

# What future for Old Oak?

Presentation to members of the OPDC Planning Committee from  
Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum, St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood  
Forum, Grand Union Alliance, and Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum



A red speech bubble graphic with a white outline, pointing downwards. It contains the text "Why are we here?" in white. The background of the slide features faint, curved, concentric lines in the top-left and bottom-right corners.

## Why are we here?

- These four community organisations have been involved in each stage of the OPDC Draft Local Plan since 2015
- Last February the Committee invited us to come and discuss our concerns
- This session was deferred for the Mayoral Elections and is only now taking place
- Genuine dialogue with OPDC is seen as having diminished since 2017



## Content of our presentation

- The location 'Old Oak' means little to most Londoners.
- The OPDC was going to change this and to create somewhere remarkable *not only to live and work, but to visit and enjoy, time and again.*
- Local people have lost confidence that this will be the outcome of the present OPDC Draft Local Plan.
- We want first to explain why, and to persuade you to allow a 'Plan B' for part of the 'Western Lands'.
- We think that there is a case for a rethink of OPDC's 'Plan A' - the Modified Draft Local Plan.
- The timing of OOC station opening will allow for this.



People do not  
understand  
what is planned

#### Learn about the OPDC opportunity



Watch our video to learn the Mayor's vision for developing the Old Oak and Park Royal area.

- The OPDC Local Plan is running 5 years behind its original timetable.
- This video of an 'indicative masterplan' for a new Old Oak remains on the 'introduction' page of the OPDC website – but is seriously out of date.
- Apartments at 'Oaklands Rise' are being marketed with claims that OOC station is 'coming soon' rather than in 2029-33 (<https://www.nhgsales.com/sales-developments/oaklands-rise/>).
- Many in the area are completely confused about what is now proposed for Old Oak and when it will be delivered.



The background of the slide features a series of thin, curved lines in light grey and white, creating a sense of motion and depth. These lines are more prominent on the left side and fade towards the right.

## Our ideas for a 'Plan B' for Channel Gate

- Use the flexibilities and responsiveness of the neighbourhood planning framework
- Do something other than 'more of the same' as at North Acton and Vauxhall/Nine Elms/Battersea
- Create Channel Gate/Atlas Road as a new part of London seen in 20 years as having shown a way ahead for a global city adjusting to Zero Carbon and ongoing pandemics.



An aerial photograph of a city area with a proposed development plan overlaid. The plan features several large orange-colored building footprints arranged in a grid-like pattern, interspersed with green spaces and trees. To the right, there are existing blue-colored buildings, some of which are taller and more modern. A road or highway runs diagonally across the lower right portion of the image. The overall scene depicts a planned urban expansion or redevelopment project.

OPDC image of future  
Atlas Road and Channel  
Gate sites  
3,100 new homes at a  
net density of 520  
units/hectare

Oaklands development  
nearing completion

Local residents do not  
want OPDC's Plan A  
for Channel Gate





The route of the 1km walk from HS2 platforms to Channel Gate's *'part of an Old Oak major town centre'*  
How many HS2/GWR/Crossrail passengers will wish to walk there?



