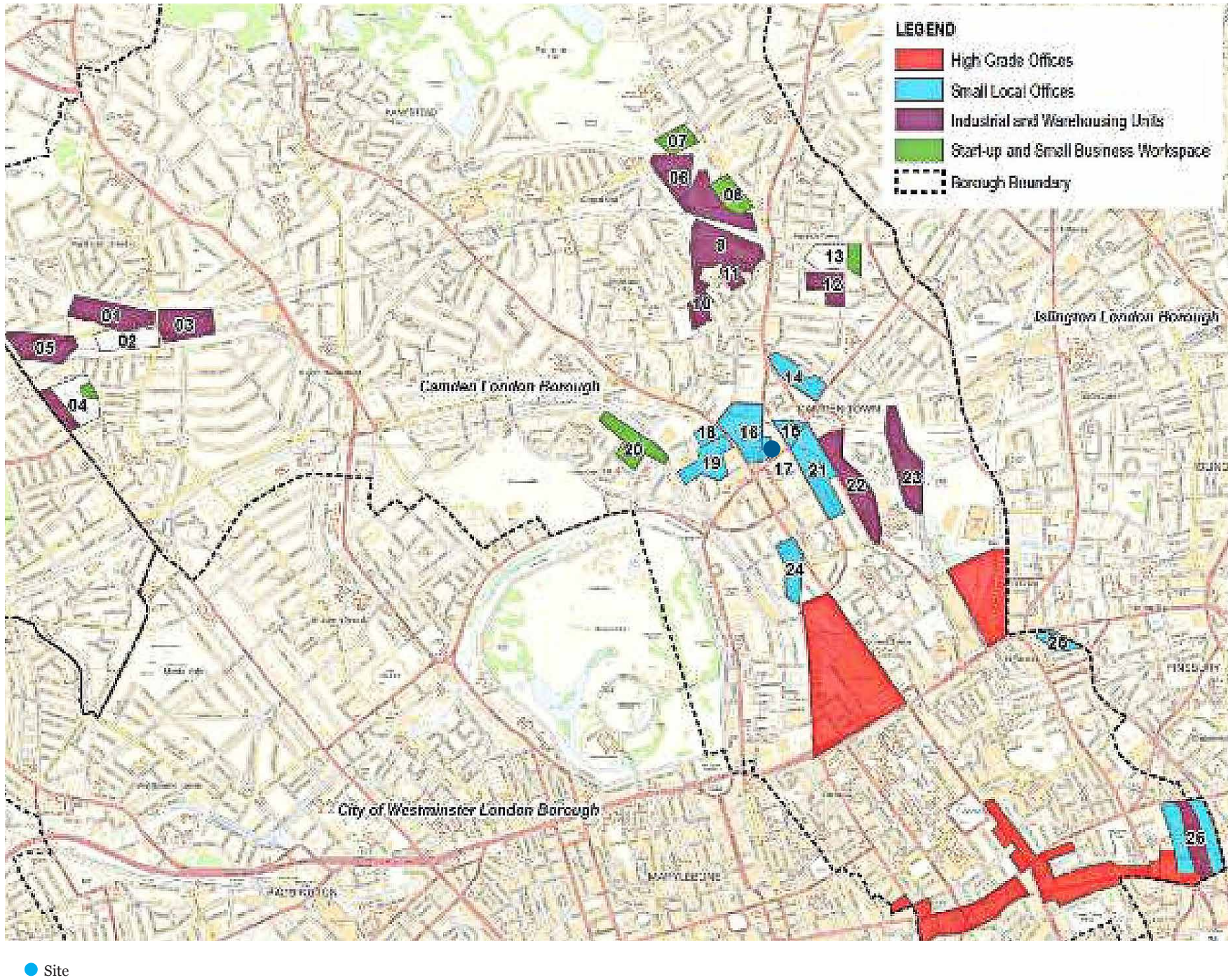


Extracts from The London Borough of Camden’s Employment Land Review in 2008

“Although Camden Town is the largest and most vibrant commercial centre of the borough, its office market is relatively small. Camden Town is something of an enigma in office property terms. While it might be expected to benefit greatly from its proximity to the central London area, it has remained a secondary office market location. There is relatively few large, modern office space and the bulk of the office market comprises converted light industrial buildings. Outside of the central London area there is limited provision of large office floor space suitable for occupiers seeking high grade office floor space.”

Despite its excellent transport locations and accessibility, Camden’s central business zone does not contain high grade offices and as a result limits the chances for high value employment. Grand Union House could re-balance Camden Town’s employment offer.



Distribution of employment premise types in the Borough of Camden  
(URS, LBC Employment land study 2014)



# 5 Site Potential

## 5.2 Camden’s Creative Cluster

Camden Town’s character and image have been generated by its vibrant markets, small independent fashion orientated traders and the media, cultural and creative industry businesses located in the area. The creative and cultural industries are attracted to Camden Town’s reputation as a place where artists, musicians, writers and a wide variety of alternative cultural practices have come together because of its relaxed Bohemian atmosphere and affordable housing. In the 1960’s the area became particularly popular with designers attracted by the robust industrial architecture and mews buildings. During the latter part of the 20th century the northern part of Camden Town has become the focus for youth culture and now attracts visitors from across the world attracted by the lively shops, markets, music venues and unstuffy atmosphere. Camden’s broad liberal spirit crosses generations, defies classification and resists gentrification.

Camden Town is home to a major cluster of cultural and creative industries and a wide range of creative businesses in publishing, media, advertising, software, music, performing and visual arts, radio, television, video, film and photography. A number of social, environmental and cultural factors act together to form Camden’s critical mass of cultural and creative production and consumption. Connectivity and enterprise support have been key drivers. The quality and character of office space, the character of public realm, staff entertainment and the food and drink offer are also important to creative businesses. Camden’s strength includes its liberal spirit, venues and galleries, image and heritage, industry, cafes, shops, and nightlife.

Similar businesses co-locating helps to entrench a clustering effect. Creative business clusters generate a supportive ecology that incorporates both the production and consumption activities that balance a local economy and add value. They generate high quality employment opportunities for local people.



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1 Walter Stickert, Therese Lessore, Monrington Crescent, 1934

2 The Good Mixer, 1980’s

3 Beryl Bainbridge at her house in Camden Town

4 Neave Brown at Fleet Road Estate

5 Compendium Books, Camden High St 1970’s

6 Dylan Thomas lived on Delancey Street in Camden





7



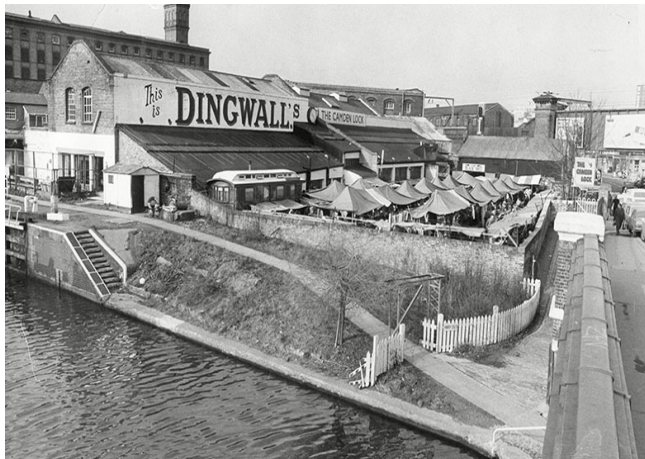
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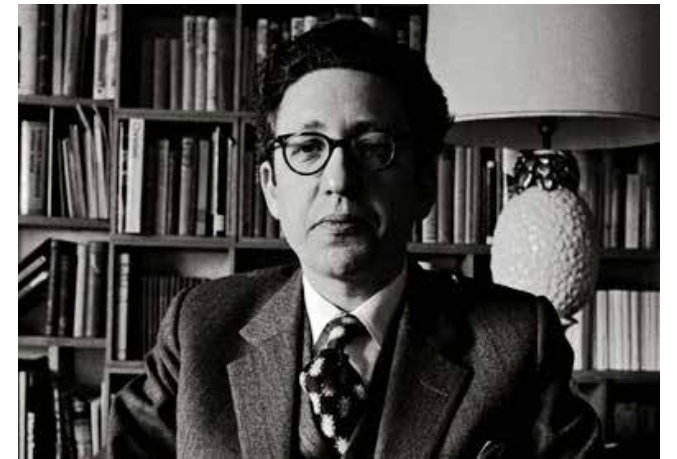
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7 Honest Jon's Records, Chalk Farm Rd, 1978

