

6.0 PROCESS

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6.1 MASSING STUDIES

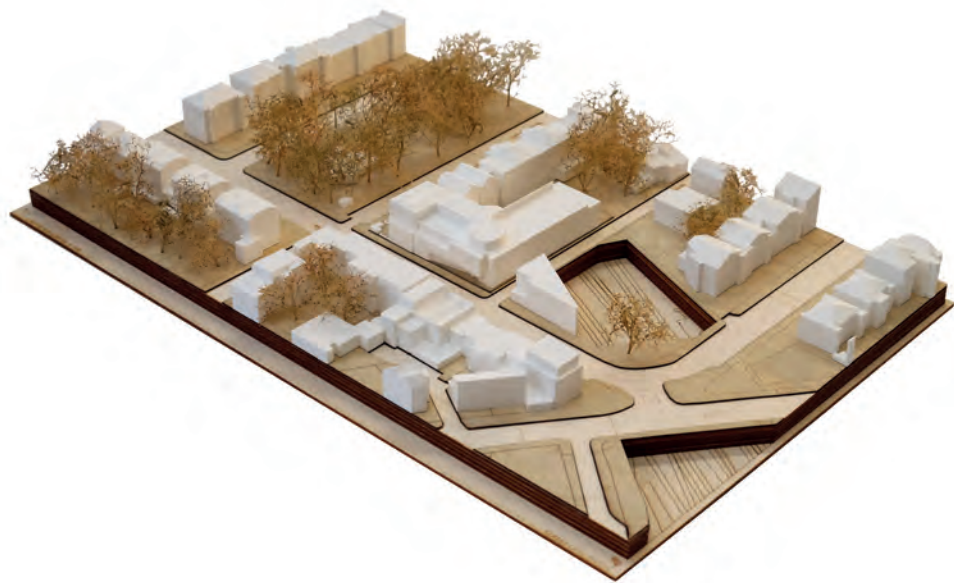
MASSING STUDIES

The proposals response to the surrounding context was tested through simple block models to identify the appropriate scale for the new building. The option to step the massing at the junction of Murray Street / Mews was adopted due to the approach off of Agar Grove.

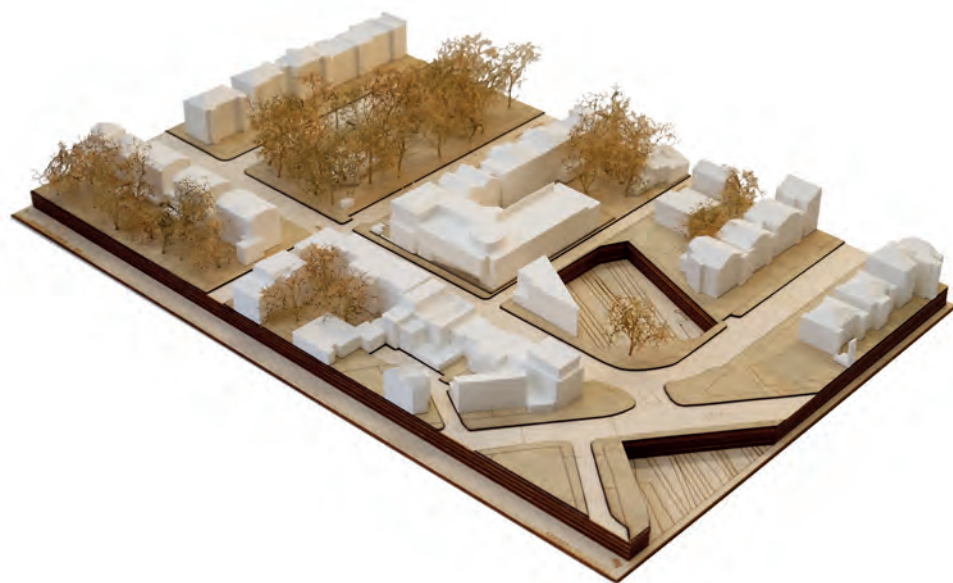
The geometry of the community hub was expressed on the 3rd floor as a cupola object, a devise used to reduce the mass to the street. The location of the entrance threshold was tested to judge the correct location along the high street.



