

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

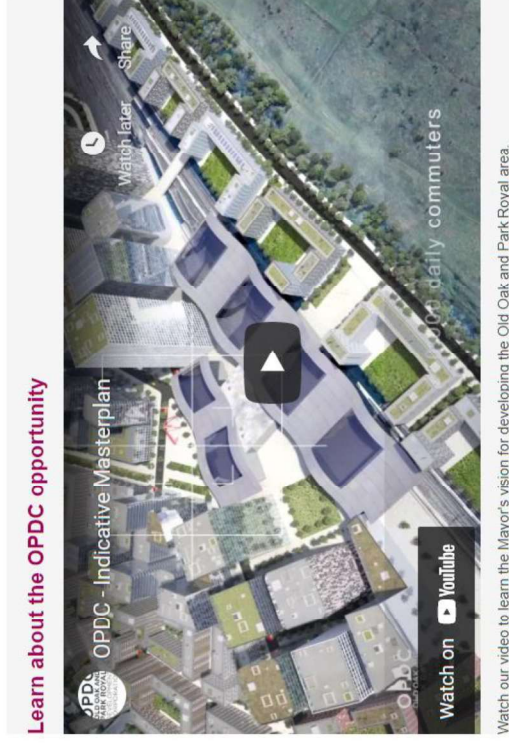
Why are we here?

- These three community organisations have been involved in each stage of the OPDC Draft Local Plan since 2015
- In February 2021 we sent to OPDC a paper titled '*Plea to the Planning Committee*' prior to the start of the consultation on the Post Submission Modified Local Plan
- The Committee invited us to come and discuss this paper
- Such a session was deferred for the Mayoral Elections and is only now taking place.

Content of our presentation

- ‘Old Oak’ is not a location yet recognised by 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’.
- More widely, 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.

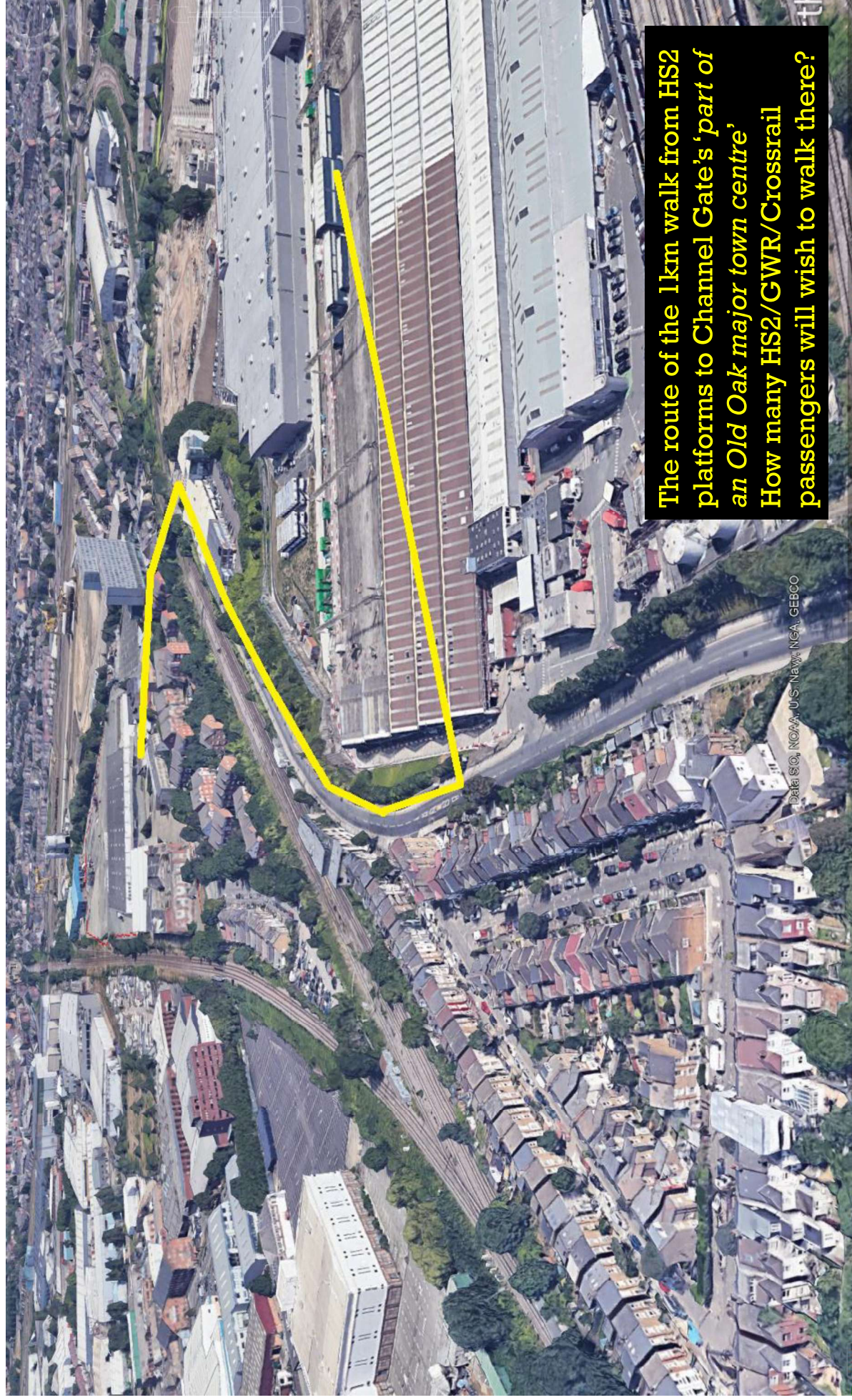
People do not
understand
what is planned



