

Section 9 - King's Cross Opportunity Area - Area Action Plan

- 9.1 The ~~Strategic Guidance Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (the London Plan) Planning Authorities (RPG3) and the draft London Plan~~ identifies the King's Cross Railway Lands as a major development opportunity ~~and suggests that higher densities and most commercial uses should be located close to the terminus.~~³⁷² The Council accepts this approach and recognises that the King's Cross Opportunity Area has the potential to create a new quarter for London which enhances features of historic and conservation importance and which provides scope for business development, tourism, leisure, housing, community facilities and measures to enhance local access to employment opportunities.
- 9.2 The King's Cross Opportunity Area is the subject of a separate section in this plan. This is a consequence of the Area's identification in ~~RPG3 and the draft~~ London Plan, which provides³⁷³ strategic guidance for London authorities, as a major regeneration resource able to complement or enhance Central Area functions and the proposed Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) terminus at St Pancras.
- 9.3 It is widely recognised that the Opportunity Area is one of the few remaining major development opportunities in inner London and is certainly the major one in Camden. The Opportunity Area continues to merit separate treatment in Camden's UDP in recognition of the following factors:
- the scale and nature of the outstanding development opportunities presented by the Area's excellent and improving public transport network;
 - the opportunities to bring significant regenerative benefits to surrounding communities and thereby contribute to social inclusion by bringing social, economic and environmental benefits to the Area and beyond;
 - the potential contribution of the Area to London's 'World City' status and its economy and cultural diversity;
 - the potential for the development of new market and affordable housing to contribute to meeting local and London-wide needs;
 - the need to address directly the potential impact of comprehensive development on the character, facilities and infrastructure of surrounding areas;
 - the great potential for low energy buildings with sustainable transport links, located in the heart of central London; and
 - the great potential for community regeneration through innovative processes of community involvement in the planning, design and management of elements of new developments and services.

With this Section, the Council seeks to achieve a successful balance of all these factors.

The key objectives for King's Cross are set out in King's Cross: Camden's Vision (June 2002). These aim to achieve a development that is firmly integrated with the local area in terms of:

- > Physical connections;
- > Economic connections;
- > Social links;
- > Managing the impact; and
- > Working with the community.

- 9.4 The Opportunity Area extends, as defined on the Proposals Map, from the North London Line in the north to Euston Road and the major railway stations of St. Pancras and King's Cross in the south. To the east it is largely bounded by York Way, and to the west by St. Pancras and the main lines from this station. The Opportunity Area thus includes the stations and approximately 24 hectares (60 acres) of developable land. To the north east there is a related development site within the London Borough of Islington.

- 9.5 The character of the Opportunity Area was largely established by the end of the nineteenth century and it contains the most significant group of early Victorian railway buildings in Greater London. The historical importance of the Area has been recognised through the listing of various buildings - most notably the Grade 1 listed railway stations of St. Pancras and King's Cross - and the designation of the King's Cross/St. Pancras and Regent's Canal Conservation Areas. The area has two Metropolitan Site of Nature Conservation Importance in the Regent's Canal and Camley Street Natural Park.
- 9.6 The southern part of the Opportunity Area is dominated by the operations of St. Pancras and King's Cross stations. The central part of the Area is crossed east-west by the Regent's Canal and contains a group of warehouse and railway buildings that reflect its industrial and transport heritage. These buildings are occupied largely by businesses on short-term leases. Two concrete batching plants and a cement plant occupy the northern part of the Area, which serve parts of central and inner north London. These plants will be retained but reconfigured as a consequence of the construction of CTRL. Operational railway lines run exposed along the western and northern edges of the Area and underground along the eastern edge, and present a challenge to the physical integration of the site with its surroundings.
- 9.7 The major transport infrastructure works within the Opportunity Area are either underway or at an advanced stage of preparation and programming. The remodelling and enhancement of the interchanges at King's Cross St. Pancras Underground station is being undertaken between 2001 and 2005. The construction of Phase 2 of the CTRL, including the refurbishment and expansion of St. Pancras station, commenced in the summer of 2001 and is due for completion in 2006. Statutory safeguarding for these works is shown in the Directions included on the Proposals Map and is included in the Schedule of Transport Proposals. Detailed proposals for the remodelling and potential enlargement of King's Cross Station have yet to come forward, but works are provisionally scheduled for the period 2003 to 2010.
- 9.8 The Opportunity Area is surrounded by the residential communities of Somers Town and Elm Village to the west, Maiden Lane to the north, King's Cross to the south and Thornhill (within Islington) to the east. With the exception of Elm Village, these communities are among the most deprived in the United Kingdom, with particularly high levels of deprivation in the areas of income, employment and housing. There is a perceived shortage of accessible open spaces. Community regeneration in these areas is a priority for the Council. The Opportunity Area contains part of, and is surrounded by the Camden Central Neighbourhood Renewal Area (see policy SD1B).
- 9.9 The Council, through its UDP and other Council strategies, will work to address these social, environmental and economic concerns. The Community and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies of Camden and Islington will be particularly important in achieving community goals as well as integrating site development with the communities that surround the Opportunity Area. Also relevant are Council strategies such as the Council's Housing, Community Safety, Green Transport, Cultural, Local Agenda 21 Action Plan and proposed Climate Change Strategies, the work of the Camden Central Single Regeneration Budget programme, alongside health and well-being initiatives from the NHS and Primary Care Trust. The objectives paper "King's Cross - Towards an Integrated City" sets out the main objectives for the site, including physical, economic and social integration. These objectives acknowledge the importance of integrating the development with the surrounding environment and to consider the site in its context.
- 9.10 There is an opportunity to make a positive contribution to the government's Strategy for Sustainable Development including its Climate Change Programme and help to meet the aspirations of the Urban White Paper. Following the final publication of the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy (the London Plan) development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area should have regard to the relevant provisions of the London Plan.