8 The Clash outside The Roundhouse, 1978

9 Blondie's first live concert, Dingwalls, Camden Town 1979

10 Alan Bennett

11 Dingwall's and the Lock Market 1978

12 Clothing stall in Camden Market 1980

13 Jonny Ramone at The Roundhouse in 1976

14 Bernard Levin

15 Rolling Stones Live at The Round House, 1971

16 Frank Auerbach at his Mornington Crescent studio

17 Camden Lock, late 70's

18 Hawley Arms Tavern



5 Site Potential

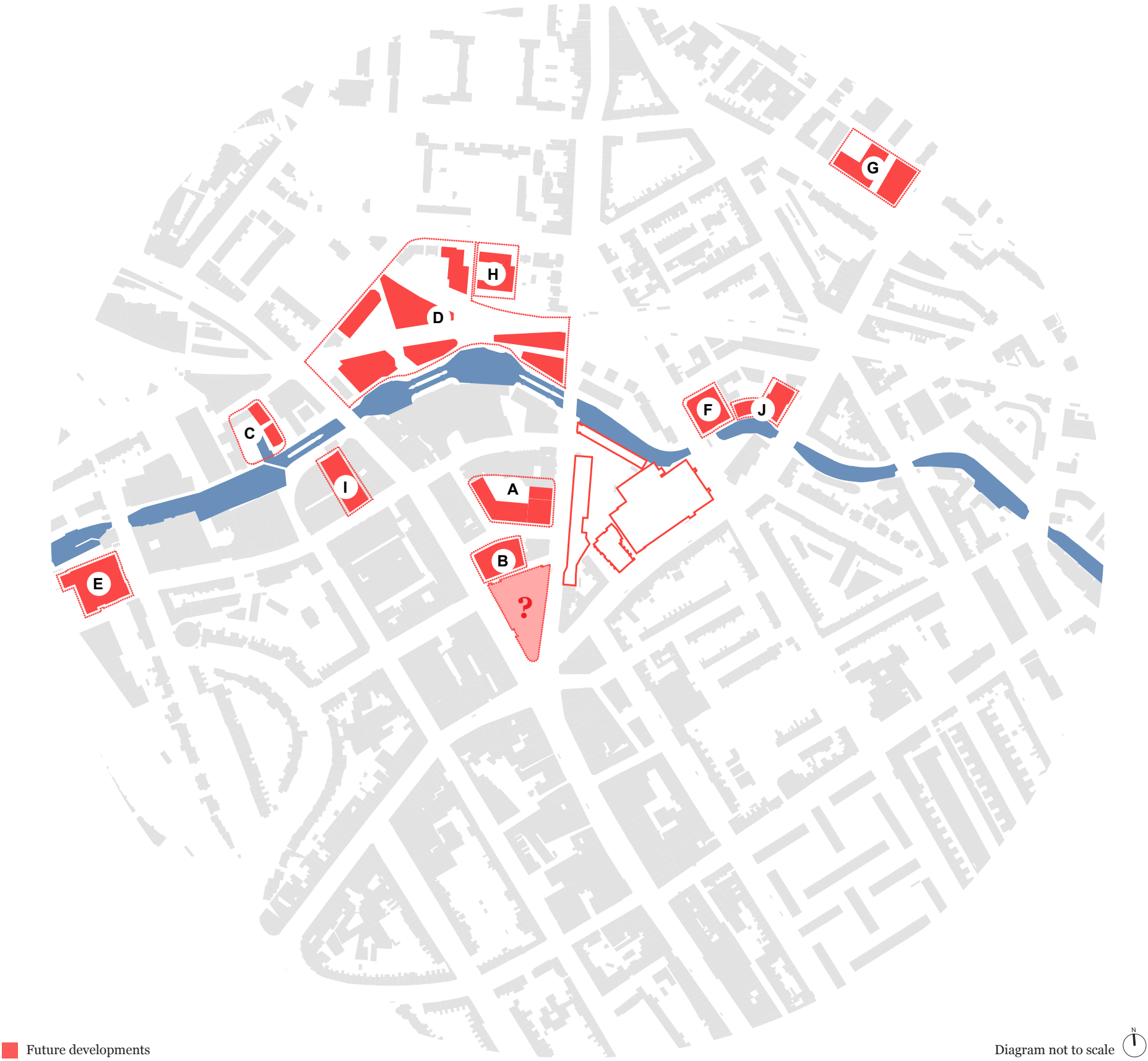
5.3 Recent and Proposed Developments

Camden Town has recently absorbed a number of new developments that are beginning to transform its sense of urban density.

