of the east side of the listed building and improving its setting (see sketch views overleaf).

The comments received regarding proposed building heights were carefully considered and it was concluded that the character and scale of buildings/structures within this part of the Conservation Area supported the proposals, as long as new buildings stepped up from, and were no higher than, the listed building. The proposed transition building, set much further back than the existing building line, would clearly read as subordinate to the Roundhouse, whilst being complementary to the recent extension on the other side. The West Building, also set back from much of the street frontage, would step down as it approached the listed building, emphasising the latter's significance and dominance.

At the first pre-application meeting, further information was requested on existing and proposed views as seen from outside Marine Ices at the bottom of Haverstock Hill. The Conservation Officer agreed at the second pre-application meeting that these showed that the proposed height of the middle building would have minimal impact on views of the Roundhouse. There was further discussion regarding the middle block at the second pre-application meeting and it was confirmed that English Heritage did not have an issue with the heights proposed.



Further views of the impact of the proposal as seen from outside Marine Ices on Haverstock Hill, as requested at the first pre-application meeting

### 3.02 Design evolution (continued)

We also met with representatives of the Regents Canal CAAC (Conservation Area Advisory Committee) and the Camden Railways Heritage Trust (CRHT) in May. This was generally positive and following comments were noted:

- Railways Heritage Trust felt former retaining wall to be a key feature as it infers historic topography of the site and Trust are keen to educate people regarding history of railway lands. It was acknowledged that, if the wall were to be demolished, there should be some record of it and proposal to provide physical reminder of where wall stood, eg integrated into paving, was welcomed.

A second pre-application meeting was held with Officers in early July and the following further comments were received:

- the revised proposal for the front steps was generally agreed to be an improvement
- comments regarding the height of the middle block were reiterated and removal of a single storey was suggested
- comments were also made with regard to the height of the transition building and reservations expressed about its height and design treatment: a more lightweight design for the aluminium framing was suggested
- agreement that predominant material should be brick
- detailing of brickwork should be considered and precedents were provided
- more work required regarding historic significance of the wall and justification for its proposed demolition
- suggestion that study should be undertaken to incorporate small section of wall into the front elevation
- if demolition of the wall can be justified, then its former location should be marked as suggested or similar
- hard landscaping proposal considered 'too hard' and preference for less new trees

Following receipt of the above, further amendments were made (see opposite).



Preliminary proposal for treatment of existing steps and new public open space



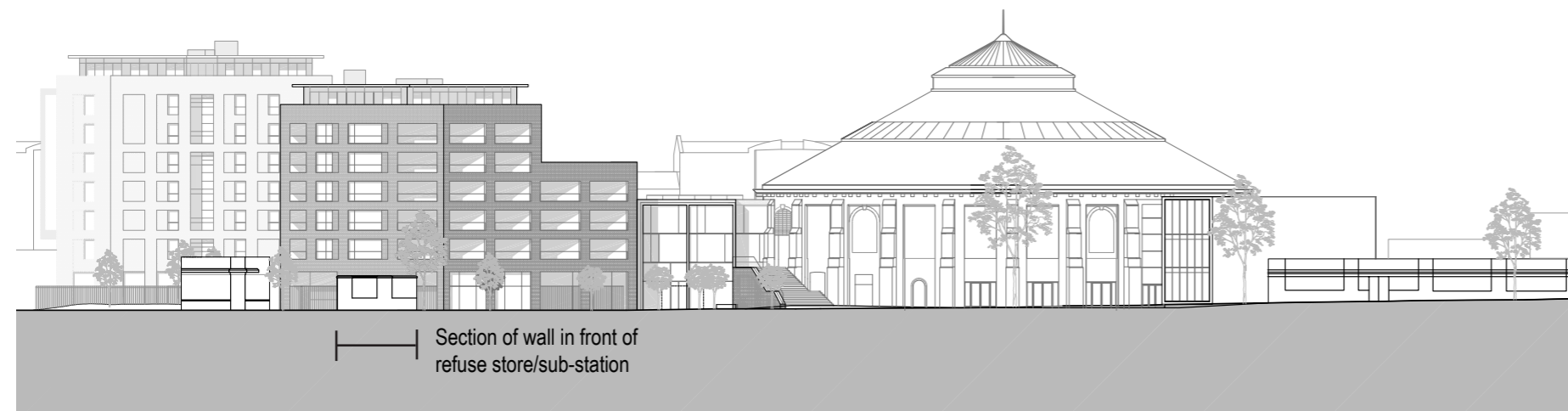
Same view as above with loggia removed following receipt of pre-application comments and discussions with Roundhouse: resulting proposal further opens up view of the listed building from the east and improves its setting