Study option A



Study option B



Study option C



Study option D

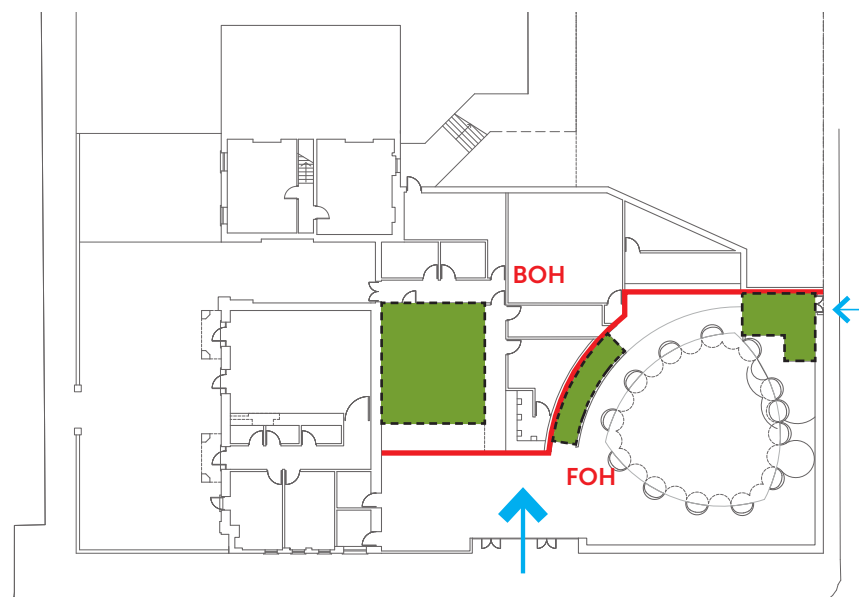
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6.2 INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for the London Irish Centre have been developed through a series of iterations, and in open dialogue with LB Camden, the local community & key stakeholders. The following information illustrates some options reviewed through this iterative process.

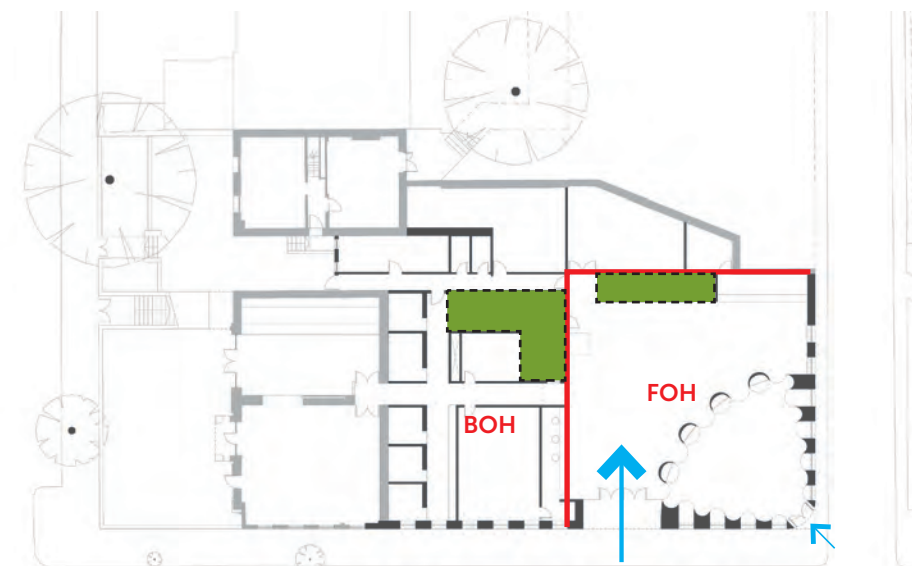
INTERNAL LAYOUT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The diagrams below illustrate the project's organisational plan development over the course of the last months. We have reviewed a number of options for the entrance sequence, core, community hub location as well as the split between front of house (FOH) & back of house (BOH) spaces.