- The OPDC Local Plan was originally timetable for adoption in early 2017. We are now in late 2021.
- This video of an 'indicative masterplan' for a new Old Oak still appears on the 'introduction' page of the OPDC website.
- Apartments at 'Oaklands Rise' are being marketed with claims that OOC station is 'coming soon' rather than opening in 2029-33.
- Most Londoners are completely confused about what is proposed for Old Oak and when it will be delivered.

Our ideas for a 'Plan B' for Channel Gate

- Use the flexibilities and responsiveness that the 2012 neighbourhood planning framework provides
- Do something other than 'more of the same' as at North Acton and Vauxhall/Nine Elms/Battersea
- Try out European ideas on community led 'project-developer' models that combine social rent with market housing and a significant proportion of self-build housing.
- Borrow ideas from e.g. Vienna's extension of their city at Aspern Seesund (20,000 new residents by 2028)
- Make full use of the GLA's experience on self-build and custom build housing
- Create Channel Gate/Atlas Road as a new part of London seen in 30 years as having shown a way ahead for a global city learning to adjust to Zero Carbon and respiratory pandemics.



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

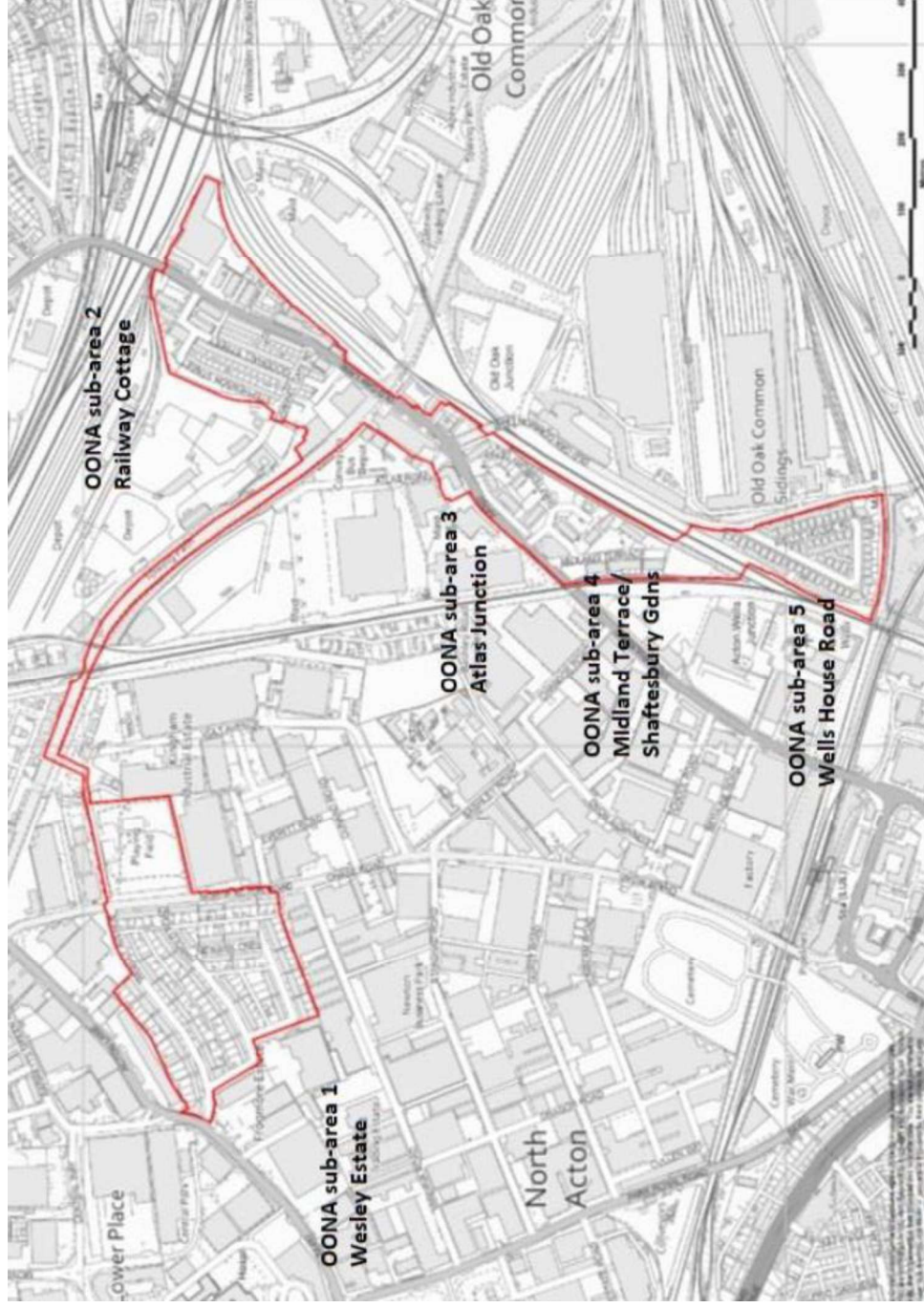


Unfulfilled promises

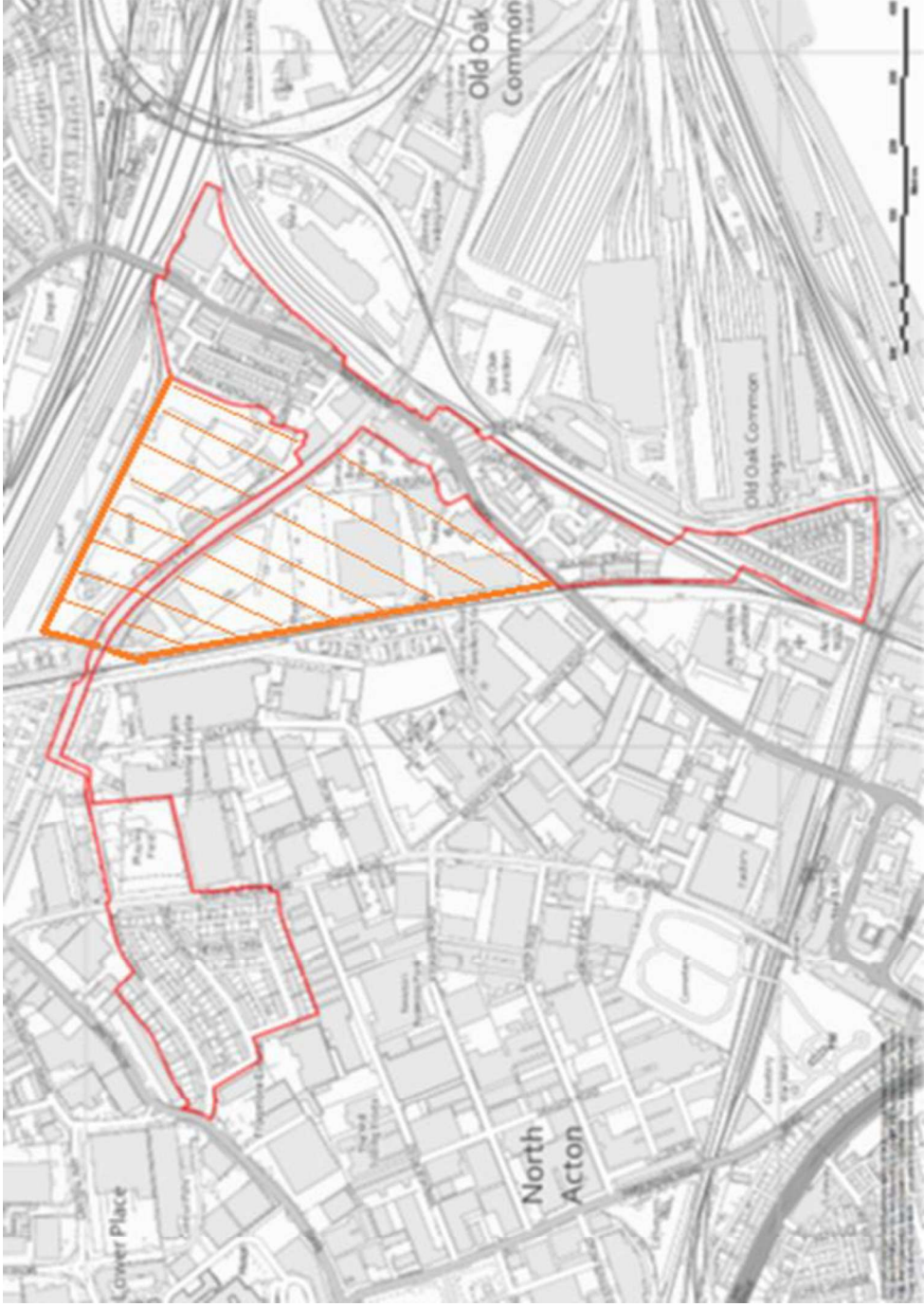
- Old Oak will not be *‘the most connected place in the UK’* even in the 2030s.
- No new Overground stations. No new road network joining East Acton and Scrubs Lane. Just a rail interchange isolated from its immediate surroundings.
- OOC Station platforms will be 1km south of Channel Gate along Old Oak Common Lane. Willesden Junction is 900m away.
- 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.

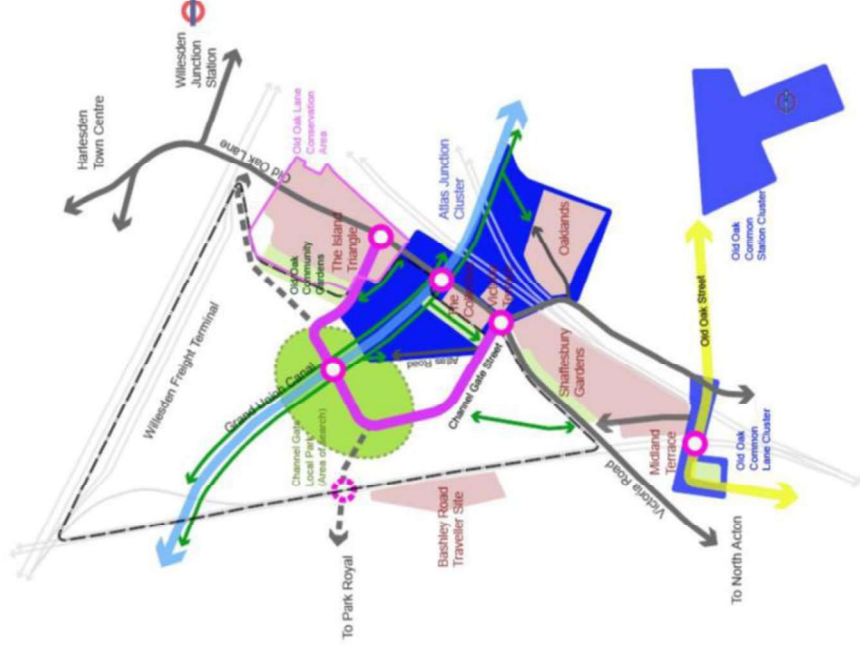
What would an OONF Plan B include?

