

## **KENSINGTON SOCIETY NOTE OF PRESENTATION FROM SAINSBURY'S/BALLYMORE ON DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR KENSAL CANALSIDE ('PROJECT FLOURISH').**

This note is based on an online presentation to Kensington Society trustees by the Sainsbury's Ballymore team on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The first part summarises what we were told. The second part is a brief commentary on the Society's current thinking on our response to an impending application. The maps and images below are from the slides used at the presentation.

### **Overall masterplanning for the site**

Sainsbury's/Ballymore have been preparing their proposals on a similar timetable to St William, at the request of RBKC.

Recognition that Kensal Canalside has always been an 'island' site with vehicle access only from Ladbrooke Grove. Other means of access for pedestrians and cyclists also limited, given the boundaries of the canal to the north, rail lines to the south, and West London Line to the west (beyond the land owned by St William/Berkeley Homes).

The proposals from Sainsbury's/Ballymore are based on the creation of a new neighbourhood centre with a replacement superstore as one of its main features (to be built as part of Phase 1).

## **A NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE**



### **Housing and tenure**

Proposals based on 2,540 new homes to be delivered on Sainsbury's Ballymore land, in phases. Split of 30/70% affordable and market housing. This would form part of an overall total of 3,940 for the Opportunity Area as a whole. This total includes the Department for Transport land south of the GWR rail lines (see map above). This will become available for development on a later timescale (as yet indefinite). The St William site at western end of the OA is the subject of a separate note.

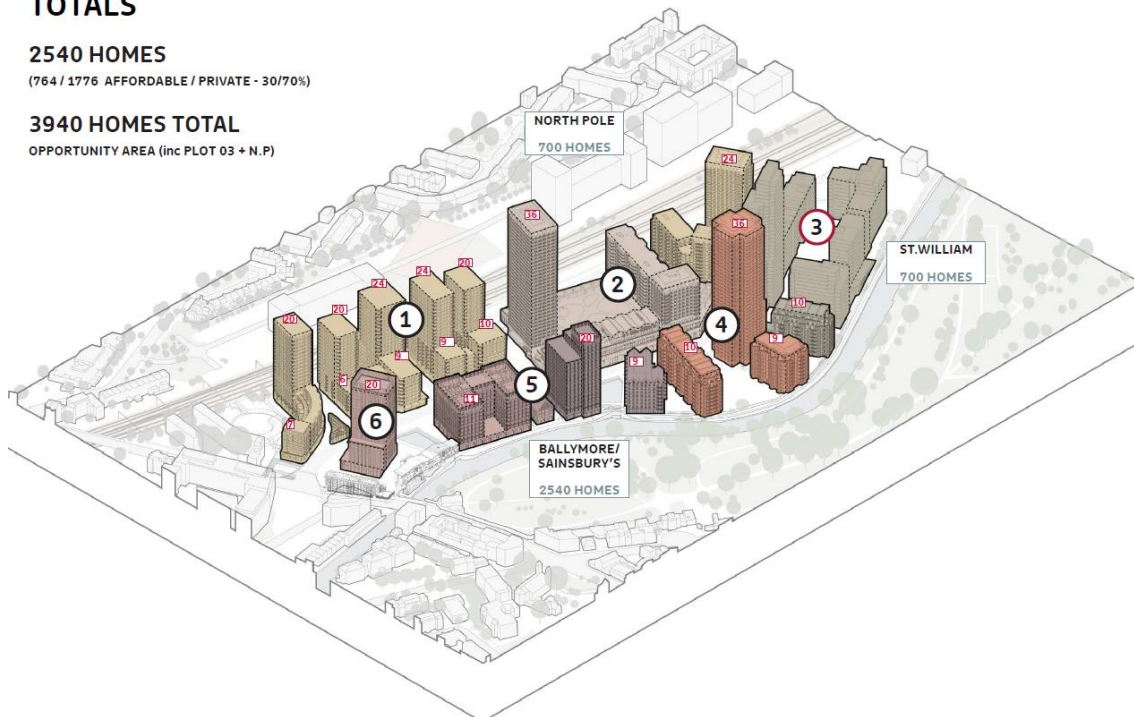
## CURRENT MASSING APPROACH TOTALS

**2540 HOMES**

(764 / 1776 AFFORDABLE / PRIVATE - 30/70%)