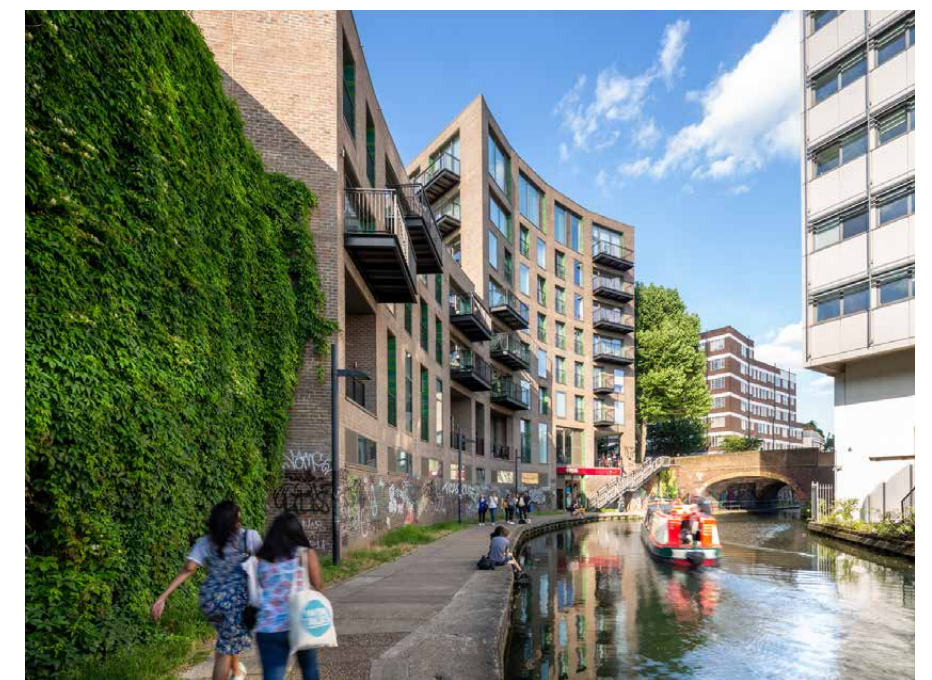
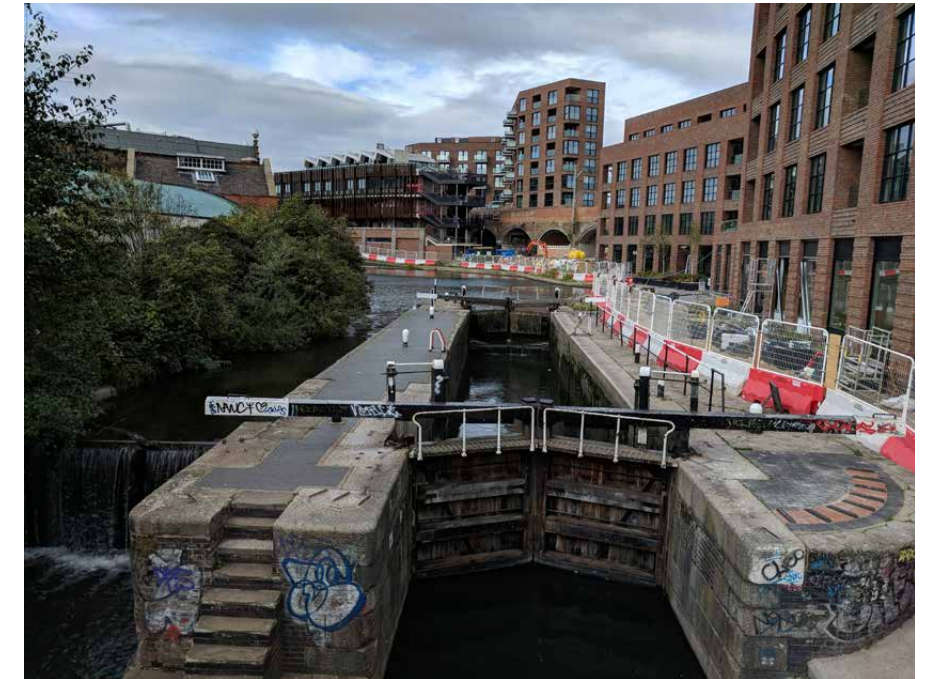
A particularly significant new development will be the potential upgrade of Camden Town Station. This proposes to add an additional main entrance and exit to the Underground Station on Buck Street (A), That project will reduce the congestion on Britannia Junction and alter the centre of gravity of Camden Town. Sitting opposite Buck Street, the Grand Union House site could contribute to this revitalisation of Camden Town centre.

A major residential development at Regents Canalside, designed by Squire and Partners, directly faces the canal adjacent to Camden Road. Its seven storey massing was responds to the height of adjacent existing buildings. The new buildings strengthen and unify the urban townscape.

- A TFL, Camden Town Station upgrade (public consultation stage)
- B Buck Street Market (2018/3553/P)
- C Camden Lock Market scheme, Chalk Farm Road (2015/4774/P)
- D Hawley Wharf
- E 1 - 6 Centric Close (2016/6891/P)
- F 140-146 Camden Street (2014/7908/P)
- G 79 Camden Road (2013/7646/P)
- H 3 Hawley Road ( 2014/2712/P)
- I 32 Jamestown Road London NW1 7BY (2013/8265/P)
- J Regents Canalside, 31-39 Camden Road NW1 9LR (2013/3752/P)







- Second floor and above**
- New homes
  - Courtyard space for residents
  - Lifts and stairs for the development
  - Common parts/access
- Ground and first floor**
- Business space
  - Retail
  - New Underground station
  - Substation

Top left: Artist's impression of TFL Camden station development.  
 Top right: View of Hawley Wharf development.  
 Below Right: Regents Canalside apartments.  
 Below left: TFL land use diagram.



5 Site Potential

5.4 Improving Activity & Permeability

Camden Town’s main roads all radiate from a single point, Britannia Junction. The secondary orbital routes that connect them provide a poor quality pedestrian experience. As a result, most pedestrian movement concentrates on the main roads. This causes pedestrian and vehicular congestion, particularly on Camden High Street north of the Underground station.

Kentish Town Road has generous proportions but somehow does not exploit its potential to relieve town centre congestion. The ground floor of Grand Union House is blank, dominated by the car park fencing and the vehicle oriented site access to the Sainsbury’s car park. The route across the car park is a useful shortcut but seems hidden and is not a pleasant experience. This environment is a deterrent for good pedestrian movement and undermines the chances of permeable links between Camden Town High Street and Camden Road.

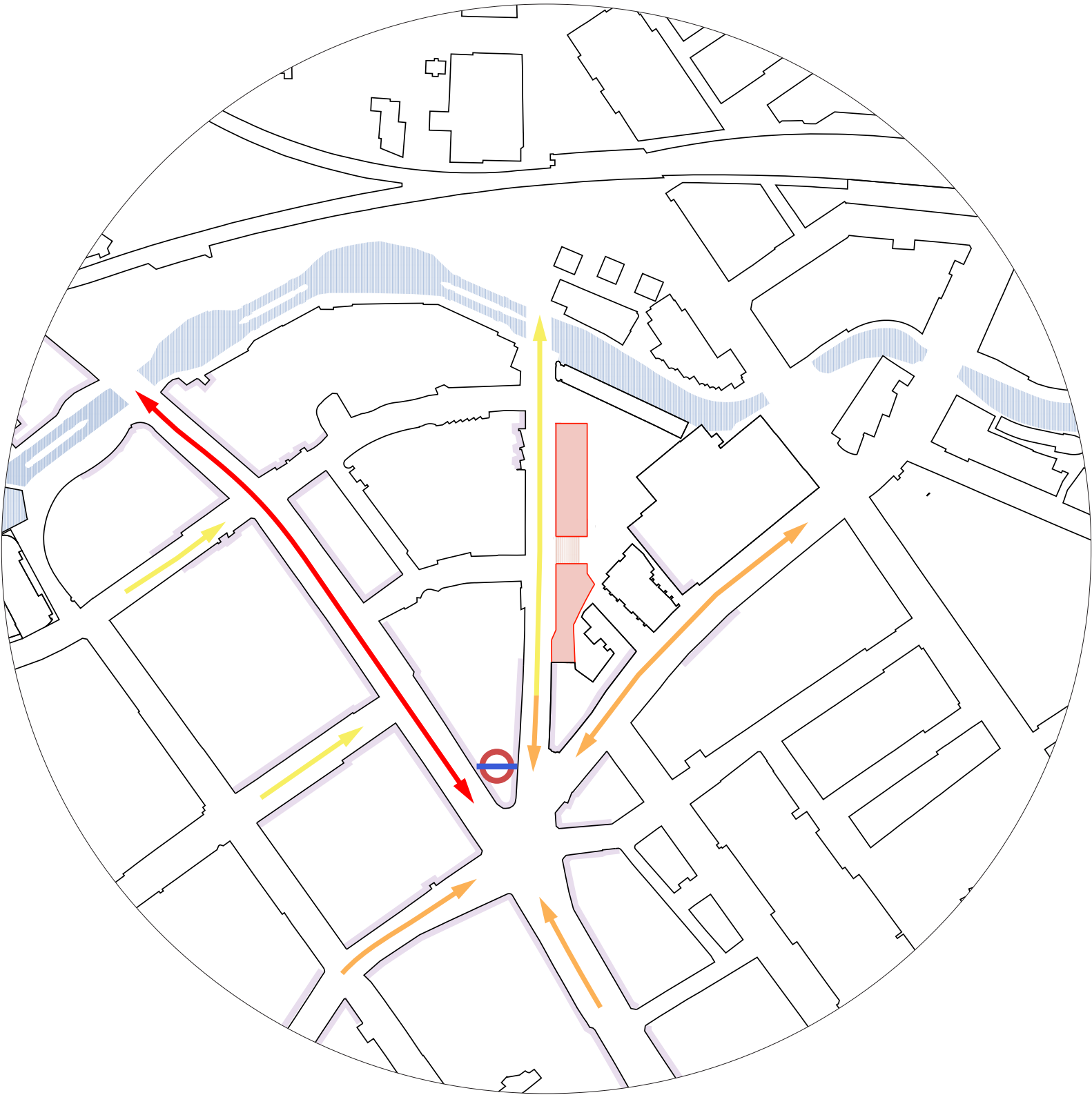
The potential future new Camden Station entrance and public space on Buck Street will increase activity around and through the site to Camden Road. The redevelopment of Grand Union House could significantly enhance and further animate the public realm throughout the site:

- Widening the access improves sightlines from Kentish Town Road and Buck St.
- Widening the access between St Michael’s Church & Sainsbury’s.
- Providing active uses at ground level in Grand Union House.
- Creating a more pedestrian-focused environment, improving natural surveillance and reducing risk and fear of crime.