- OONF has long argued the case for a ‘neighbourhood hub’ at Atlas Junction.
- A neighbourhood plan would allocate sites for new housing at ‘urban neighbourhood’ levels of density matching the National Model Design Code and LB Ealing 2012/13 development plan.
- Plus a level of self-build/custom build ‘co-development’ housing across the two main sites at Atlas Rd/Channel Gate (by 2026-8 after HS2 use) implementing the recommendations of the Richard Bacon Review.
- Stages of independent examination and referendum could be undertaken by late 2022.
- OONF’s Plan B could then 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. We are on the wrong side of our own Iron Curtain.*
 - *As you indicate in your letter to me (from the PM) the coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the importance of the place we call home. Indeed, the combined effects of the pandemic and over 20 years of using the internet to work remotely have thrown up enormous questions about the nature of Place and Work and Real Estate.*
 - *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

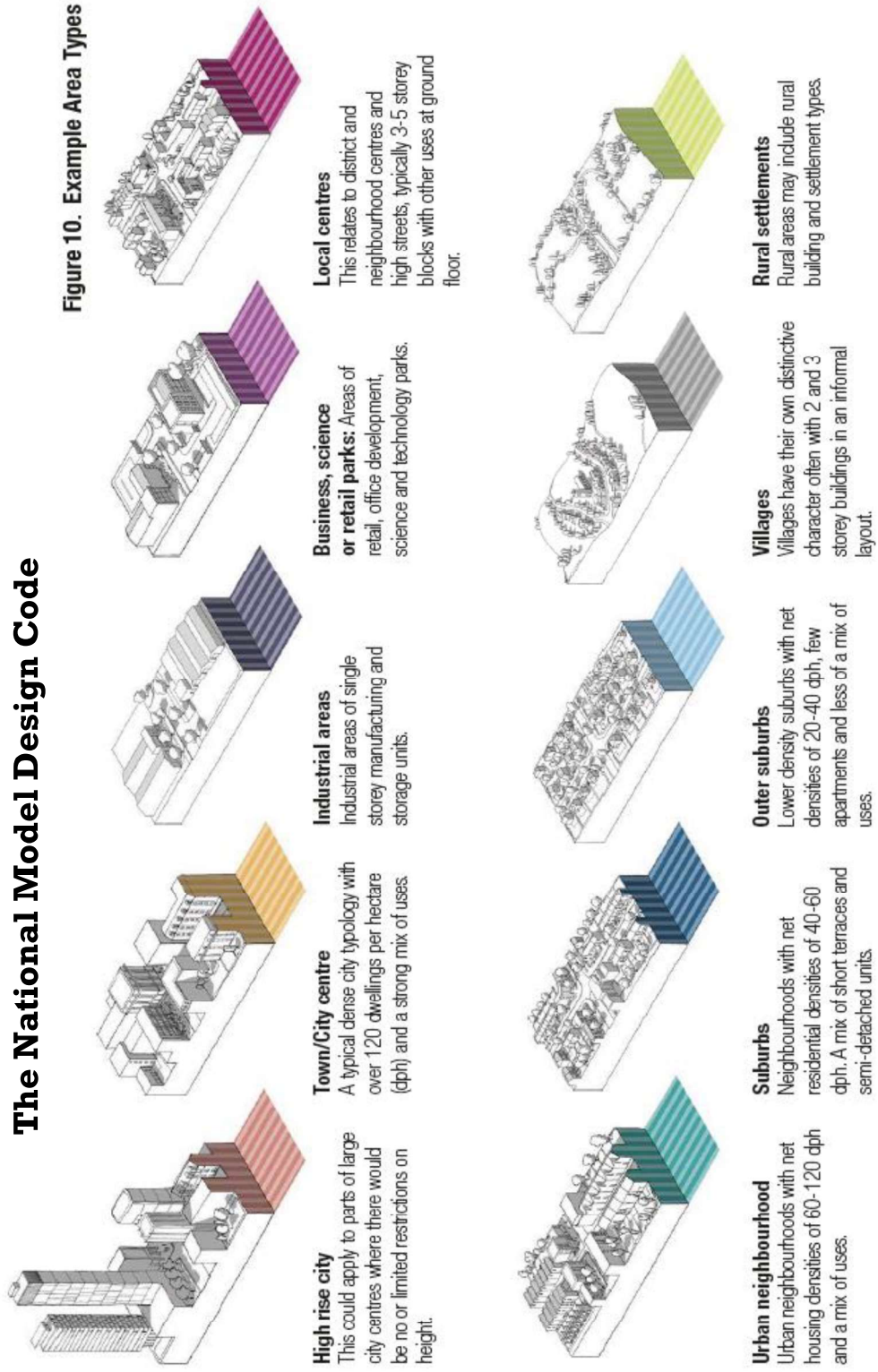


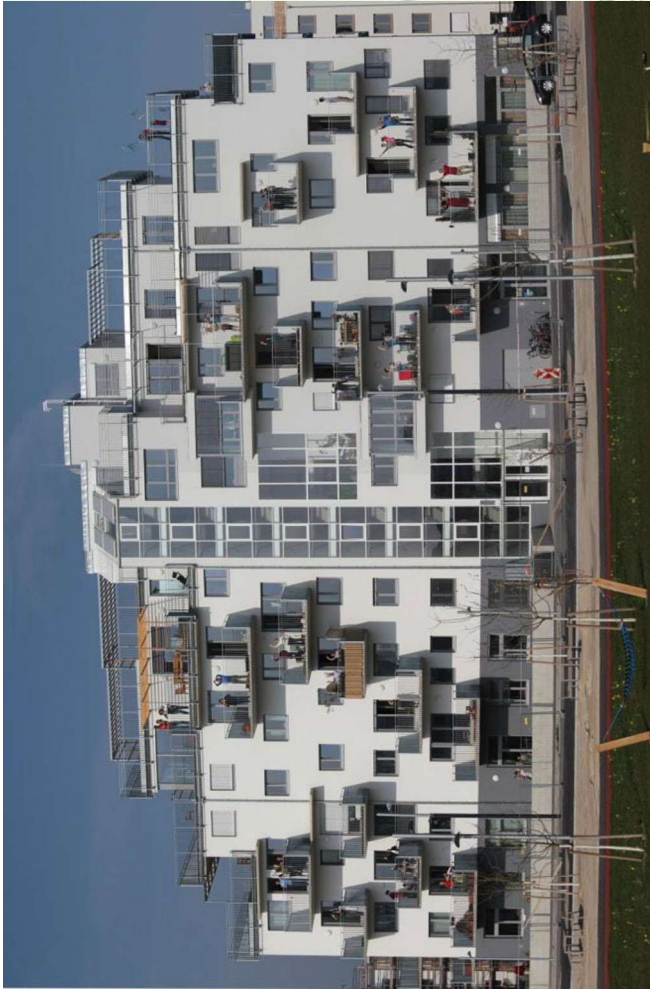
Proposed average density
of 520 dwellings/hectare
is four times what the new
National Model Design
Code envisages for an
'urban neighbourhood'