- 9.11 Because of the long-term nature of the development of the Opportunity Area, a flexible planning approach that reflects changing social and economic circumstances will be central to the successful completion of site development and the sustainable regeneration of the area. This durable approach is to be reflected in the ~~revised~~³⁷⁴ Planning Brief for the site.

Strategic policies

SKC1

The Council seeks the sustainable development of the King's Cross Opportunity Area, which achieves its full potential:

- a) to support and develop London's role as a world business, commercial and cultural centre;
- b) to achieve economic, social, and physical integration with surrounding communities;
- c) to contribute positively to meeting the full range of housing, social and healthcare needs in Camden and so contribute to meeting London's needs;
- d) to create employment and training opportunities both generally and for local people;
- e) to maximise opportunities for walking and cycling and the use of existing and proposed public transport facilities, thereby minimising dependence on private car use and traffic generation;
- f) to minimise any adverse impacts on the environment arising from the development and to secure positive environmental gains;
- g) g) to ~~increase and~~³⁷⁵ enhance opportunities for biodiversity; and
- h) for community regeneration through innovative processes of community involvement in the planning, design and management of the new development and services.

- 9.12 The King's Cross Opportunity Area has the potential to provide an outstanding development exemplifying the principles of sustainability in a socially inclusive way. It provides the opportunity to apply the principles of sustainable design, use and construction in practice and to secure a living and working environment, which benefits local people, while keeping the wider ecological impact to a minimum. It can be expected to make a positive contribution to meeting the Council's and government's economic, community and neighbourhood renewal strategies and environmental objectives, including their climate change strategies. The total amount of land available for development, its location, and the comprehensive transport network providing high levels of accessibility, all contribute to this potential. As one of the largest brownfield sites in central London, it presents the opportunity to be a landmark, environmentally sustainable development that embraces its built and natural heritage.
- 9.13 The redevelopment of the Area is also an exciting opportunity to support and develop the London-wide and local economies, reflecting the aspirations set out in the ~~draft~~ London Plan. The development, combined with comprehensive regeneration action planning and Supplementary Planning Guidance, can help achieve sustainable development: generating employment, education, healthcare and housing opportunities, and helping to tackle poverty and social exclusion. To this end, the Council will expect to work with developers, other agencies and local communities in regeneration action planning to complement the physical Master Plan. Any application will be expected to explain how the proposed developments will help to achieve these objectives.
- 9.14 By providing training and support through regeneration initiatives, local people will be able to take advantage of the job opportunities provided in the Opportunity Area during and after construction. It is anticipated that this will be achieved by the Council, developers, training organisations and local communities working together. Other regeneration initiatives aimed at reducing social exclusion will be important in achieving the integration of the Area with the

surrounding community. Housing provision, including affordable housing will contribute to this integration, as well as help to meet housing needs. The Council expects at least 1000 housing units (of which 50% will be affordable) to be provided on the site.