We believe that a future Old Oak can be better than this



CGI of Oaklands Rise – first units now being occupied

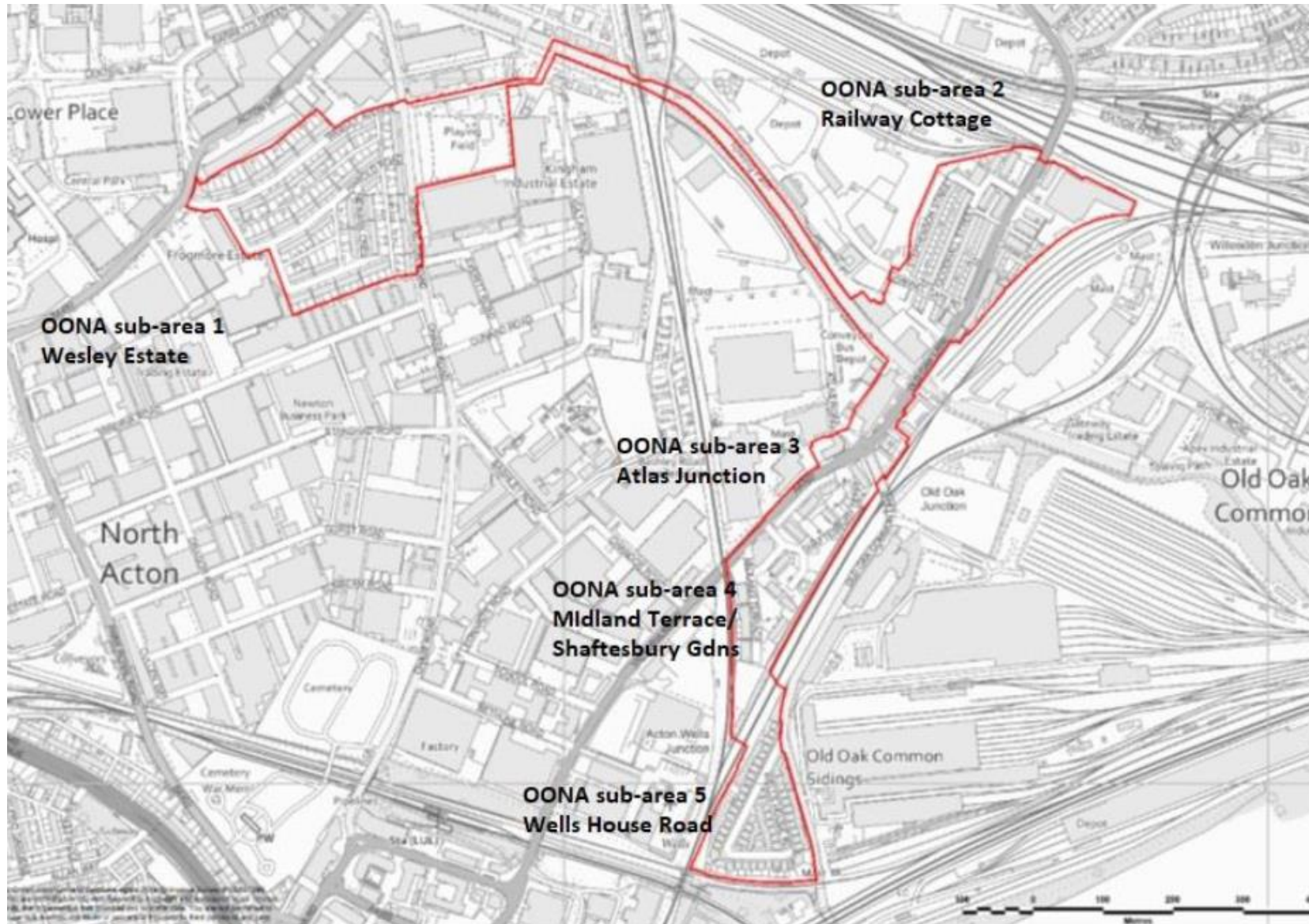


## Unfulfilled promises

- Old Oak will not be *'the most connected place in the UK'* even in the 2030s. Not equivalent to Kings Cross.
- No new Overground stations. No direct access to Underground. No new road network joining East Acton and Scrubs Lane. Just a rail interchange isolated from its immediate surroundings.
- No eastern vehicular access to OOC station. Why will Scrubs Lane develop as a 'place in its own right'?
- Additional sites for housing, identified through OPDC 'modifications', have simply pushed up land values.
- Landowners, public and private, are now demanding yet more 'flexibility' in Local Plan policies on Tall Buildings.



# The current Old Oak neighbourhood area as designated by OPDC



- Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum established itself in 2015
- Combines residents groups in these five 'sub areas'
- Has been meeting jointly with the Grand Union Alliance every month.
- The area boundary was designated by OPDC in September 2017
- Draft neighbourhood plan promotes a 'neighbourhood hub' at this location (but not 'part of a town centre')



# Why not allow the Forum an extended boundary and the chance to prepare a 'Plan B' for this part of Old Oak?



- Red line boundary shows the designated Old Oak neighbourhood area
- Hatched areas show Channel Gate and Atlas Road sites
- OPDC Planning Committee in July approved the start of consultation on our designation application.
- OPDC Planning Committee and Board will decide on designation.



## What would an OONF Plan B include?

- A 'Plan B' neighbourhood plan would allocate Channel Gate/Atlas Road for new housing at 'urban neighbourhood' levels of density matching the National Model Design Code and LB Ealing 2012/13 development plan.
- Including some self-build/custom build 'co-development' housing, implementing the recommendations of the Richard Bacon Review.
- OONF's Plan B could be ready to go if OPDC's Plan A becomes unfeasible or inappropriate, in various scenarios.
- OPDC would retain control on triggering Plan B, as a contingency/fallback spatial plan.