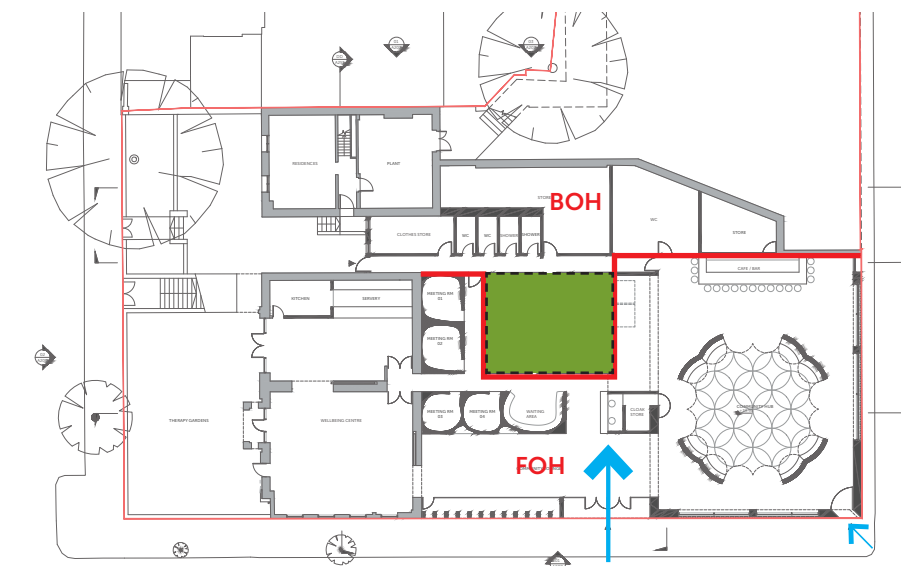
EARLY STAGE PLAN

Starting as a central object, the Community Cafe was conceptualised to be the heart of the building for the interaction of all visitors on-site while enhancing a sense of community by allowing different user groups and demographics to cross paths. Key moves that evolved to further interactions include a main stair, north/south split in FOH & BOH so that the community lobby is open along Murray Street.



A SHIFT TO MAXIMISE SPACE

The central Community Cafe was shifted to maximise space on both the ground and first floor. The stair was adapted to improve fire safety as well as circulation through the building. Programmatic changes relating to the Well-being/Community Care functions were adopted to have more presence on the ground floor. Access to the Well-being Centre was more difficult here with the location of the advice rooms, therefore options to keep the lobby open to the street were pursued.



GEOMETRIES FOR CULTURE & COMMUNITY

The curvilinear geometries that began to influence the more social functions began to cross over to the care functions to emphasise its shared importance within the brief. These spaces began to embody the sense of nooks & cranny's that is desired to encourage informal gathering places within the building.

6.0 PROCESS

6.3 EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

EXTERNAL FACADE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The external facade design has evolved in response to conversations with client stakeholders/Camden/DRP & the local community. As the brief for the new Centre developed, we initially tested facade designs that allowed for a fully flexible floor plate to ensure that the building could change when needed. As the brief became more defined, it was apparent that allowing total flexibility undermined the types and atmospheres of the internal spaces sought by the community. Our current proposal looks to creating a strong, subtle exterior that responds to the different neighbouring conditions, stepping back and opening up to respond to the existing Villas and townscape along Murray Street.



PRE-APP 01 OPTION

As noted above, a search for maximum flexibility within the floorplates led to an ordered, gridded facade treatment. Emphasis on a strong corner treatment started to emerge.



PRE-APP 01 OPTION

Further studies were undertaken to given the facade more depth and weight, a concern that has been present throughout the iterative process.



DRP PROPOSALS

The unique geometries of the interior spaces started to appear on the facade to express the unique spatial qualities within. Ideas to have a greater mass on the 2nd floor emerged, carving out a deeper more powerful entrance threshold.

7.0 PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN

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7.1 GATHERING

A PLACE OF GATHERING - STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY

Developing the building design through the motif of *gathering* will provide spaces where the older and younger generations can mix and interact with one another which is currently very difficult due to the multiple entrances and lack of spaces to socialise in. This will help address issues relating to social isolation, exclusion and loneliness which are becoming an increasing issue in the elderly community in Camden and throughout London.

The sketches below were the beginnings of our thinking into the types group spaces required for the new Centre.