**3940 HOMES TOTAL**

OPPORTUNITY AREA (inc PLOT 03 + N.P)



### Massing and Tall Buildings

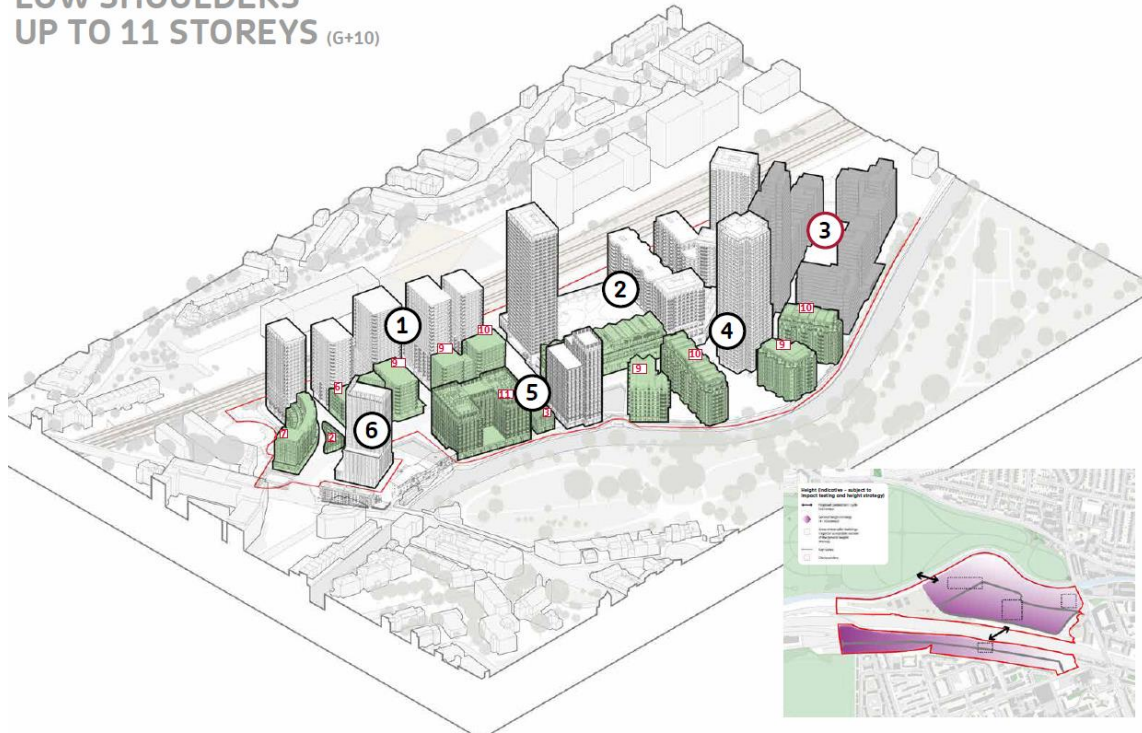
Sainsbury's/Ballymore envisage three very tall buildings on the overall site (i.e taller than Trellick Tower (98m)). These are the 36 storey 'store marker' above the new superstore, and a 36 storey 'fulcrum' tower adjacent to the boundary of the St William site. A third 35 storey building is proposed by St William for their part of the Opportunity Area (see map below).



Other buildings would be 'low shoulder' of up to 11 storeys (ground plus 10).

## DEFINING PRINCIPLES

### LOW SHOULDERS UP TO 11 STOREYS (G+10)



### Transport and connectivity

As with most new development in the Borough, the new housing would be 'permit-free' with resident permits limited to people with disabilities. Off-street underground parking would be provided for 20% of housing units.

Sainsbury's/Ballymore are assuming that the single vehicle entrance/exit to the site at the Ladbroke Grove roundabout will become a signalised junction. Their diagram below shows potential future east/west connections to Scrubs Lane in north Hammersmith. Also a possible pedestrian/cycle route from the southern canalside towpath over a bridge and across Kensal Cemetery to Harrow Road to connect to Kensal Green station.

The current nearest Underground station is at Ladbroke Grove over 1km distant. Car parking for the new Sainsbury's superstore will be reduced from the present 450 to 250 cars.