The site could contribute to more effective movement of pedestrians around Camden, taking pressure away from the Britannia Junction and easing access to public transport. Such an improvement in public realm could act as the catalyst to provoke a regeneration of Kentish Town Road.

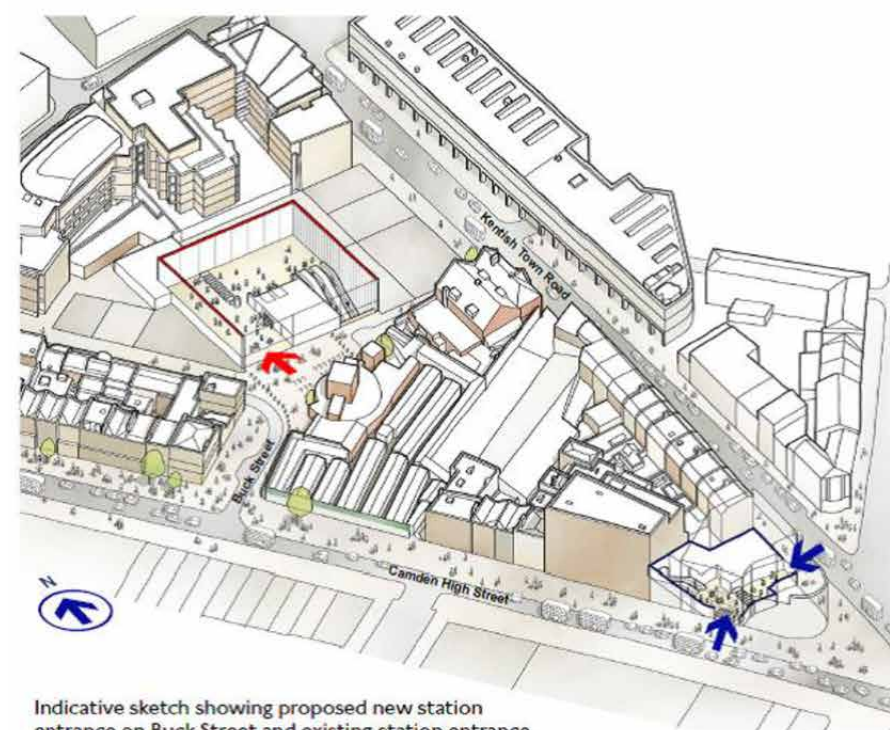


Left: Overcrowding on Camden High Street  
Middle: Inactive frontages and low foot fall on Kentish Town Road.  
Right: Existing pedestrian routes



- Extreme foot fall
- Comfortable foot fall
- Low foot fall
- Active Frontage

Diagram not to scale



Indicative sketch showing proposed new station entrance on Buck Street and existing station entrance. Proposed over station development not shown.

- Extreme foot fall
- Comfortable foot fall
- Low foot fall
- Active Frontage



Diagram not to scale

Above: Artist's impression of the Buck Street Market scheme  
 Below: TFL Masterplan  
 Right: Potential new pedestrian routes and frontages



5 Site Potential

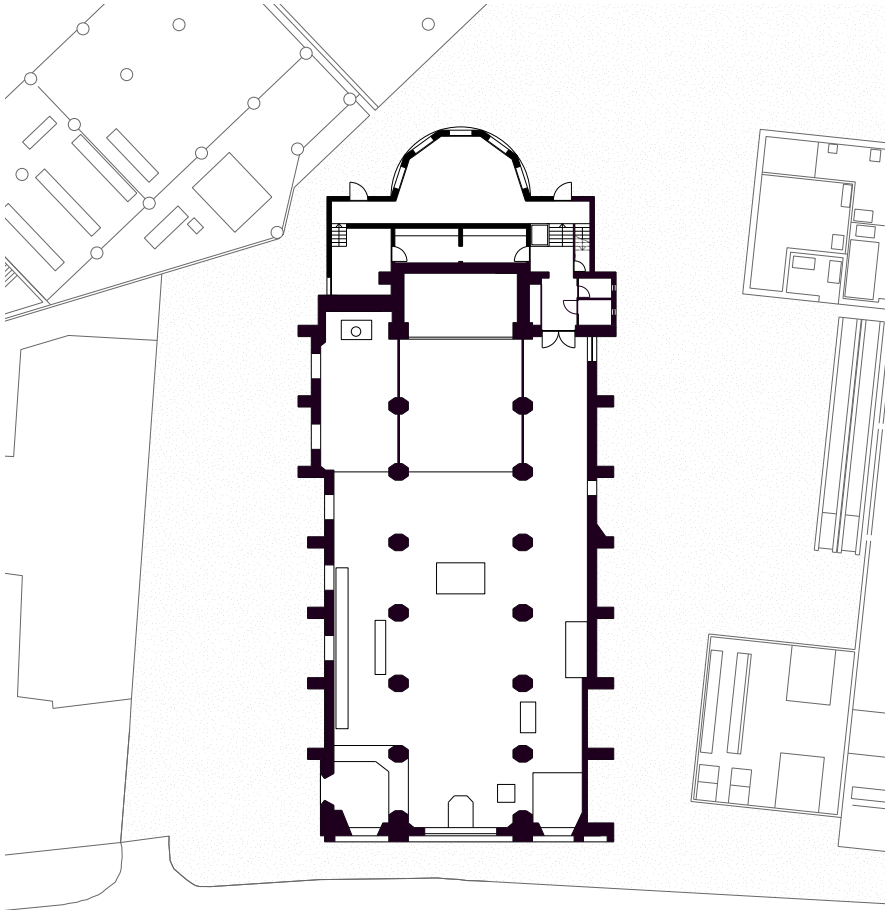
5.5 Urban Ambition

The redevelopment of Grand Union House will improve the public realm on Kentish Town Road. Multiple active functions at the ground floor of Grand Union House will animate the street and make it a more humane place to be. Enhancing the passageway through Grand Union House will create a more legible route through the site. The width of pavement will be doubled, surface materials will be improved and lighting enhanced. Placing a generous, busy office lobby next to it will activate the space and improve the sense of safety.