The Individual



The beginning of a community



A gathering

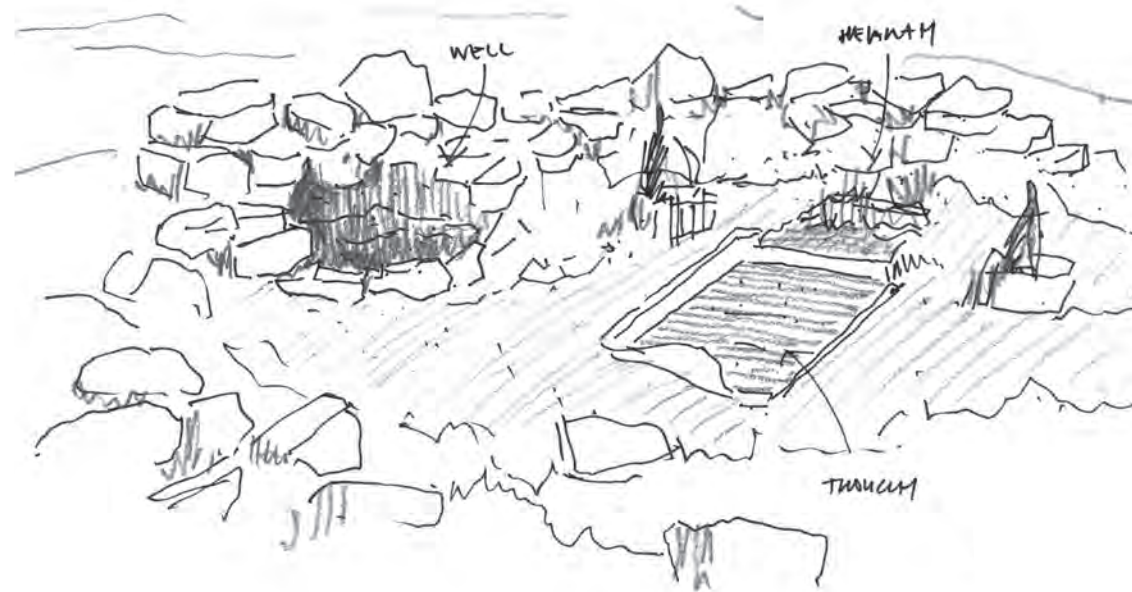
7.0 PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN

7.2 COMMUNITY HUB

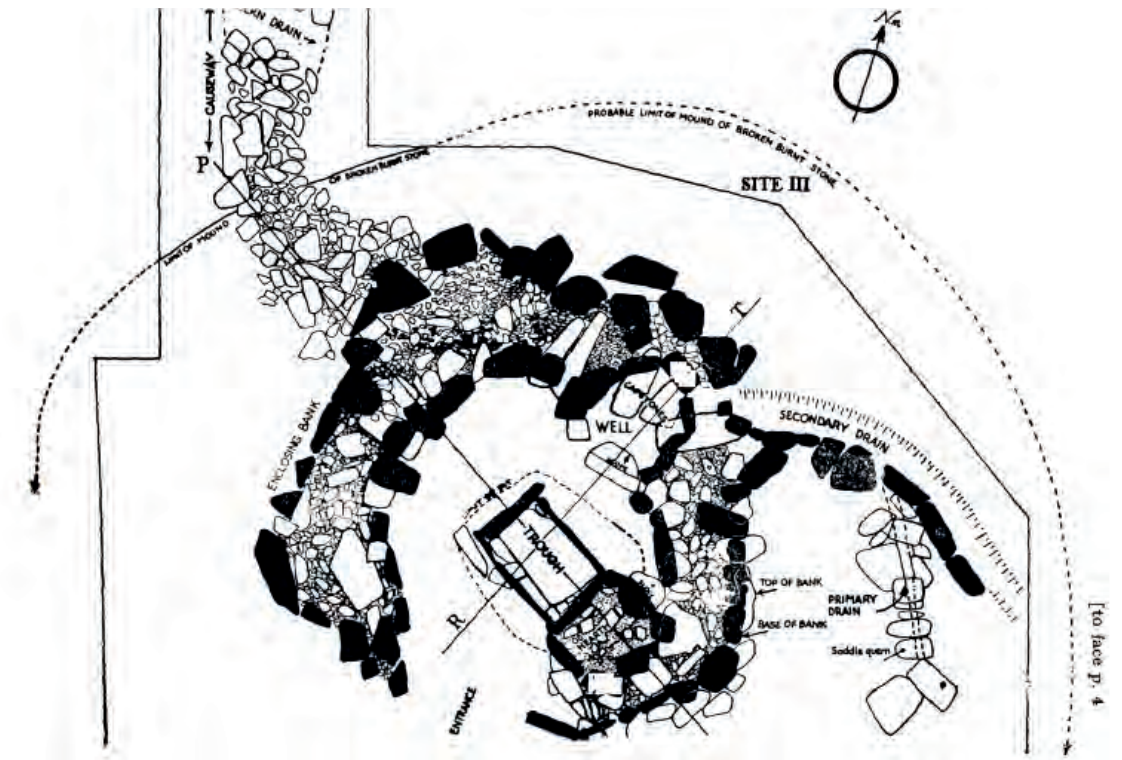
CREATING A UNIQUE COMMUNITY HUB

As part of our research into community gathering we started to look at archaic forms of settlement and gathering in Irish culture. One of the earliest forms of gathering settlements is the Bronze Age 'Fulacht Fiadh'. The settlements gathered around a well for fresh water and were formed from a crescent shaped enclosure to hold a fire pit, for cooking & warmth, and a protective low stone wall to provide some shelter from the wind.