- 9.15 Achieving economic, social and physical integration is a major challenge. Physical integration can be achieved through good design, permeability and good transport connections. Economic integration is a product of local business and access to employment opportunities. Social integration is multi faceted and can be achieved through the provision of community facilities within the Opportunity Area with wider community benefits. It is also likely to be a result of the use of facilities, such as schools, in the immediate areas by those living and working in the Opportunity Area. Existing draft regeneration and cultural strategies as well as the Community Strategy, provide useful context on how social and economic regeneration can appropriately be achieved in a way that is consistent with wider Borough objectives.
- 9.16 The capacity of the site for development will be governed by many factors including transport provision. The redevelopment of King's Cross and St. Pancras railway stations and the Underground station will enhance the already high levels of accessibility of the Area. There are further opportunities for enhancing these major transport improvements such as Cross River Tram, the upgrading of bus facilities and interchanges, and ensuring the safe and free movement of pedestrians, road-based public transport, water-based transport and cyclists through and within the site, which the Council expects to be fully considered.
- 9.17 The principal nature conservation interests in the Opportunity Area include the Camley Street Natural Park and Regent's Canal, which are Metropolitan Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. The North London Link is a Borough Site of Nature Conservation Importance (Grade 1), but the Channel Tunnel Rail Link construction will inevitably remove most of the habitat in this area. The development of the Area offers scope for enhancing the principal areas and providing additional opportunities for biodiversity. Development proposals also need to have regard to the statutory requirements regarding protected species.³⁷⁶

SKC2

The Council seeks the development of the King's Cross Opportunity Area as a genuinely mixed-use development that is well integrated with surrounding areas, with development densities and supporting facilities and uses appropriate to the high accessibility and urban characteristics of the Area and its environs.

- 9.18 Government guidance (PPG1, PPG3, PPG12, PPG13) clearly stresses the role of mixed-use developments in achieving sustainability. If the development of the Opportunity Area is to create a sustainable urban quarter then a mix of uses through each major phase of the development will be needed. Well designed, mixed-use developments contribute to more vibrant and viable schemes that are less susceptible to adverse economic and other changes.
- 9.19 Densities are expected to be appropriate to the central location and excellent accessibility of the Opportunity Area. Sustainable Residential Quality (SRQ) density guidelines will be used as a guide to densities on the site. Factors such as the physical characteristics of the site, proximity to the canal and other sensitive areas, strategic viewing corridors, transport capacity and high quality design values mean that uniformly high densities may not always be achievable.
- 9.20 Mixed use development will help to achieve a reinvigorated local economy and socially balanced communities with a range of services and facilities. As well as commercial uses and housing, a successful mix will include retail, cultural, and leisure facilities which make active use of open space and bring benefits to local people as well as tourists and other visitors. There is also an opportunity to build on existing strengths such as the vibrant local music and arts sectors.

- 9.21 Government and regional advice stress the desirability of locating higher density development and business uses close to public transport interchanges or termini. The approach adopted for the Opportunity Area is consistent with the current proposals for Transport Development Areas. These are “well-designed, higher density, mixed use areas situated around good public transport access points in urban areas” (the ~~draft~~³⁷⁷ London Plan).
- 9.22 Establishing the Opportunity Area as a lively sustainable urban quarter incorporating a range of business, retail, leisure, and cultural uses, housing types and tenures will meet the objectives of the Community Strategy, with its goal of reducing the gap between the richest and poorest parts of Camden. The vision in the Strategy is that of a place where people are involved in their communities, taking care of the environment for themselves and for future generations, where communities thrive and grow, people are healthier, the economy is strong, and people benefit from excellent public services.
- 9.23 St. Pancras and King's Cross stations are the key transport hubs which will provide first class international, national, London and local links to the Opportunity Area. St. Pancras station is currently being improved for CTRL operation and will be completed in 2006. The Council will seek to ensure that the redevelopment proposals for King's Cross station are fully integrated into the overall development and are in balance with the public transport provision and the wider development.

SKC3

The Council seeks a comprehensive, integrated and phased development of the King's Cross Opportunity Area.