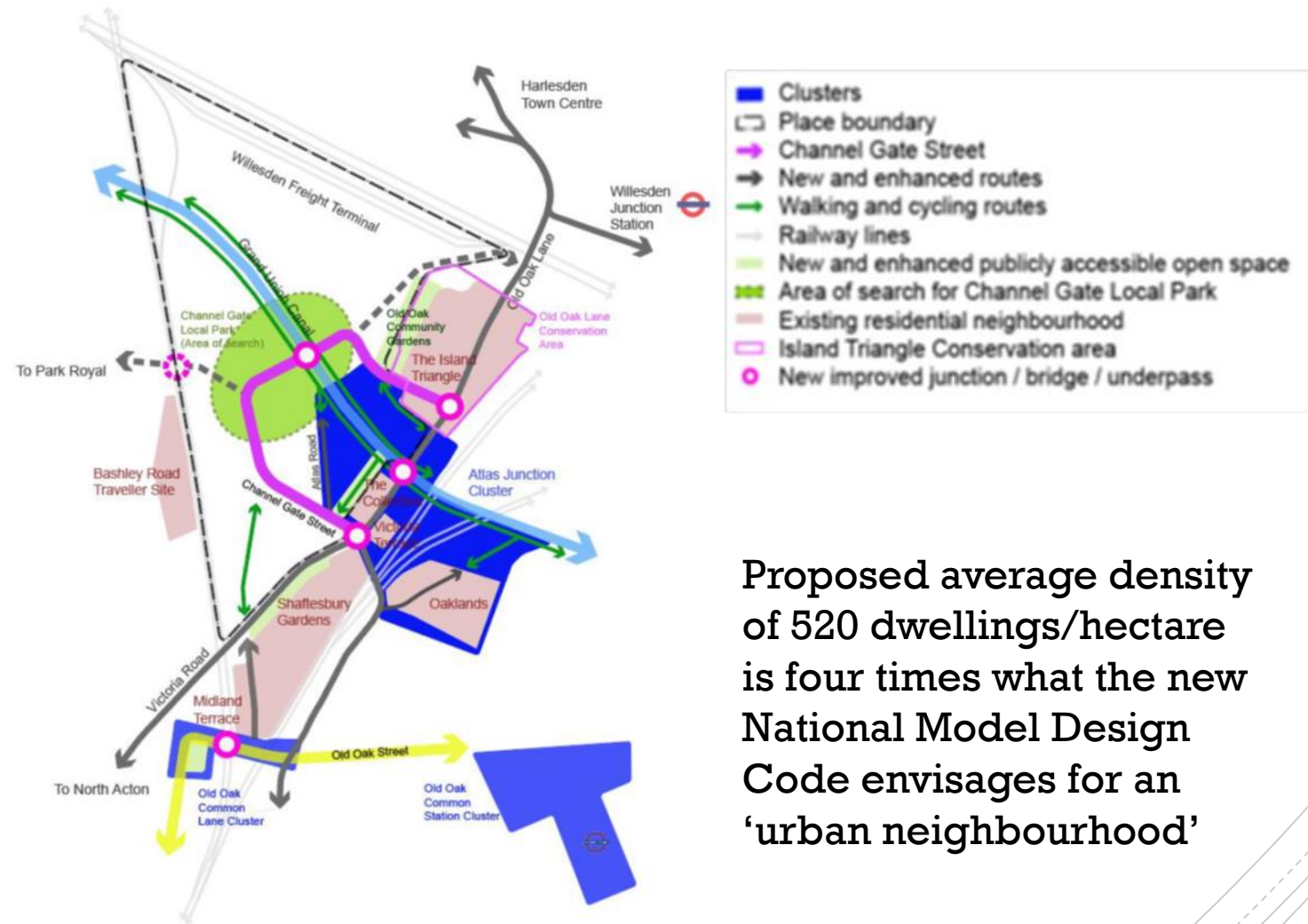
## MP Richard Bacon's review on 'self-commissioned' housing

- *The United Kingdom – and England in particular – operates its housing model differently from any other country in the world.*
- *Our housing delivery system has become increasingly hard-wired in favour of one particular model of limited appeal.*
- *in some markets like Austria, Germany, Poland and Japan, self-commissioned housing is the dominant form of housebuilding.*