This idea generated the geometries of the proposed community hub that is central to the buildings layout and meaning.



Sketch of Fulacht Fiadh in Co.Kerry



Plan formation of Fulacht Fiadh showing enclosing crescent shape

7.0 PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN

7.3 A PLACE WITH MEANING

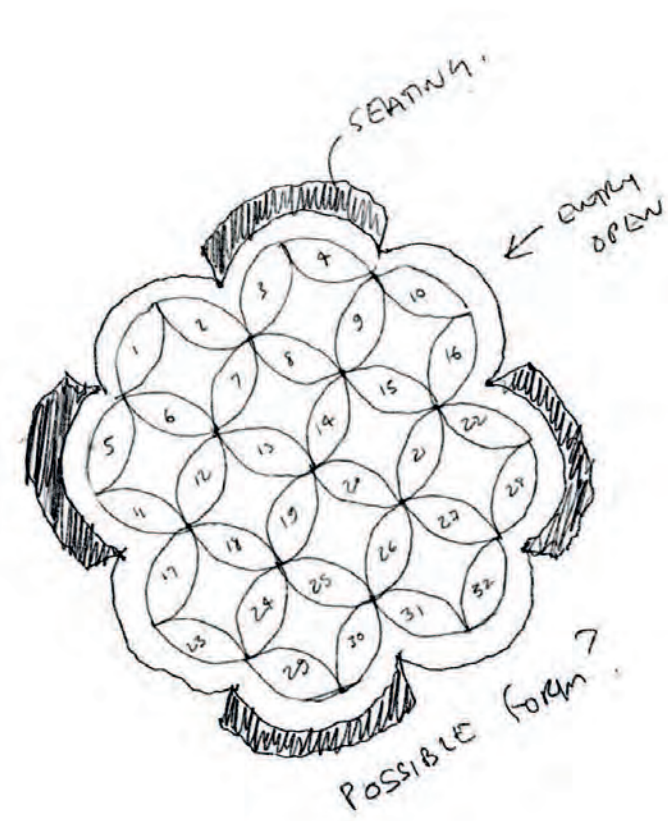
UNDERPINNING THE COMMUNITY HUB WITH A MEANINGFUL PATTERN TO REPRESENT THE INCLUSIVE AMBITION OF THE NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE

Inspired by the landscape of Fulacht Fiadh and the embedded forms and patterns within European public spaces, we began to investigate how to create a form and pattern that could embed meaning into the Irish Centre, symbolising the core values held by the charity.

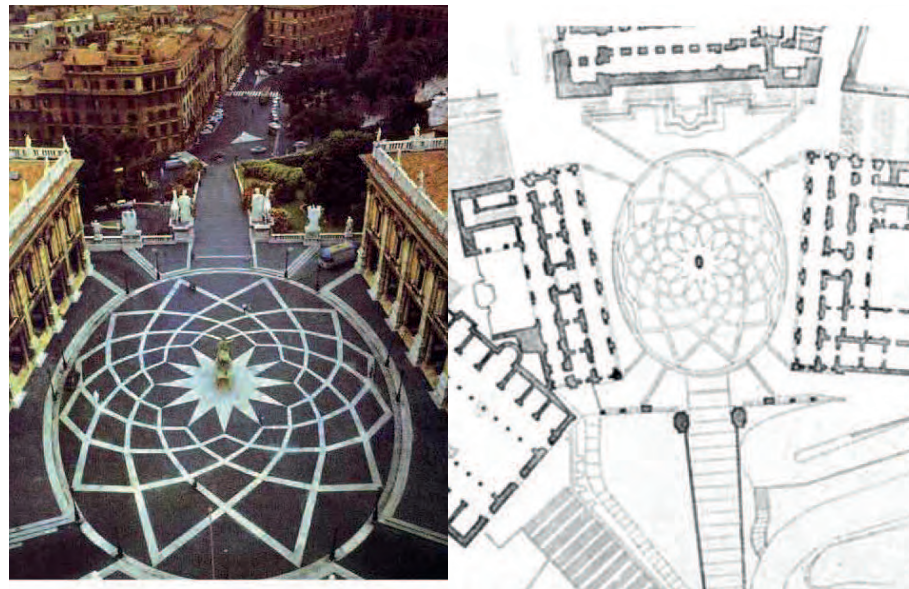
A recognition of the fully inclusive nature of the Centre prompts a response to the number 32 - representing the number of countries in the island of Ireland, and the number of boroughs in London.