- 9.24 The Council recognises the magnitude of the potential development of the Opportunity Area. As such, it expects to see a comprehensive approach taken to the planning and programming of all development. The Council will wish to approve an overall masterplan strategy for the mixed use development of the Opportunity Area before individual proposals for specific parts of that mixed use development are brought forward. This masterplan strategy will be expected to relate satisfactorily to the comprehensive approach to all development in the Opportunity Area, as the Council's objectives would be prejudiced by piecemeal development of the Opportunity Area. The realities involved in achieving a viable commercial development are recognised and will be taken into account.
- 9.25 Each major phase of the comprehensive development of the Area should contain an appropriate balance of different uses, including affordable and market housing, and complement previous or subsequent major phases and the surrounding area, in terms of scale, massing, layout, uses, and linkages. In view of the long history of uncertainty about future development at King's Cross, there is an understandable desire to see development completed within a reasonable timeframe. Work is expected to commence as the CTRL and related major transport infrastructure works are nearing completion.
- 9.26 Because of the scale of the development, the Council will also require, amongst other analyses, a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment to be submitted in support of development proposals in the Opportunity Area. This requirement is consistent with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England and Wales) Regulations 1999 and Circular 02/99. The Council will expect the information submitted in support of large-scale development proposals to address a number of issues including social, biodiversity and transportation impact issues, with reference to, for example, government climate change strategies.

SKC4

The Council will require a very high standard of design, architecture, townscape, layout, landscape and open spaces throughout the King's Cross Opportunity Area.

- 9.27 Consistent with recent government guidance, a design-led approach will be sought for the redevelopment of the King's Cross Opportunity Area. Poor quality design, layout and construction create poor quality places, which are unsustainable.
- 9.28 Good design is central to urban regeneration and helps create economic, environmental and social value. It contributes to achieving high quality, higher density development. It will also help to create an attractive and accessible development with a range of environments for people's enjoyment including vibrant areas and peaceful places. The application of the 'Secured by Design' principles will help address concerns about crime and personal safety. Detailed design should incorporate appropriate building techniques to conserve energy and natural resources, minimise the impact of the development on the environment and provide opportunities for biodiversity.
- 9.29 A robust urban character, incorporating the distinctive features of the Opportunity Area, provides an appropriate context for future development. These distinctive features include the Camley Street Natural Park and the site's industrial heritage, most importantly the Grade I listed buildings of King's Cross and St. Pancras stations and the Regent's Canal.
- 9.30 The Council will encourage a contemporary, bold, imaginative design approach that complements and enhances these existing features. This approach must acknowledge and respect the special character of the Area, through a full assessment of its character and qualities.

Local policies

- 9.31 The policies set out below give further guidance for the development of the Opportunity Area as a specific large development of its own. In many cases, these policies reflect wider land use planning objectives and principles. These wider objectives and principles are set out more fully in other parts of the UDP. It will be important therefore to read the King's Cross Opportunity Area policies within the context of the UDP as a whole. Compliance with one policy, whether in this section or elsewhere in the UDP, may not mean a proposed development is acceptable if it would breach other objectives or principles contained within other UDP policies. Conversely, compliance with other UDP policies would not justify a departure for the policies set out below.
- 9.32 The Council considers it important that these policies should be clear and succinct about what is considered necessary for a successful development, indicating in a positive way the circumstances in which planning permission would be granted so as to provide the clearest possible guidance to those bringing forward development proposals.

KC1 - Mixed use development

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the mixed-use development of the King's Cross Opportunity Area that:

- a) includes a range of economic activities that create a wide variety of employment opportunities;
- b) provides an appropriate quantity, variety and mix of different housing types;

- c) includes appropriate levels of supporting community, cultural, social, educational, healthcare, leisure and retail activities and varied open spaces, with benefits to adjoining areas;
- d) includes other appropriate economic activities, such as tourism, leisure or education facilities;
- e) avoids large areas of single use development, which will generally be resisted; and which accord with the policies set out below.

9.33 Regional guidance ~~as well as the proposed policy directions in the draft London Plan~~ highlights the uniqueness of King's Cross Opportunity Area, ~~identifying its potential as a "new quarter" for London.~~³⁷⁸ The likely predominant land uses of employment/commerce and housing can help reduce the need to travel, increase liveliness and variety. Designed appropriately, a mix of uses can increase pedestrian movements and ground floor activity to create safer streets.

9.34 The Council will expect business activities and housing to be supported by a range of complementary services and facilities. There is a need to avoid putting further pressure on existing local resources. Facilities and services like local shops, healthcare services and education facilities for all age groups will support and regenerate the Opportunity Area and contribute to its long term sustainability. New services and facilities will also be relevant to existing local communities, assisting with social inclusion and integration. In consultation with the community, these new services and facilities will be developed in conjunction with the Local Health Authority and Local Strategic Partnership as well as services provided within the Council. At the same time, local community use can have a positive benefit for viability. It is recognised that the success of the development will hinge upon good management systems, which support and integrate a wide mix of uses throughout the life of the development.