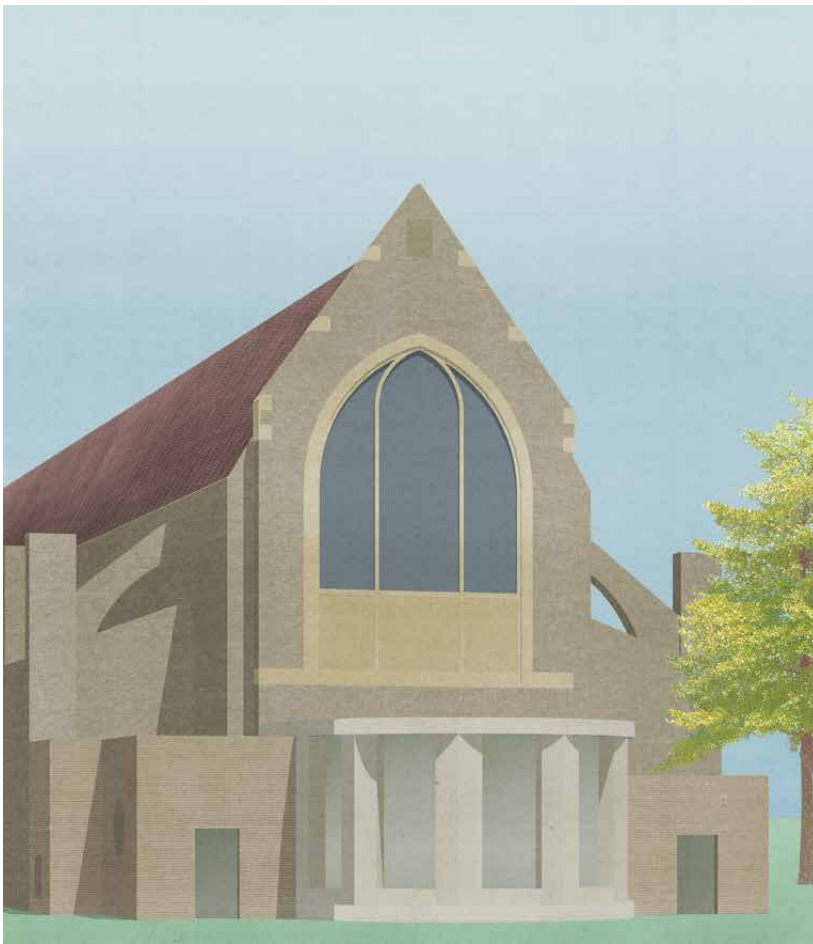
It could also act as the catalyst for improvements beyond the project demise. The images opposite are intended to project a vision of how the wider site could develop.

An enhanced connection between Camden High Street, the Potential Camden Town station entrance on Buck Street and Camden Road will create more route choice for Sainsbury’s customers. Approaching from the west, they will be able to see the store from the new station entrance. The Yard could become a more pedestrian-friendly place, balancing the needs of vehicles with other users. The yard could feel more like a shared public space at the heart of Camden.

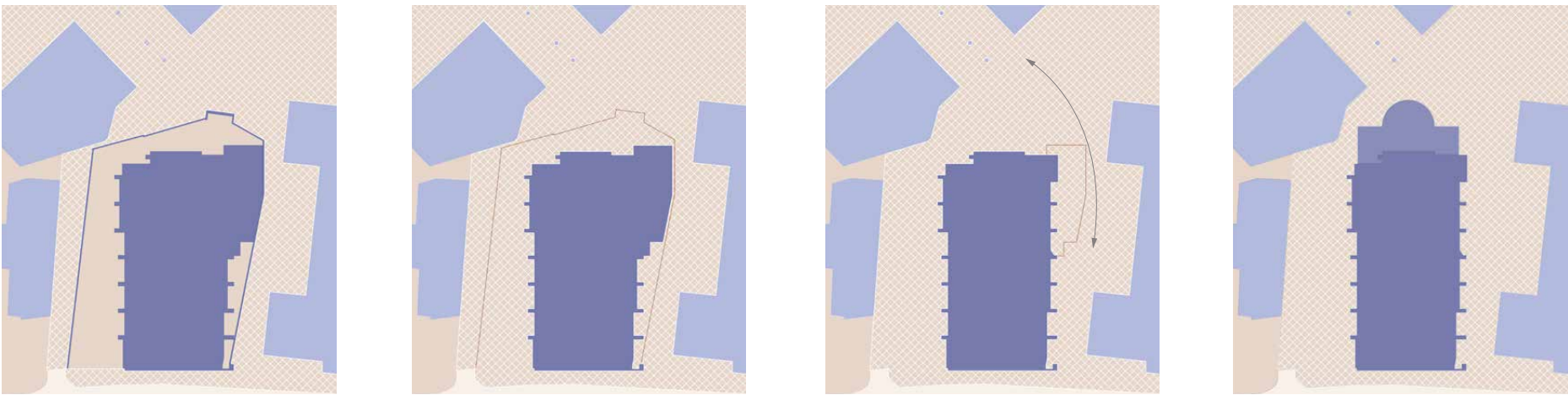
St Michael’s Church currently sits behind a walled garden. Despite its extensive outreach programme, the Church seems mute within the town centre. As a neighbour to Grand Union House it is physically close but walled off. Re-organising the ancillary accommodation at the back of the Church could widen the access route besides Sainsbury’s and improve the pedestrian experience. A new Vestry building at the back of the Church could open to the Yard. It would be suitable for public events, and would support animation of the public realm and route. Further permeability could be achieved if a secondary route were introduced from Grand Union House through the Churchyard garden to Camden Road.



Ground floor plan of St Michaels Church with proposed extension to the rear of the Church



Artist's impression of the proposed extension to St Michael's Church



Diagrammatic sequence of proposals

Above: Retail activates the pedestrian routes through Grand Union House.  
Right: Studies for St Michaels Church that integrate it into a wider site revitalisation.





Urban study on how the various stakeholders around Grand Union House integrate into an urban masterplan linking Kentish Town Road and Camden Road. There lies great potential in activating the 'courtyard' by enhancing the pedestrian experience.



6 Development Proposal

6.1 Land Use

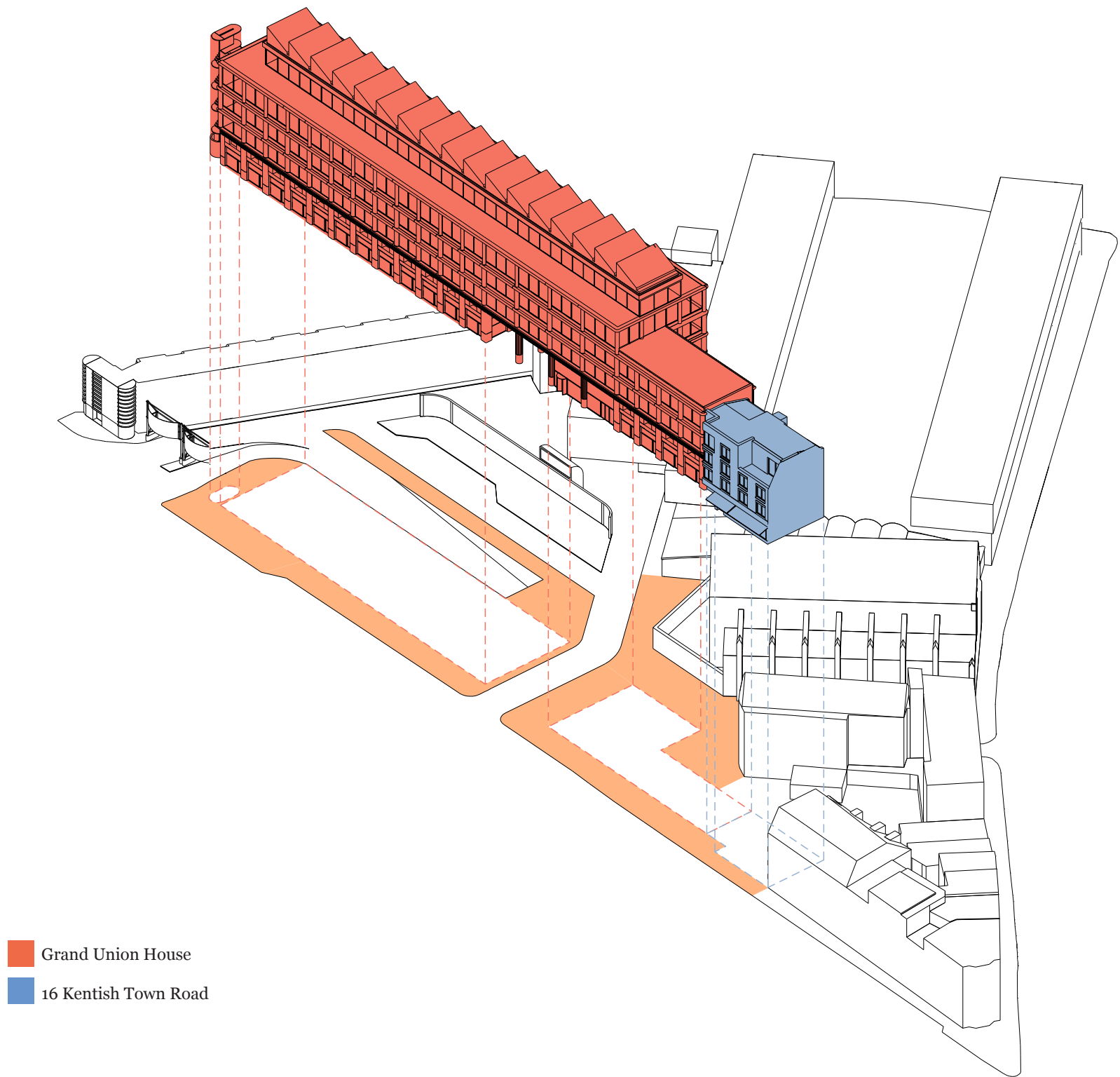
The site development provides a mix of commercial office space, residential accommodation and street level A1-A3 and/or D2 uses.