The National Model Design Code



Figure 10. Example Area Types

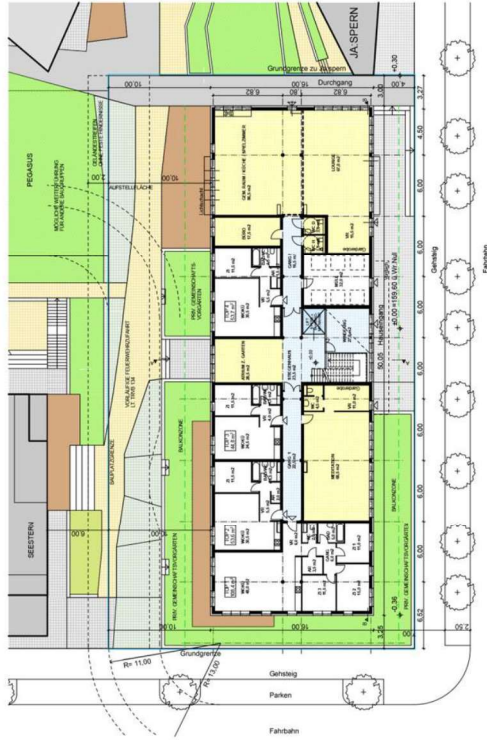




Aspern
Vienna

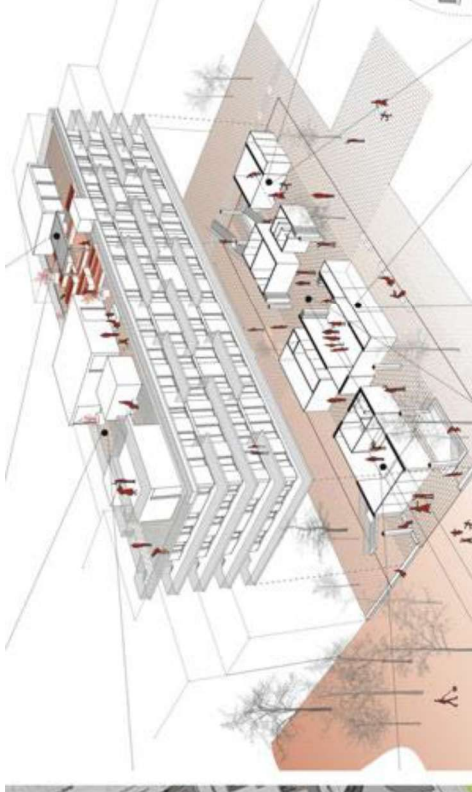
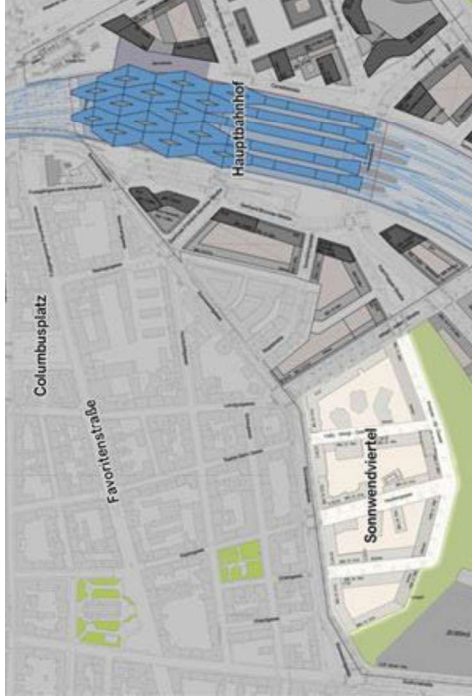
240 ha for
20,000
people