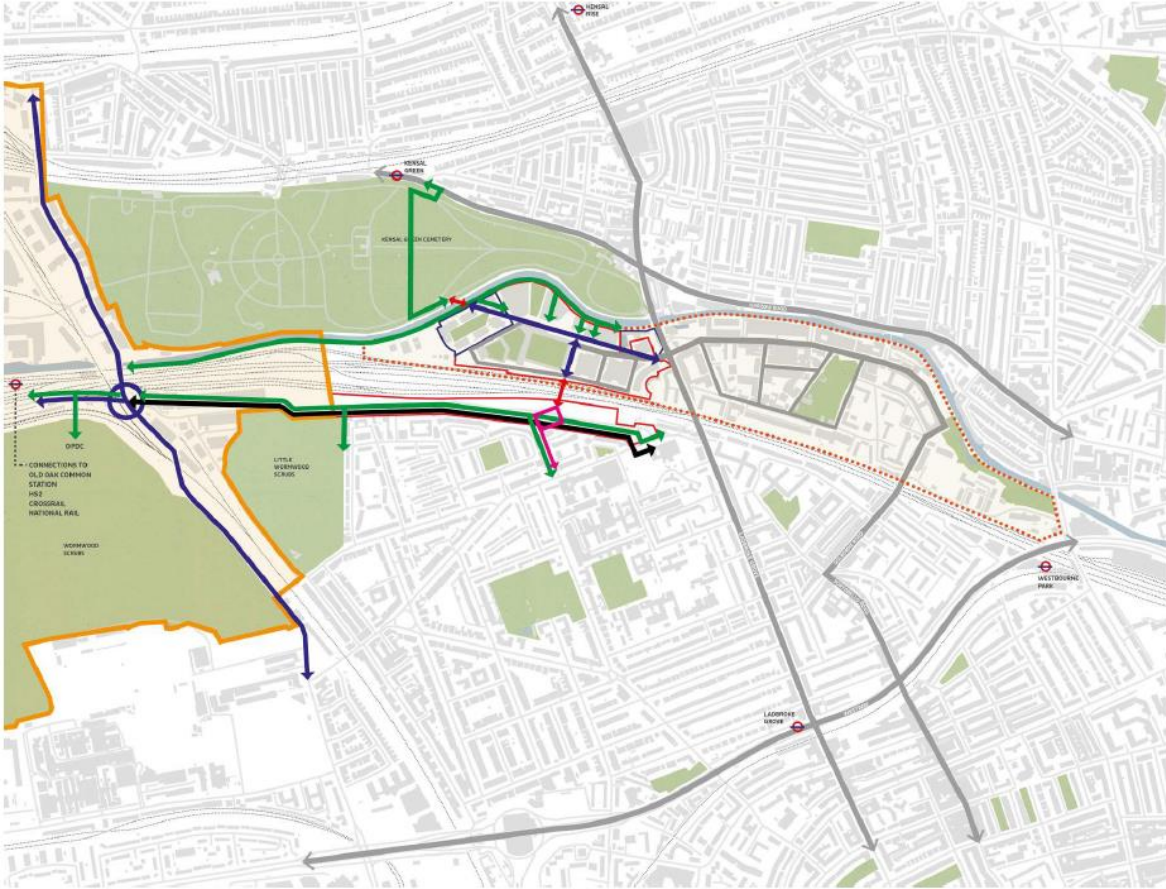
Main form of public transport access will be buses, circulating round a loop in the Opportunity Area and entering/exiting at Ladbroke Grove. Frequencies envisaged as similar to the present, of 45-60 buses/hour travelling on different routes outside the OA (routes 23, 52, 70, 228, 295 and 452).

The proposed road network within the Opportunity Area is shown on the diagram below. A lengthy bridge across the Great Western rail lines to the southern strip of Network Rail land is a long term proposition. This could ultimately provide a bus/car link to Barlby Road.