The sketches adjacent show the origins of our studies into a form and pattern embedded with profound meaning.

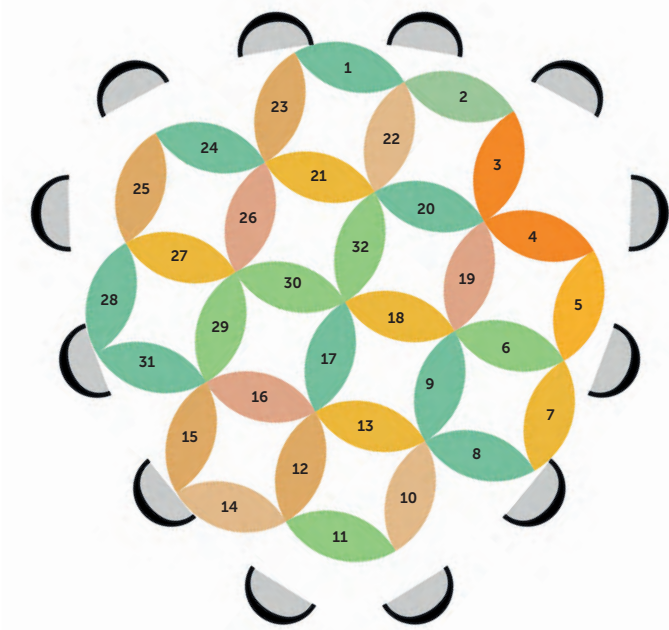
Central to the developing brief is the desire to interweave stories of Irish culture into the building as an act of expressed identity. The internal spaces will have a variety of spatial & light qualities to allow the varying programmatic needs to flourish.



Concept sketch of community heart with embedded motif



Piazza del Campidoglio, Rome by Michelangelo



Concept diagram of indicative floor pattern with 32 piece motif



Model image of indicative floor pattern within community hub

7.0 PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN

7.4 CREATING A HOME FROM HOME

CREATING AN UNAPOLOGETICALLY CONTEMPORARY BUILDING THAT IS RESPONSIVE TO THE DIFFERENT NEIGHBOURING CONDITIONS, PRODUCING A DOMESTIC SCALED, PUBLIC BUILDING

We held several workshops with the local community during the design stage, the term *'home from home'* arose on many occasions in terms of how the current building users feel about the LIC, and how they would like the new Centre to feel in the future. These conversations prompted us to look at Irish vernacular, and the traditional forms of 'home' that the community would be familiar with.

The Irish Cottage is a building typology that resonates with the feeling that is desired for the new building, both internally & externally. It is both protective & embracing, with a material quality that is not dissimilar to the context of Camden Square.

Integral to achieving the desired spatial experiences will be how light enters the spaces. The predominately solid exterior with focused windows & doors gives results in the atmosphere of the internal spaces. The 'carved openings' often respond to the plan, making a playful composition.

The proposed design for the LIC does not mimic this typology, but harnesses the external material presence that leads to a specific internal atmosphere, providing a warm and welcoming place for the community. This concept will further benefit the surrounding neighbours by reducing overlooking, allowing this public building to sit comfortably within its predominately residential context.



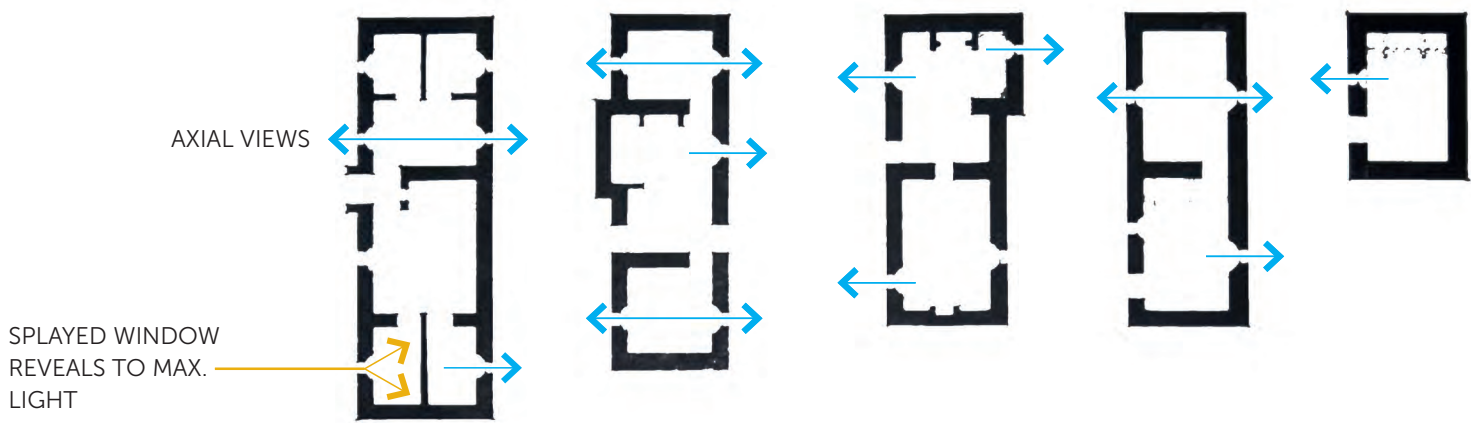
Strong sense of solidity by localising windows