The site’s central Camden Town location is considered ideal for a large commercial office development. Grand Union House will contribute to Camden’s already thriving creative environment. The office building has been designed with floorplates that are large, bright and flexible. They will appeal to a large number of businesses of varying scales. They are inherently adaptable to future changes in business use.

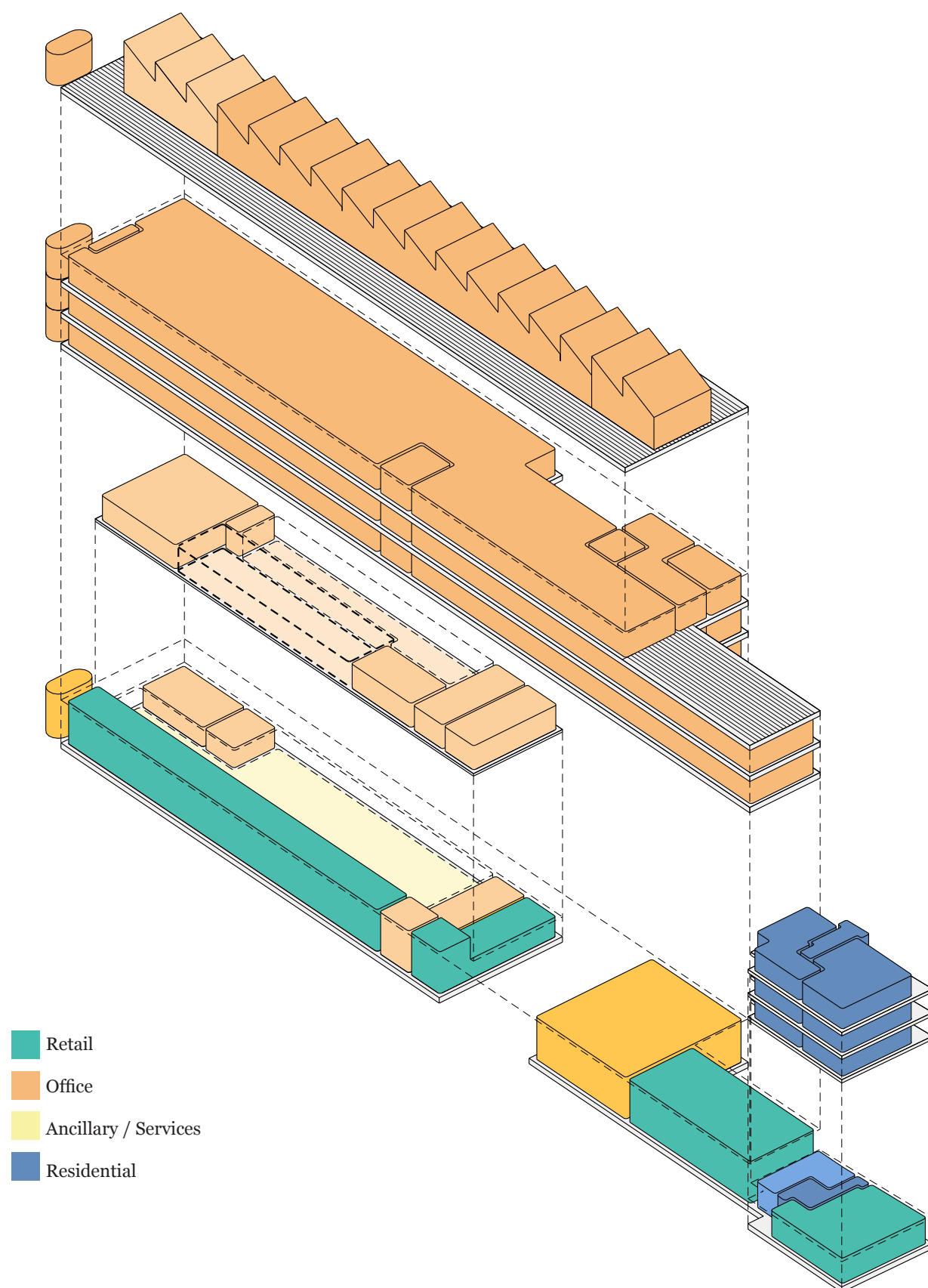
The residential building at 16 Kentish Town Road consists of 6 affordable dwellings to meet Camden’s needs for additional affordable residential accommodation. The dwellings are arranged as a mixture of one and two bedroom family apartments and a studio. Each has dedicated amenity space and is dual aspect. They are accessible, adaptable and will be located close to other residential buildings.

Retail units beneath both buildings have been sized to attract small independent retailers, cafes and restaurants that will enliven Kentish Town Road throughout the day.

The development proposal will create a new vibrancy for Kentish Town Road. The mix of uses will help to balance Camden’s current mix of uses.







Proposed NIA Areas					
Level	Workspace (B1)	Retail (A1/A3)	Retail (A1/A3 + D2)	Residential (C3)	Total
	NIA m2	NIA m2	NIA m2	NIA m2	NIA m2
-01					
00		275.37	261.48		536.85
0M				122.25	122.25
01	1308.49			122.25	1430.74
02	1308.39			108.46	1416.85
03	1141.14				1141.14
04	390.10				390.10
<b>Total m2</b>	<b>4148.12</b>	<b>275.37</b>	<b>261.48</b>	<b>352.96</b>	<b>5037.93</b>

Proposed GIA Areas					
Level	Workspace (B1)	Retail (A1/A3)	Retail (A1/A3 + D2)	Residential (C3)	Total
	GIA m2	GIA m2	GIA m2	GIA m2	GIA m2
-01					
00	235.85	275.36	263.38	58.39	832.98
0M	249.10			143.87	392.97
01	1477.12			143.87	1620.99
02	1476.74			129.81	1606.55
03	1309.09				1309.09
04	505.96				505.96
<b>Total m2</b>	<b>5253.86</b>	<b>275.36</b>	<b>263.38</b>	<b>475.94</b>	<b>6268.54</b>

Proposed GEA Areas					
Level	Workspace (B1)	Retail (A1/A3)	Retail (A1/A3 + D2)	Residential (C3)	Total
	GEA m2	GEA m2	GEA m2	GEA m2	GEA m2
-01					
00	253.85	310.82	289.16	66.19	920.02
0M	289.47			165.05	454.52
01	1549.85			165.05	1714.90
02	1549.85			151.35	1701.20
03	1371.56				1371.56
04	534.89				534.89
<b>Total m2</b>	<b>5549.47</b>	<b>310.82</b>	<b>289.16</b>	<b>547.64</b>	<b>6697.09</b>

Left: Diagram depicting land use breakdown.  
 Right: Proposed areas for the development.