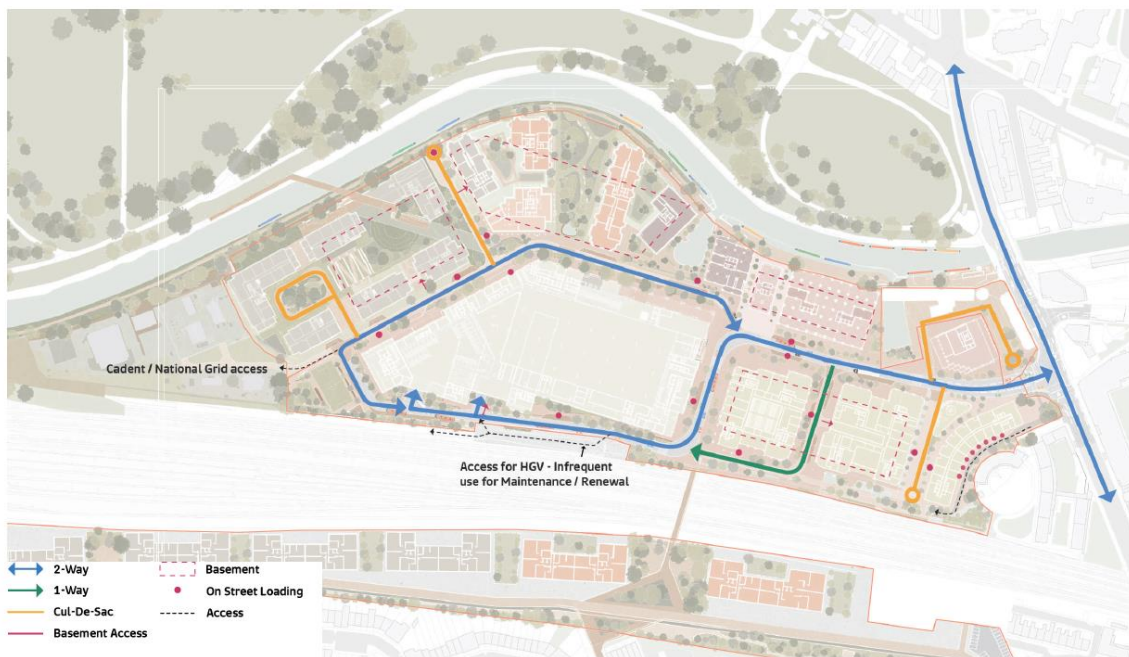


# VISION: STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

## WESTERN CONNECTIONS

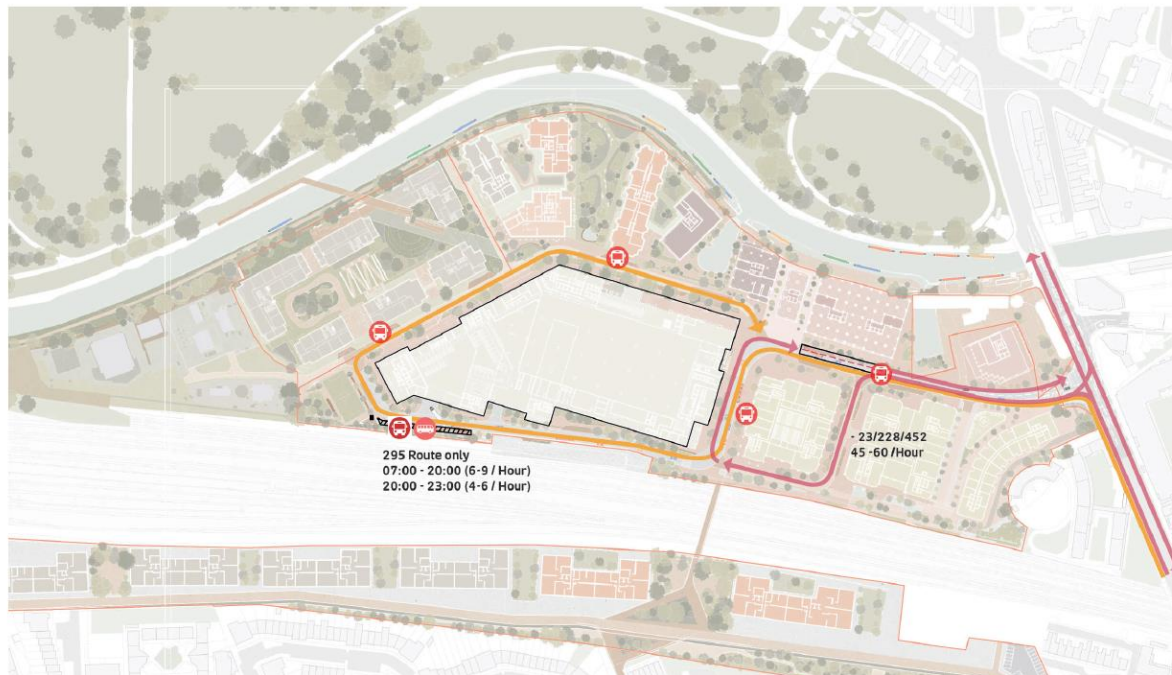


## VEHICLE NETWORK



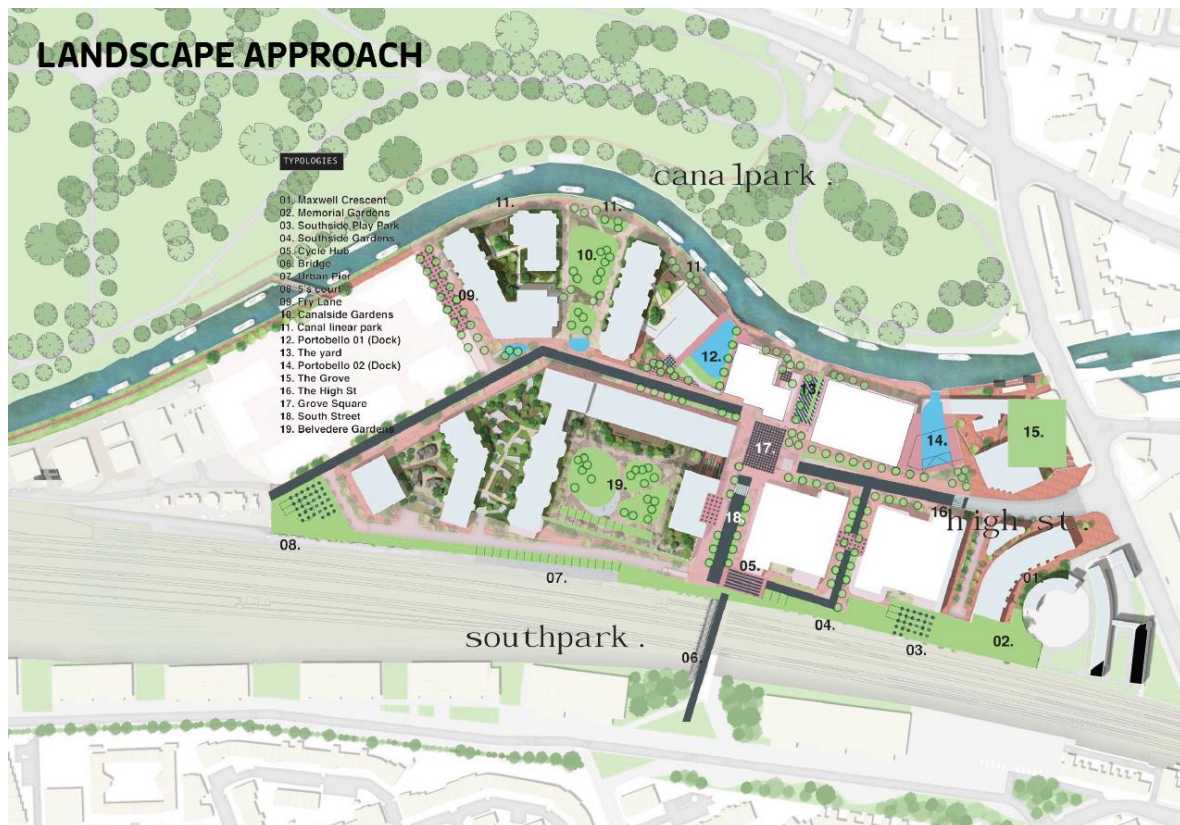


## BUS NETWORK



## Open space and landscaping of public realm

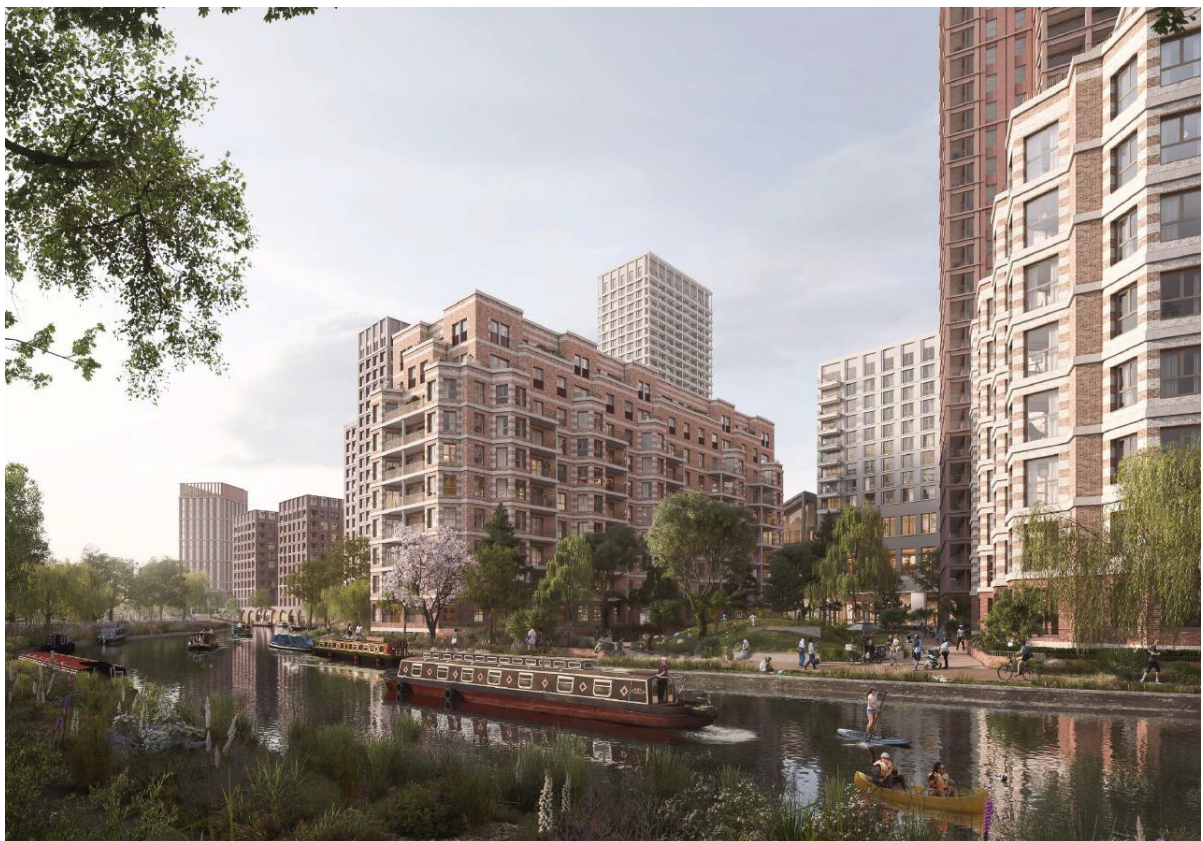
See diagram overleaf. Some new canal basins proposed to be created. Two metres of contaminated topsoil will need to be removed from the site.





## Design approach

The architects on the team are Maccreanor Lavington. Designs are intended to reflect warehouse buildings and 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century mansion flats (while higher than 6-7 storeys of such buildings).







## INITIAL COMMENTS FROM THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

### Capacity of site for new homes

- Too many housing units are assumed as being appropriate for this site – with no Crossrail Line Station, its limited road access and over 1km distance from an Underground station.
- The 2013 RBKC Issues and Options document showed 3 capacity/density options with 3,500 new homes as the highest. This option assumed a Crossrail station providing a high level of public transport access. This station is not going to happen.
- The 2021 London Plan sets an ‘indicative’ housing target of 3,500 new homes for the Kensal Canalside Opportunity Area, to be ‘tested’ through masterplanning (or through an updated Local Plan).
- The 2019 RBKC Local Plan (drafted in 2017) incorporates this target as a ‘minimum’ rather than ‘indicative’ figure in the Site Allocation in Policy CA1.
- The RBKC July 2021 Kensal Canalside SPD shows alternative ‘development capacities’ of 3,500, 4,200 and 5,000 new homes used to test the viability of achieving 35% affordable housing. Where is the evidence of these capacity figures being ‘tested’? This should be done through the new Local Plan Review currently underway (London Plan 2021 Policy SD1B(5)).