Right: lighter treatment proposed for the transition building following receipt of comments at second pre-application meeting



Above: revision to massing to west Building (in centre) with addition of further increment in stepping down towards the Roundhouse (previous massing can be seen in the elevations below)



Above: elevational studies showing impact of keeping section of old wall in front of refuse store and sub-station on street frontage

Further amendments following Pre Application Meeting no 2:

1 The detailed design of aluminium framing to the Transition Building frontage has been developed to present a 'lighter' treatment. This will provide greater transparency and contrast with the listed building and improve its appearance as a link, or transition, structure with the new buildings.

2 In considering the Conservation Officer's comments regarding heights of the Transition and West Buildings, further studies were undertaken and, again, it was concluded that the proposed heights are appropriate for the setting and character of the listed building and for this part of the Conservation Area. The further studies highlighted that they would be even more appropriate if another increment was added to the massing of the buildings as they step down towards the Roundhouse. This could be achieved by inserting another penthouse apartment above the lower section of the West Building (extending a 1 bed apartment westwards and increasing it to a 3 bed). This removes the 2 storey change in height that previously presented itself to the listed building. It also counters the argument for dropping the height of the West Building by one storey as the revised proposal provides a smoother transition between the West and Transition Buildings (see top left)

3 Further design studies were carried out regarding brick detailing: both use of vertical bonding and detailing of recessed brick panels (see Appearance section below)

4 A study of the impact of keeping a section of the historic retaining wall in front of the refuse store and substation was undertaken (see left). After careful consideration, it was concluded that the amount of wall that could be kept would not be sufficient to make it meaningful and demolition therefore is still proposed. Full justification for this can be found in the Heritage Statement accompanying this application

5 Proposals for hard landscape remain unamended as it is considered these provide the high quality and durability required for such a public space - paving in front of the Roundhouse comprises a mix of york stone paving slabs and setts and the proposal is to continue use of the same here. Three new trees are offered to enhance the appearance of the space; they will be of compact habit so as not to obscure views of the listed building.

### 3.00 Proposals (continued)

### 3.03 Layout

The development of the design for the new buildings on the site starts with the Roundhouse. The first two development principles listed on page 16 are (1) to improve and enhance the setting of the Roundhouse and (2) to open up new views of the Roundhouse from the east and improve the public realm

The Roundhouse is the major presence in this part of the Conservation Area and it is generally viewed obliquely along the street. There is an opportunity to improve the background to such views when seen from the west (principally from the Haverstock Hill approach). There is also an opportunity to improve the approach to the building from the east by infilling the 'gap' behind the petrol station with a distinctive new building and by opening up wider views of the listed building to the street.

The Roundhouse has a strong and regular geometric form, with buttresses providing muscularity and vertical emphasis. Openings are less regular, having been made where required. An escape stair from the first floor performance space wraps around the eastern side. The recent extension on the western side follows the circular form and meets the main building just below eaves level and behind one of the buttresses. When approached from the west, the siting of this extension obscures the view of much of this side of the listed building.

The proposed layout comprises 3 main components:

#### 1 Transition building

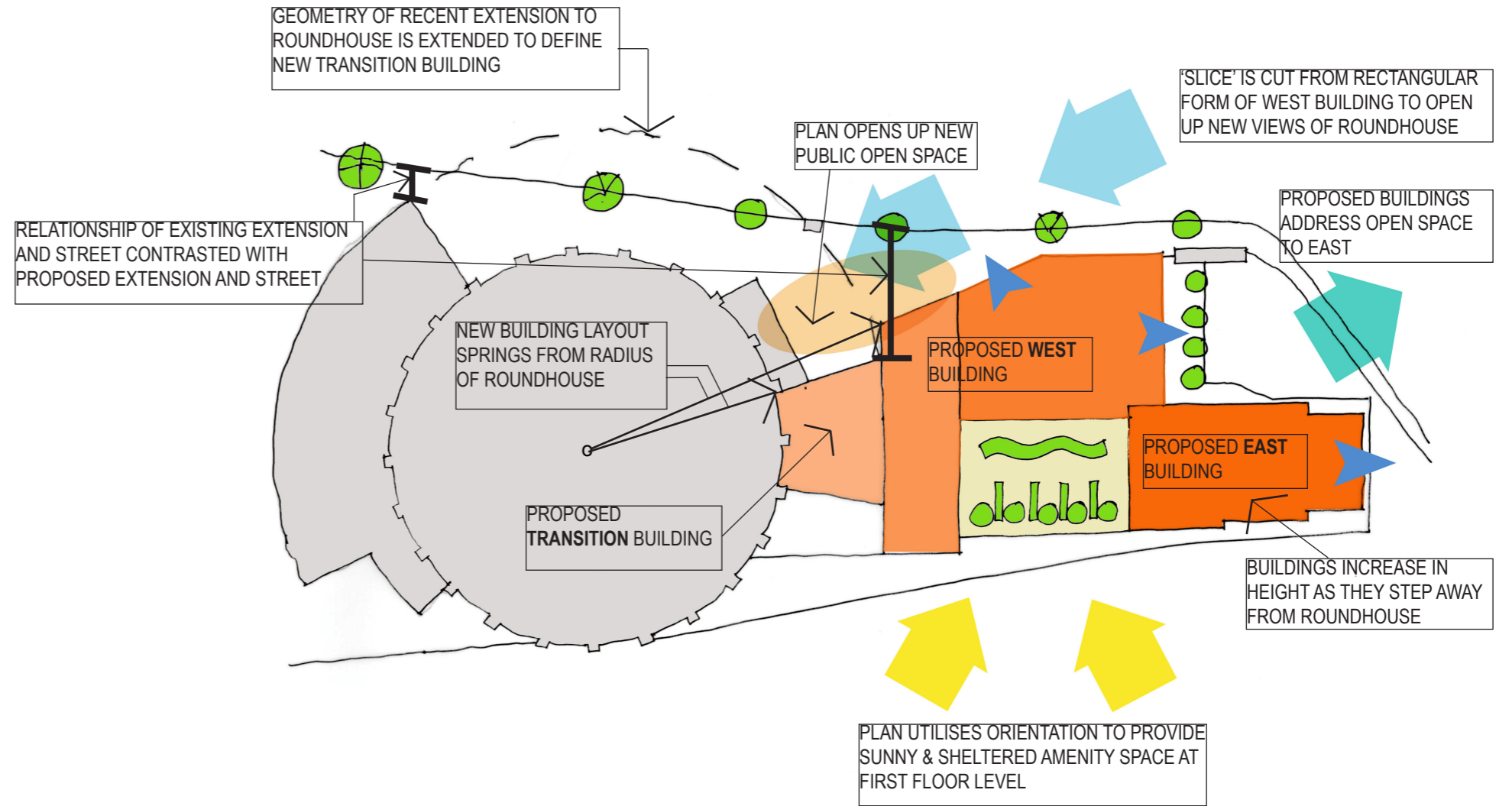
This will start from behind one of the Roundhouse's existing buttresses and follow the radius from the centre of the listed building. The relationship will be similar to the recent Roundhouse extension on the western side but will commence much further round the circumference, allowing the latter to be read as the dominant structure. This will also create a new public open space at the front which will provide new views to this side of the Roundhouse. The width of the transition building will be similar to the recent extension, taking the same diameter from the centre of the Roundhouse and continuing it around. It will complement the extension, whilst not obscuring views from the east (see photo and 3D below right). It will provide commercial accommodation with A3 bar/restaurant at ground floor and B1 offices above.

#### 2 West building

This will directly address the street at the eastern end of the site but then, taking a radius from the centre of the Roundhouse, it will be cut back to open up new views of the eastern side of the listed building. Removal of this 'slice' also allows the formation of a new public open space in front of the Roundhouse and transition building to allow for informal gatherings and to provide outdoor space for the bar/restaurant. The main residential entrance will be located at the eastern end, opening off the pavement and running along the eastern elevation with views into a new courtyard which also gives access to a B1 unit at the end. At the other end, opening off the new public space, is a wide and generous access route through to the rear of the site, providing shared access to residential, B1 units and the fire exits at the rear of the Roundhouse. This is designed as a light-filled space, which will consist of reflecting surfaces and both up and downlighting.

The West Building has a varying relationship at ground floor with the street and public space, reflecting the various activities going on within. At the eastern end, the main residential entrance is set back from the pavement in a welcoming porte cochere-type

## Concept Diagram



Below: view of the Roundhouse as seen from the west with the new extension blocking the view of much of the listed building (left) and, by contrast, a 3D view of the proposed public open space on the other side and the new view of the Roundhouse revealed by cutting a 'slice' from the new west building (right)