## 7 Grand Union House

### Grand Union House

The redevelopment of the Grand Union House site will provide a new, dense mixed-use building. The design has the following characteristics:

#### High quality architecture:

- A well-defined new presence in Camden Town.
- An efficient, adaptable, high quality modern office space.
- A rigorous contemporary architecture amongst the disparate styles of surrounding architecture.
- A strong and characterful materiality
- Refined architectural detailing

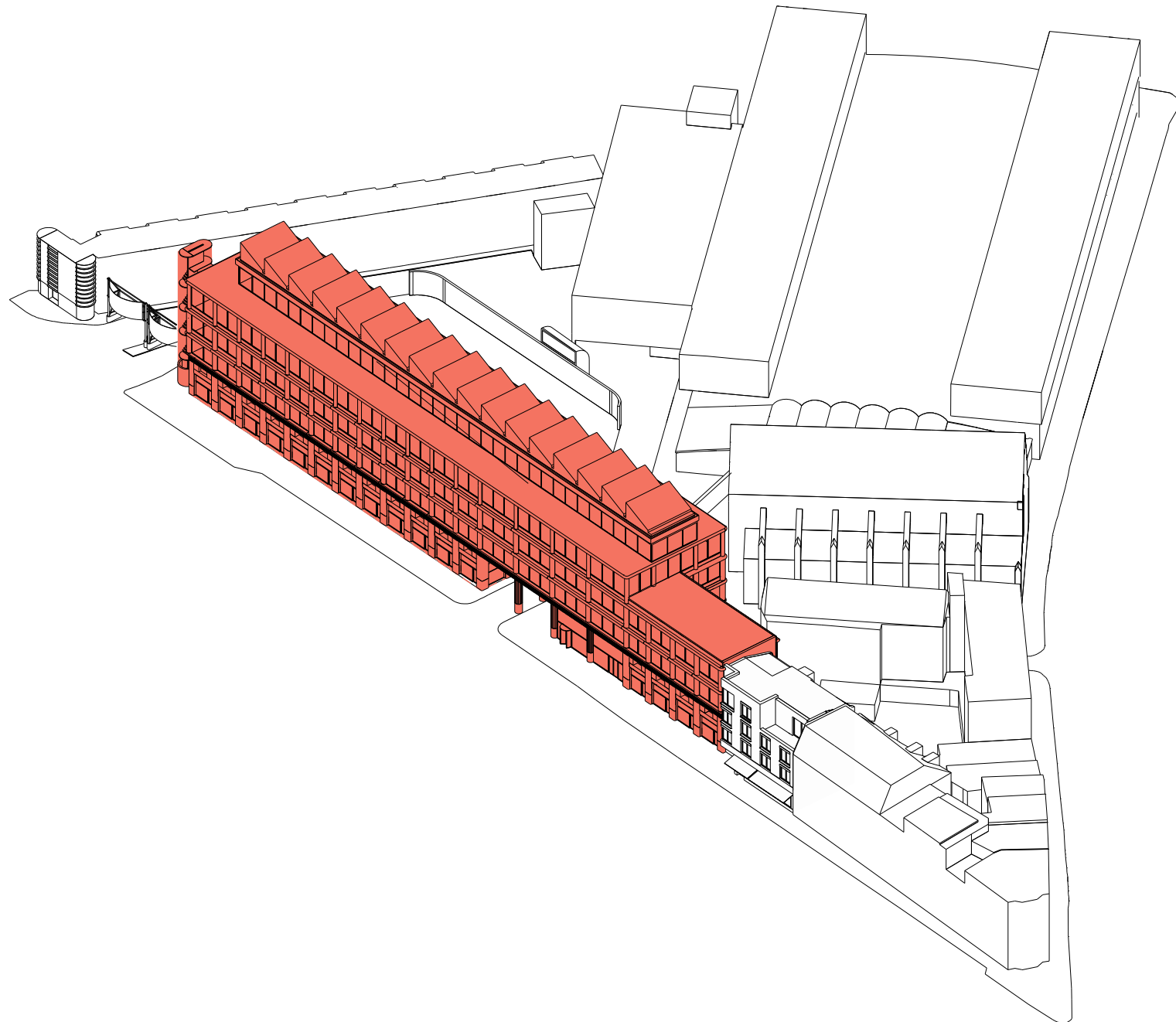
#### An excellent Urban Contribution:

- Maximising floor plates to increase the quantity of high grade office space in central Camden.
- A welcoming entrance that contributes to street animation and improves the pedestrian experience
- Enlivening Kentish Town Road by introducing retail, restaurants and café spaces at ground floor
- Improvements to the street public realm and route to Camden Road

#### Sustainability

The building represents exemplar sustainability achieving BREAAAM excellent:

- Re-using the concrete foundations and structure of a previous building
- Low embodied carbon superstructure including wood floor slabs
- Re-cyclable aluminium façade elements
- Bright day-lit office floors with good views for all users from the narrow floorplate
- Day-lit stair cores with views that encourage vertical circulation on foot and animate the facades
- Future proofed façade that can take advantage of improved future air quality.
- Timeless design, quality of construction and adaptability that is robustly sustainable







Left: Artist's impression looking south along Kentish Town Road  
 Right: ABC Building looking south along Kentish Town Road, 1960's



7 Grand Union House

7.1 Massing

An important contributing factor to the extent of development has been the construction method for the building. Re-development of the site cannot proceed unless impact on the Sainsbury’s supermarket operation is practically eliminated. This involves maintaining access to the store’s deliveries entrance and exit route and the customer car park in the basement.

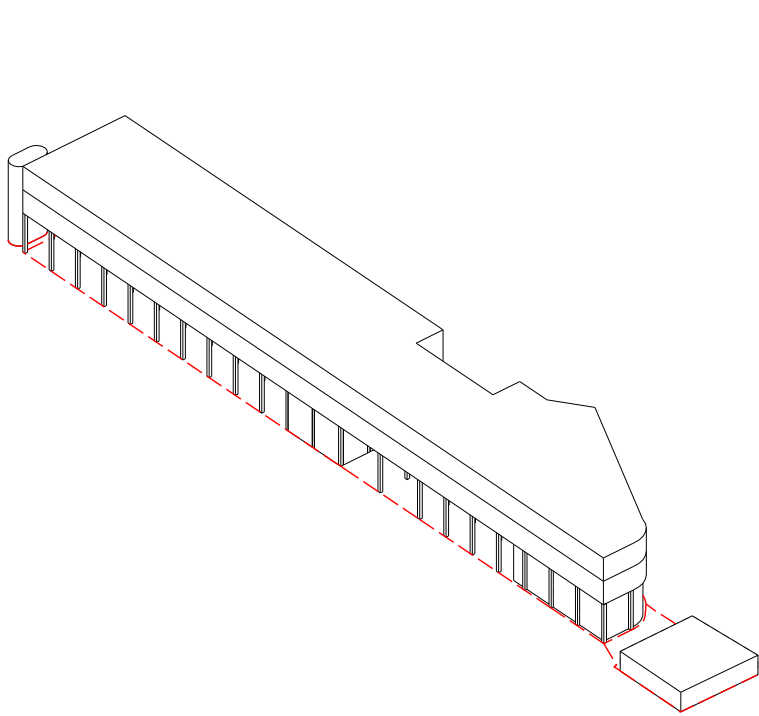
The new Grand Union House office building re-uses the existing concrete raft foundation and existing basement car park columns. Re-using these elements will eliminate impact on the store’s operations because no work will be required in the basement.