Layers of the domestic scale



Rooted in the material presence of Irish cottages



Sketch studies of Irish Cottage typology

7.0 PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN

7.5 A BEACON & HAVEN

CREATING A BEACON FOR THE IRISH DIASPORA TO HIGHLIGHT THE IRISH AS AN EXEMPLAR MIGRANT COMMUNITY TO LONDON

The corner of the site that connects Murray Street to Murray Mews has held an important significance throughout the design evolution of the scheme. We developed the design of this to be symbolic of the ambition for the new Centre in 3 distinct ways:

- 1. Axial connection to Euston** - the corner is due north of Euston Square, the location where many Irish immigrants arrived into London via the train routes from the Ports on the west coast. This due south connection could be used as a symbolic reminder of the migration routes used to reach London.
- 2. Harness the meaning of Light** - By opening up the corner of the building it allows for an opportunity to harness a moment of light at midday when the sun will shine directly into the community hub. This moment of light was inspired by the strong connection to light found in ancient Irish culture in places such as Newgrange, Co. Meath.
- 3. 'A Candle on the Window'** - This significant corner would emit a soft light, resembling and resonating with a candle in the window. This makes reference to a speech made by Ireland's first female president, Mary Robinson, who in her inaugural speech made reference to the Irish tradition of placing a lit candle on the window cill on Christmas Eve each year to guide people home, a gesture she made upon moving into Aras an Uachtaráin, the Presidential Residence, to act as a symbolic beacon for the millions of Irish immigrants abroad. This design feature within the new Centre will provide a similar beacon for those in need, and in search of the Irish Heart of London.

"there will always be a light on in Áras an Uachtaráin for our exiles and our emigrants".

PRESIDENT MARY ROBINSON



Irish arrivals into Euston, 1950 (ext. from The Scattering)



Newgrange, Co. Meath



Victorian corner - Public House, Blackfriars



Euston Road, 1950 (ext. from The Scattering)



The Solstice marked by light, Newgrange



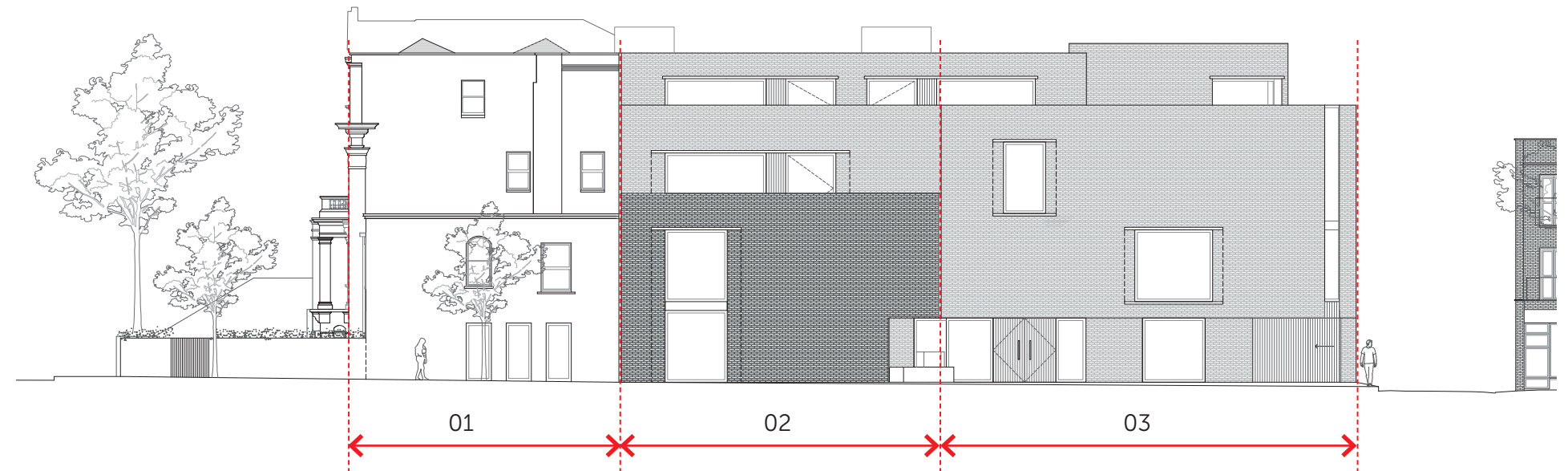
Victorian corner - shop, St Annes Lane, Westminster