9.35 ~~Large scale retail development would be inappropriate if it would threaten the viability and vitality of neighbouring centres in Camden Town, Islington and Westminster.~~³⁷⁹ The Council has recognised in policy SD35³⁸⁰ that the King's Cross Opportunity Area is a suitable location for uses that are major generators of travel demand such as office employment, shopping, higher education and leisure, and policy KC1 identifies retail activity as a component of mixed use development. The Camden Retail Study 2004 was commissioned to consider the need and capacity for additional retail floorspace in the Borough over the period up to 2016. Taking into account the new provision planned as part of St Pancras Station, the Study examined the impact of additional shop development at King's Cross, and indicated that subject to the specific details of the mix of shops, the Opportunity Area could accommodate a phased development completed in 2016, to provide gross floorspace of about 29,500 sq m for shopping (A1), accompanied by 1,500 sq m for service uses (A2) and 15,000 sq m for food and drink uses (A3) without harming the vitality and viability of existing centres. The King's Cross Opportunity Area therefore has potential to provide a focus of shopping and service uses serving those living in, working in or visiting the vicinity. The Retail Study noted that support may be needed for some centres to counter the cumulative negative impacts of significant shopping proposals across London. The King's Cross Opportunity Area is considered to be an appropriate location for shop development in terms of policy R1A, but as it is not an established retail location, it will be considered as an out-of-centre site for the purposes of paragraph 6.22 dealing with retail impact assessment.³⁸¹

9.35A Retail development should encompass a range of convenience, comparison and new food and drink uses.³⁸² ~~Consistent with RPG3,~~³⁸³ Near the main transport interchanges and termini there may be scope for specialist retail outlets to serve long distance travellers and tourism. Parts of the Opportunity Area and areas nearby are not within convenient walking distance of existing centres.³⁸⁴ Shopping providing accessible, essential convenience services will be important to meeting the needs of local communities and will be encouraged. In addition to a

significant focus of shopping and service uses, new neighbourhood centres and small parades may therefore be appropriate.³⁸⁵ In accordance with policy T1A, major car-reliant retail development will not be appropriate.³⁸⁶

- 9.36 The Council will encourage the provision of leisure and community facilities that are flexible and therefore appropriate for a range of different uses. This will help to keep facilities relevant and ensure their long term viability. Teenagers and older citizens are often poorly catered for and it is important to ensure their needs are addressed.
- 9.37 Because of the long term nature of the site's development, combined with a changing economic and social environment, it will be important to keep abreast of trends in these areas to provide the basis for on-going decisions about the appropriate mix of uses and supporting facilities and services in the development of the Opportunity area. Community involvement and consultation are essential during the process to ensure that community needs are considered and incorporated in the development. Flexibility in design can accommodate changing needs and improve the viability and sustainability of the development in the long term.

KC2 - Prioritisation

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area that afford priority to the provision of a range of employment floor space and new housing accommodation, including affordable housing.

- 9.38 The Council wishes to see a successful balance struck between strategic commercial interests, and both London-wide and local planning objectives. Local housing deprivation combined with continued population growth is creating additional housing stress in London as well as Camden and Islington. A variety of housing types and tenures will contribute to meeting local and London-wide housing needs as well as creating a vibrant, diverse community. The Opportunity Area designation reflects the potential of the development to contribute to the London-wide economy, at the same time as creating local jobs and the training needed to make them accessible to the unemployed living in areas adjacent to the Opportunity Area.

KC3 - Economic activities

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area that include a range of business uses (within Use Classes B1 and also B2). Proposals should include:

- a) a range of different sized units, including smaller and 'start up' units and workshops; and
- b) units that have flexible physical design and layout.

- 9.39 The maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment has been identified as a priority in national and regional guidance. High levels of accessibility to the site mean that the Opportunity Area will provide employment opportunities for people from all parts of London.
- 9.40 At a local level, with significant levels of unemployment in the areas adjacent to the Opportunity Area, there is significant potential to invigorate the local economy and communities by providing a range of employment opportunities and services. Training providers such as the Learning and Skills Council, ConneXions and various voluntary and community groups, supported by the local authorities where appropriate, will offer the means to provide people with the knowledge and skills to take advantage of the opportunities presented through the development of the Opportunity Area.