The ground to first floor concrete columns and floor slab will also be re-used. This maintains sufficient height for the first floor over the supermarket yard’s exit. In addition, the concrete first floor will act as a crash deck for the erection of superstructure. This means that a normal delivery vehicle exit can be maintained below the bridge.

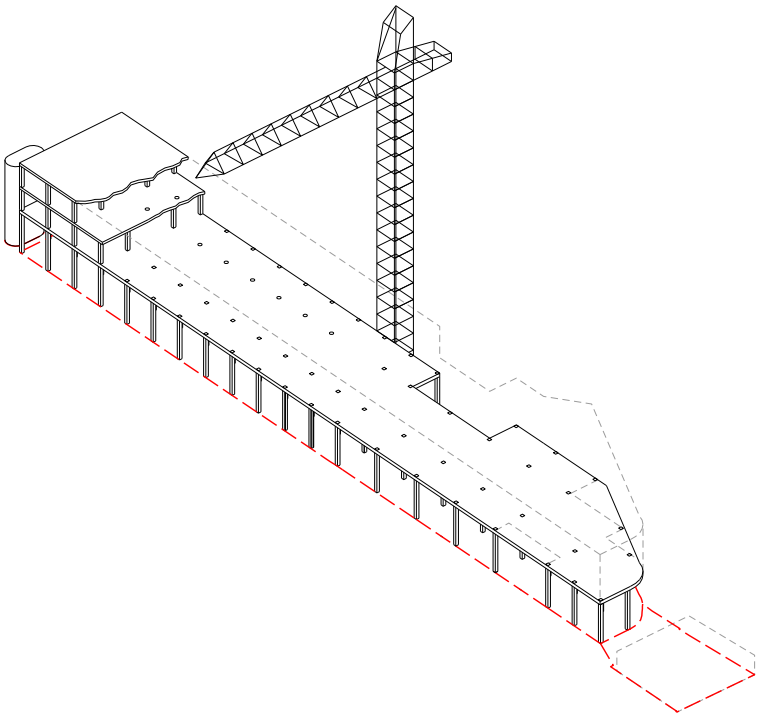
Re-using existing structures sets a limit to the new weight that can be applied to them. The rest of the new building’s structural design employs a lightweight superstructure system above first floor. It is a combination of steel and cross laminated timber. Using this system enables 3 ½ office levels to sit on a structure that currently only supports one office floor plus a mezzanine. The structural loads have been maximised and this sets the height of the building.

The commercial office building above the concrete structure steps from 2 to 3 floors high with a recessed penthouse floor on the higher portion. A half floor mezzanine level is situated at the rear of the ground floor. The lower part of the building responds to adjacent buildings in terms of scale and daylight/sunlight impact.

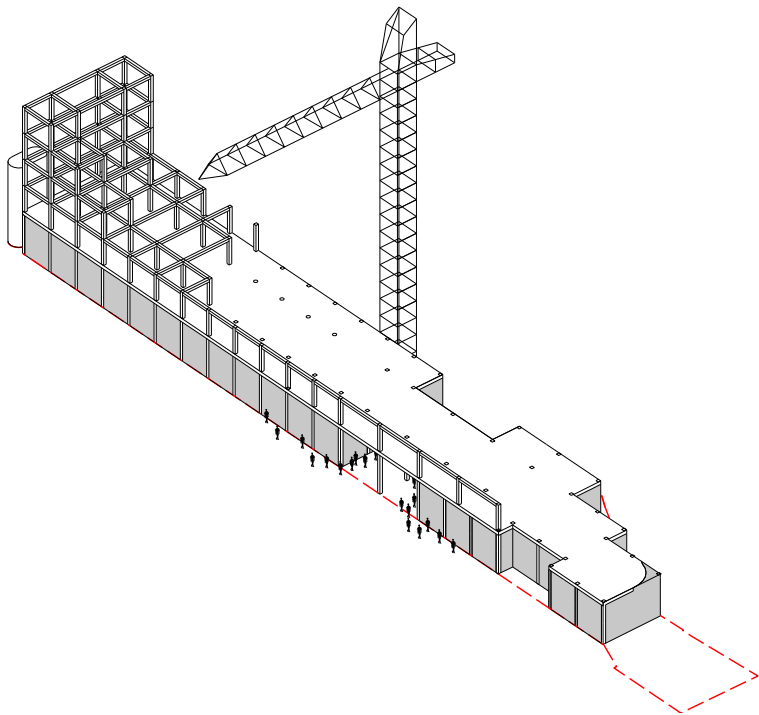
The resulting building provides 5,254sqm of commercial office accommodation on three and a half floors. The open, clear floor plates are well lit from the east and west and planned to be extremely versatile in their layout and sub division. They should suit a wide range of business types. These would include the range of small start-ups sharing open space to larger and more established firms requiring a generous floor plate. This scale of office accommodation is unusual in Camden’s town centre and in great demand for firms that wish to locate here.



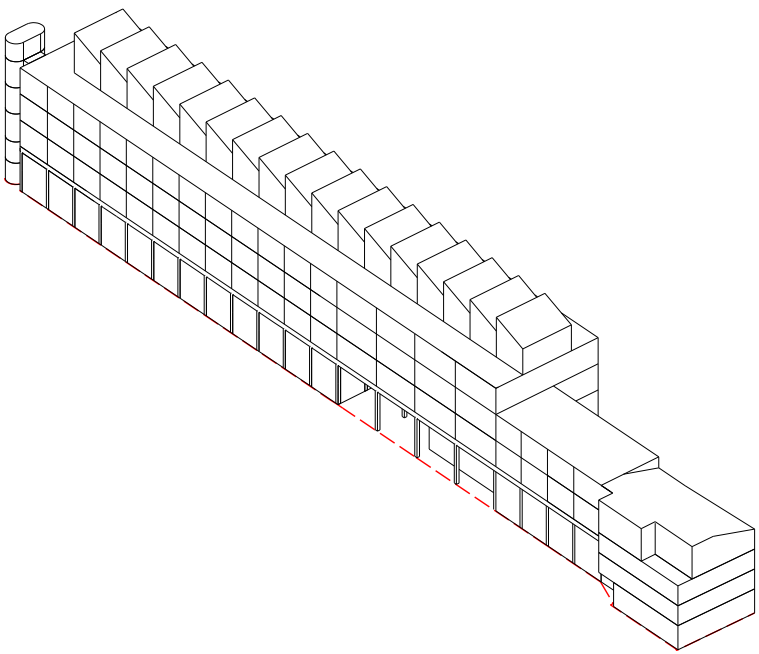
1 Existing condition



2 Removal of upper 3 floors of Grand Union House without disrupting Sainsbury’s operations. Existing ground and first floor columns, slab and raft footings are maintained.



3 Existing first floor slab is used as a ‘crash deck’ while new lightweight steel structure is erected. Sainsbury operations continue uninterrupted.



4 New GUH building is complete along with new homes for Camden.

Construction sequence that maintains the foundations of Grand Union House.