7.0 PRINCIPLES OF THE DESIGN

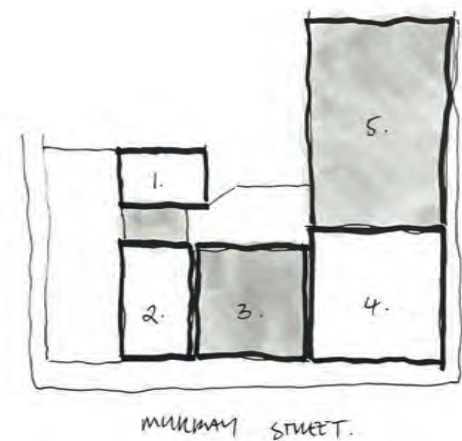
7.6 URBAN COLLAGE

DEFINITION OF THE NEW BUILD ELEMENTS BUILD UPON THE URBAN COLLAGE OF CAMDEN SQUARE

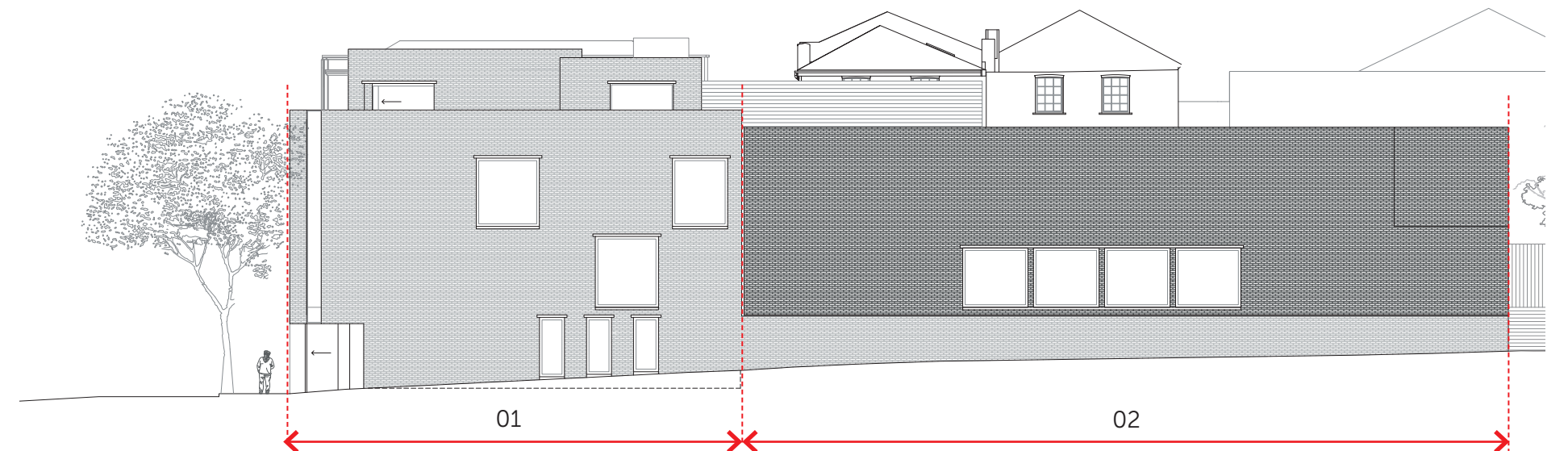
The new building elements around the site should embed themselves back into the surrounding context by the mass, scale, material & texture.



Proposed Murray Street composition



Sketch showing the collage of building elements



Proposed Murray Mews composition