“It is unlikely that self-build or custom-build at Old Oak and Park Royal will make a significant contribution to meeting housing need. However, self-build and custom-build will be supported where it accord with the policies in this Local Plan”. (OPDC Modified Local Plan paragraph 8.11)



# OPDC's Plan A for Channel Gate in PSMDLP

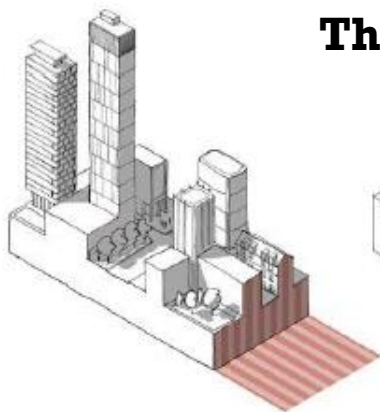


Proposed average density of 520 dwellings/hectare is four times what the new National Model Design Code envisages for an 'urban neighbourhood'



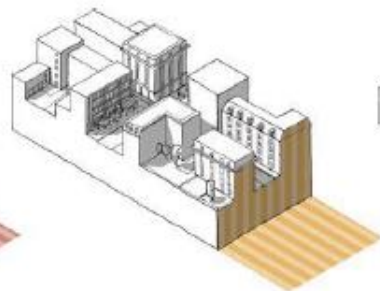
# The National Model Design Code

Figure 10. Example Area Types



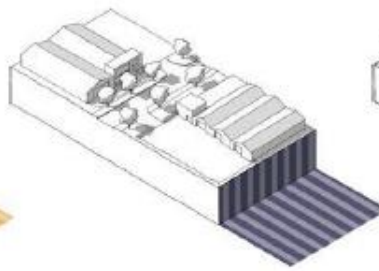
## High rise city

This could apply to parts of large city centres where there would be no or limited restrictions on height.



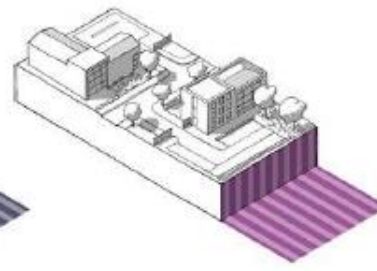
## Town/City centre

A typical dense city typology with over 120 dwellings per hectare (dph) and a strong mix of uses.



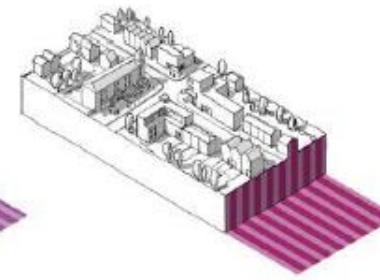
## Industrial areas

Industrial areas of single storey manufacturing and storage units.



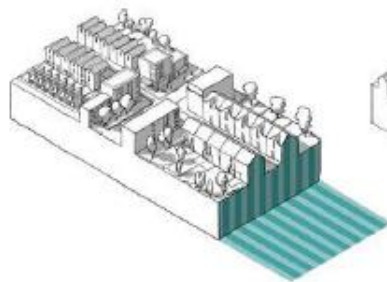
## Business, science or retail parks:

Areas of retail, office development, science and technology parks.



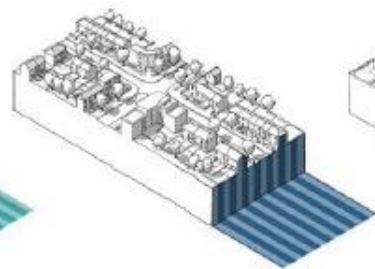
## Local centres

This relates to district and neighbourhood centres and high streets, typically 3-5 storey blocks with other uses at ground floor.



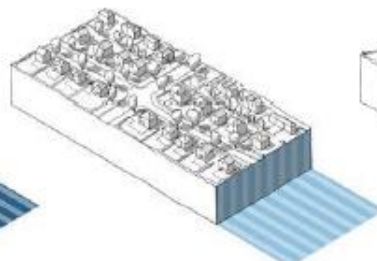
## Urban neighbourhood

Urban neighbourhoods with net housing densities of 60-120 dph and a mix of uses.