### Building heights and housing density

- RBKC has resisted proposals for very tall buildings since the 1970s. High-density/high-rise housing is unsuited to families, expensive on service and maintenance costs, and counter to RBKC aims for a zero carbon borough (as compared with medium-rise blocks).

- Neither the RBKC 2010 Building Height SPD nor the 2019 adopted Local Plan identify Kensal Canalside as being 'suitable' for tall buildings. This is due to proximity to conservation areas and low public transport accessibility levels. Current preparation of a new Local Plan will review existing policies, but at present a significant policy conflict will arise on the Sainsbury's/Ballymore proposals.
- The London Plan and the Local Plan encourages major office developments at locations with high levels of public transport access (PTAL 4 or higher). Even the eastern end of Kensal Canalside is at PTAL levels 2/3.
- Sainsbury's/Ballymore gave a density figure of 350 housing units/hectare at the presentation. We think this is a *gross* density figure, whereas the normal measure is *net* density (excluding open spaces and roads). Given the proposed building typologies, we think a net figure would be 600-700 units/ha. This is a 'super-density' or 'hyper-density' by London standards – far too dense considering the poor public transport accessibility of most of the site.

### **Transport and connectivity**

- Even when 'permit-free' and with only 20% of units having off-street parking provision (c. 800 spaces), a development 3,940 homes and a large Sainsbury's superstore will attract significant vehicle traffic from e-retailing and home deliveries. The Ladbroke Grove junctions at this location are already congested.
- Local people familiar with this existing congestion will need a lot of convincing that a 4,000 home development (with additional office space) can possibly be serviced with a bus strategy only, and no new rail, Underground or Overground connections.
- Any new vehicle connection to the west of the Opportunity Area (Scrubs Lane in North Hammersmith) is a long-term project currently reliant on uncertain funding via developer contributions in the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation area.
- The same problem applies to development of the southern part of the Opportunity Area (Department of Transport land at North Pole Road) and any new vehicle connection across the GWR tracks to Barlby Road. There are firm commitments or time horizons for delivery of such a project.
- A new pedestrian/cycle connection through Kensal Cemetery has many challenges (permission from the owners of the cemetery, opening hours, safety from crime on an extended closed walkway). Many consider the existing canalside path unsafe to use.
- For all the above reasons, a Transport study for the site is an urgent priority and will be scrutinised closely. This should be based on the cumulative impacts of all developments in the OA and not just on the St William and the Sainsbury's Ballymore 'Phase 1' applications.

### **Landscaping and open space**

- We questioned the extent of green open space proposed (as separate from roads and hard surfacing). Tree pits will be needed for trees above podiums or basement parking.
- How with the 2m of contaminated topsoil be removed and where will it go?

### **Next steps**

- Sainsbury's/Ballymore said that they intend to submit two separate applications, potentially around Easter 2022. One would be final application for 'Phase 1' including the new superstore and associated housing at their proposed 'neighbourhood centre'. The other



would be an outline application intended to fix the main parameters for locations, heights and massing of the remainder of their masterplan.

- The Kensington Society considers that planning applications in early 2022 would be premature. The July 2021 Kensal Canalside Supplementary Planning Document can only 'guide' existing planning policies. A SPD cannot introduce new or substantially changed policies. The case has yet to be made that tall building locations shown in the SPD are 'suitable' in terms of public transport connectivity and heritage impact (especially on the cemetery).
- Sainsbury's/Ballymore have submitted an application for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIA) on their proposals. The Kensington Society has sent in a detailed response to RBKC.

The above are initial comments from the Society, based on information provided to the Society by the developers. Proposals may change in response to feedback from the public. We will be attending the RBKC Development Forum event at Barlby Primary School being held on November 24<sup>th</sup>. We will be submitting detailed responses to all planning applications.

Kensington Society  
November 2021