Family
oriented
design





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



Reaction 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

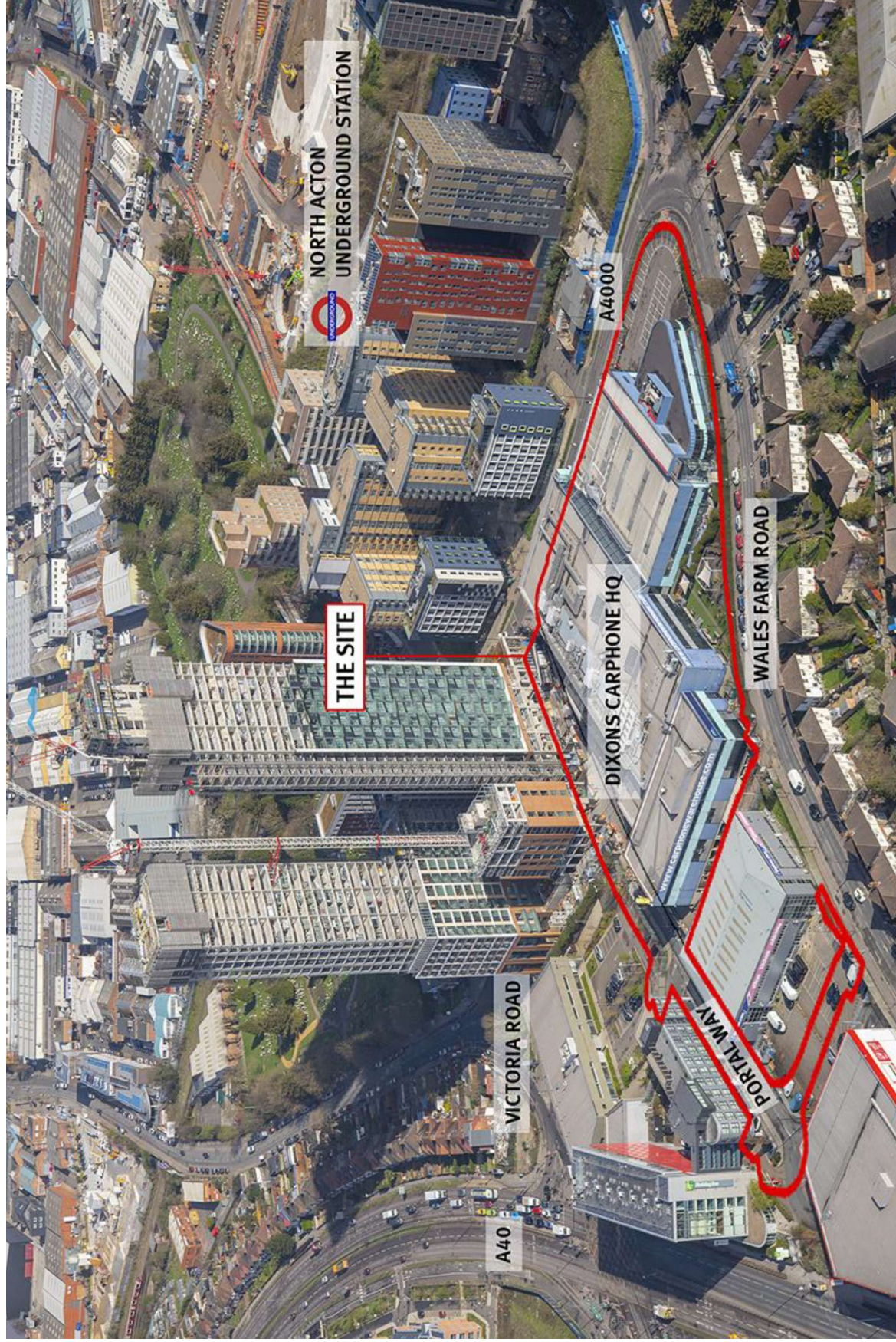
- 2021 London Plan Policy D9 (b) requires Local Plans to identify sites for tall buildings. Sub-paragraph 2 states *Any such locations **and appropriate tall building heights** should be identified on maps in Development Plans.*
- *And 3) states Tall buildings should only be developed in locations that 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 even more 'flexible' and opaque policy wording on Tall Buildings.
- 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.



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