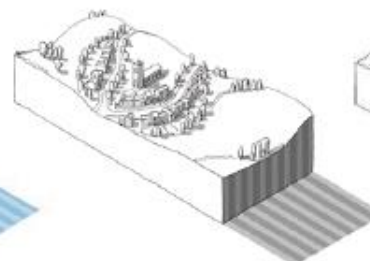
## Suburbs

Neighbourhoods with net residential densities of 40-60 dph. A mix of short terraces and semi-detached units.



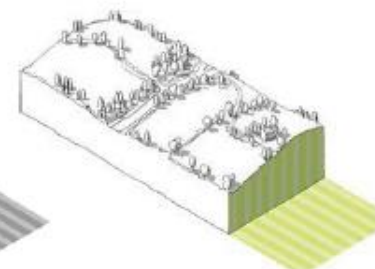
## Outer suburbs

Lower density suburbs with net densities of 20-40 dph, few apartments and less of a mix of uses.



## Villages

Villages have their own distinctive character often with 2 and 3 storey buildings in an informal layout.



## Rural settlements

Rural areas may include rural building and settlement types.

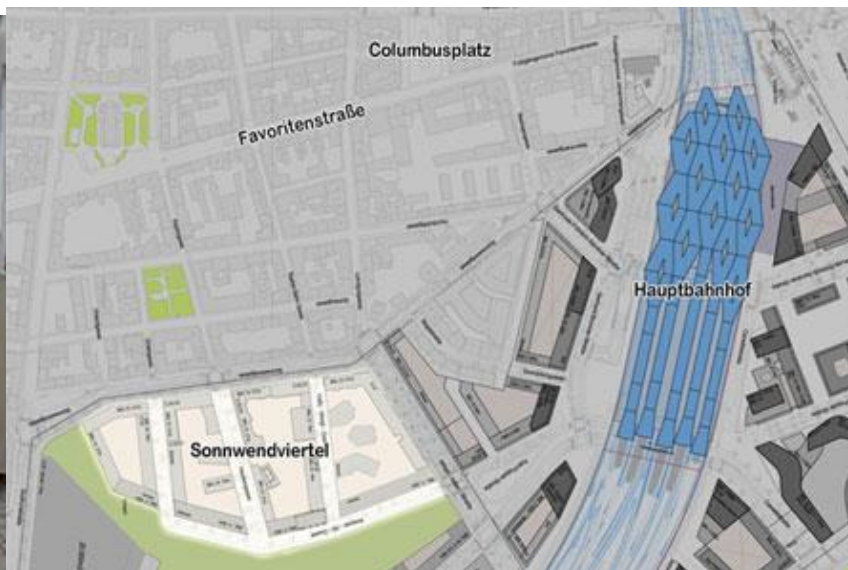








Co-housing at Vinderhoute (Belgium), Lancaster (England) and Sonnendviertal (car-free, mixed use redevelopment area next to Vienna's central station)





## Reactions to the OPDC Modified Local Plan

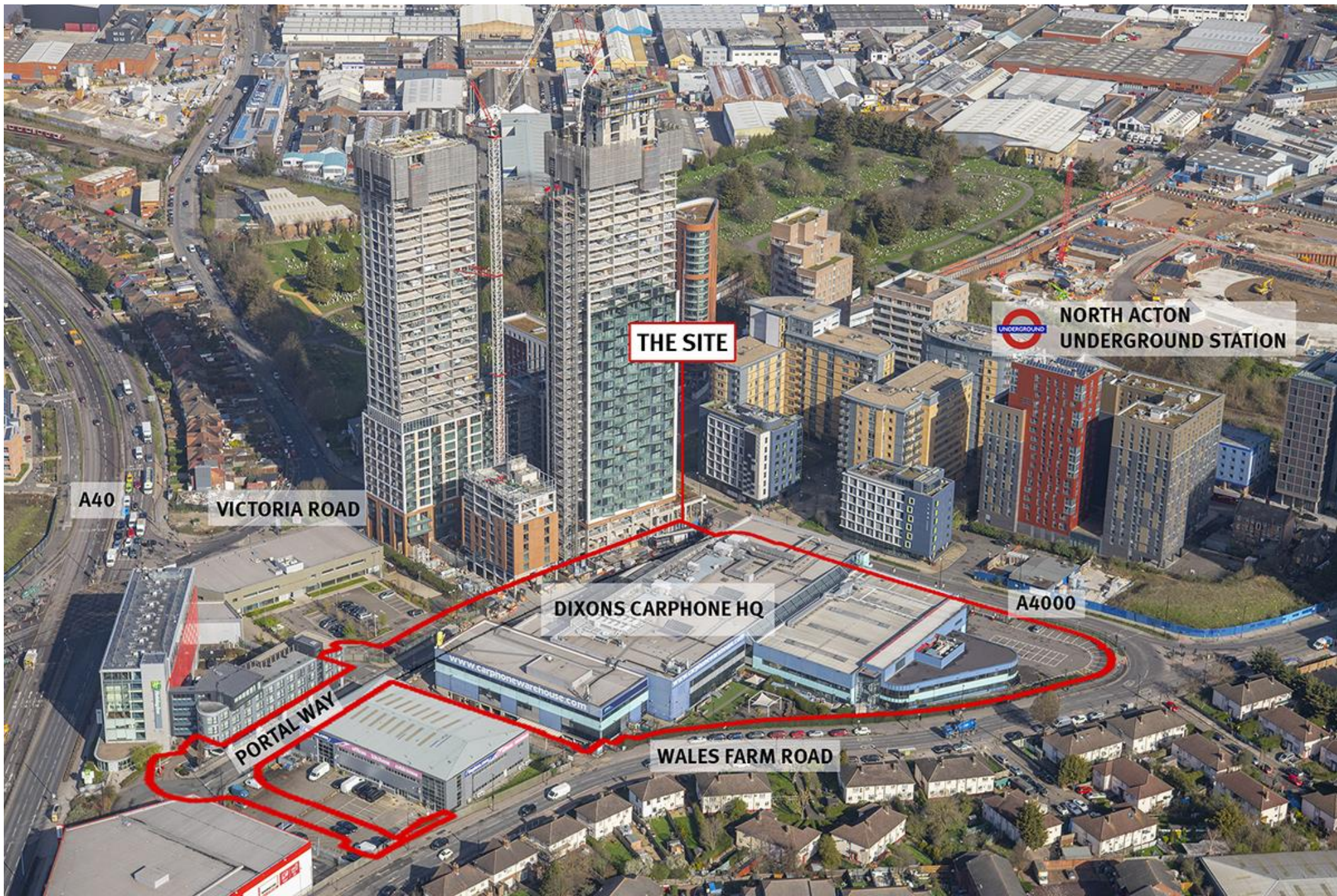
- **Caroline Pidgeon** London Assembly Member *It is a concern to me that a significant portion of the proposed development, particularly of new homes, is based on funding not yet secured. I would have thought OPDC would have learnt the lessons of their previous bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) for the Cargiant and adjacent land at Old Oak North. I do think it is essential that this plan makes clear the alternative plans and options available should OPDC fail to successfully bid for some or all the additional funding required. A plan B is needed to give confidence to these plans.*
- **Andy Slaughter** MP for Hammersmith *I do not think I am alone in raising some of these concerns, nor are they new. I have seen the submissions from LBHF, Friends of Wormwood Scrubs and Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum and agree with many points made there. I am concerned that there is not more engagement with these well-informed sources on a regular basis.*



# London Plan and Tall Buildings

- 2021 London Plan Policy D9 (b) requires Local Plans to identify sites for tall buildings. Sub-paragraph 2 states *Any such locations **and appropriate tall building heights** should be identified on maps in Development Plans.*
- *And 3) states Tall buildings should only be developed in locations that are identified as suitable in Development Plans. Assessment of 'impacts' defines 'suitability'.*
- The OPDC PSMDLP **rarely defines 'appropriate building heights' for different locations.** But from density figures and North Acton experience, very extreme heights are foreseen (up to 55 storeys to date).
- In representations, landowners (including Dept of Transport) are now asking the Inspector for policy wording on Tall Buildings that is even more 'flexible' and opaque.
- Does the SoS Direction of Dec 2020 to the Mayor of London mean anything? London's public will be fighting battles on multiple planning applications if the new London Plan Policy D9 is to be ignored.





## North Acton

What may prove to be the final phase of ultra tall buildings in London.

Planning consents issued since 2015 by Ealing Council on behalf of OPDC.

‘The site’ shown in this image is at 1 Portal Way. Application due late 2021.

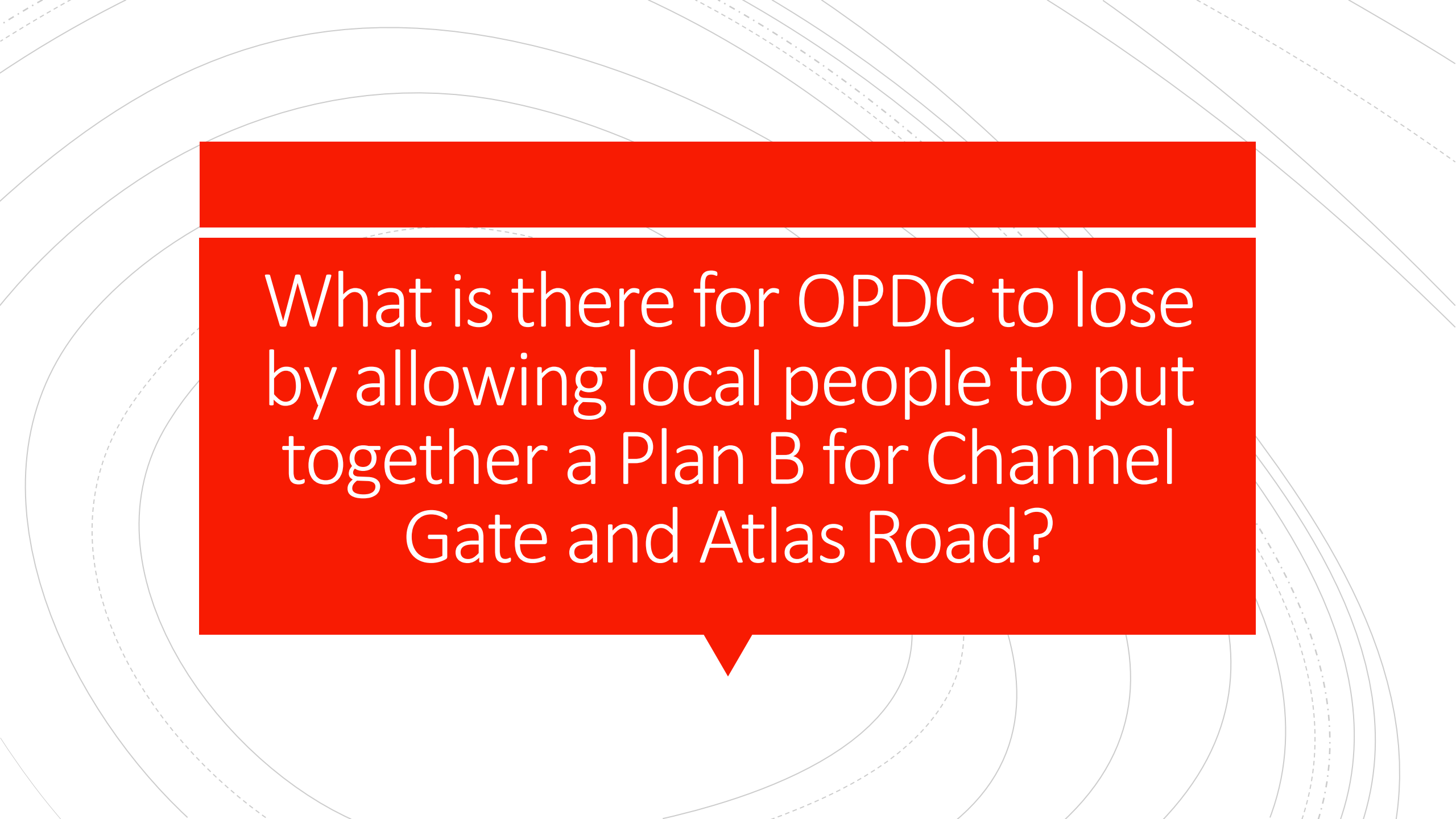


Pomponi study  
(Edinburgh/  
Cambridge)  
July 2021

- *For a 20k population, moving from a High Density Low Rise to a High Density High Rise typology results in a 140% increase in LCGE (Life cycle greenhouse gas emissions over 60 years, including e.g. embedded carbon).*
- *Specifically, in terms of LCGE impacts, High Density Low Rise urban typologies are the best-case scenario for a fixed population. This can even be argued to be the case for a fixed land area.*

See at <https://www.nature.com/articles/s42949-021-00034-w>



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What is there for OPDC to lose  
by allowing local people to put  
together a Plan B for Channel  
Gate and Atlas Road?