- 9.41 The Opportunity Area should provide accommodation for a range of business uses that contribute to both the London-wide and local economies. Office space for large corporate organisations as well as small business units should be included. This will help ensure a range of employment opportunities are created, at various skill levels, and provide for a mix of business uses. Provision should be made for sectors of London's economy that are particularly strong locally (e.g. art, media and higher education).
- 9.42 A flexible approach to building design and construction will help contribute to the long-term sustainability of the area. The viability and diversity of the development will improve with flexibly designed business accommodation capable of being adapted for new uses and changing economic circumstances.

KC4 - Housing

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area that meet the following criteria:

- a) a net increase of at least 1000 housing units. 50% of the first 1,000 housing units should be for affordable housing apportioned as 35% social housing for rent and 15% for essential workers and other intermediate occupiers;
- b) in considering proposals over and above the initial 1000 units (net), the Council has a target of 50% social rented and intermediate housing, again apportioned as 35% as social housing for rent and 15% for essential workers and other intermediate occupiers. The Council will take into account the London Plan, prevailing UDP policies, other relevant policies, local and/or London-wide housing needs, the wider regeneration needs of the King's Cross area, economic circumstances and other material considerations;
- c) all housing proposals should include a mixture of types, sizes and appropriate densities to meet local and/or London-wide housing needs including the need for larger, family housing units. High density development will be appropriate, subject to high quality design and sustainable residential quality; and
- d) the early provision of social and intermediate and other housing should be a significant element of each major development phase.

- 9.43 Across London there is an acknowledged shortage of housing for households on low and moderate incomes (London Mayor's Housing Commission). The Council's Housing Strategy (paragraph 23.1) highlights the acute housing shortage in Camden, which has been generated by a combination of a growing population, consistent high demand, land shortage, increasing development prices and buoyant right to buy sales. The provision of all types of new affordable housing at King's Cross will help the Council make better use of its existing housing stock. Further comment is made in the Housing Strategy about the lack of land on which to develop meaning that Camden cannot build itself out of its housing crisis.
- 9.44 The Opportunity Area is one of the few sites within the Borough that can deliver housing on a significant scale with the added benefit of having excellent access to public transport. This high level of accessibility combined with good design and other factors should mean that high density housing can be achieved on many parts of the site. This approach accords with the Mayor's emerging Spatial Development Strategy.
- 9.45 The Council expects at least 1000 housing units (of which 50% will be affordable) to be provided on the site to help meet the anticipated housing needs of both Camden and London. Seventy four housing units providing affordable, including a range of intermediate rented accommodation existed on the site until recently and most remain, including the Stanley and Culross Buildings. The Council wishes to see that the increase of at least 1000 units is in addition to the retention or replacement of these 74 units as affordable housing units.

- 9.46 The Opportunity Area can make a very important contribution to meeting London's overall housing needs by the provision of a proportion of market housing (i.e. Housing for sale at full market rates). It also provides an opportunity to address Camden's and London-wide housing needs, for social and essential worker and other intermediate housing . The targets of 35% for social and 15% for intermediate housing reflect the findings of the London Mayor's Housing Commission and subsequent feasibility study Affordable Housing in London as well as the Council's own housing targets, which prioritise social rented housing. The Borough's housing needs are regularly assessed through its Housing Needs Survey.
- 9.47 Government guidance defines affordable housing to encompass both low-cost market and subsidised housing (irrespective of tenure, ownership or financial arrangements) that will be available to people who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market. The DETR Index of Multiple Deprivation Study shows high levels of housing deprivation around the Opportunity Area. The resident population in the area surrounding the site is expected to continue to increase, placing yet further demands on housing in the local area. In addition, there is a mismatch between supply and demand, which has led to overcrowding, and people being housed in inappropriate accommodation. Affordable housing remains a key Council priority and will help meet the growing need for homes for people who cannot otherwise afford to buy or rent accommodation in the housing market. This approach is consistent with Circular 6/98 and PPG3.
- 9.48 The policy seeks substantial provision of intermediate accommodation for those on moderate incomes, including essential workers. This will create the opportunity for provision of a range of housing types and tenures for less than the normal market price or rent. This type of housing can contribute significantly towards maintaining key services both locally and city-wide, for example by providing affordable accommodation for healthcare employees near to their place of work. There will be a variety of ways of achieving this.
- 9.49 As the Council requires a mixed use approach to development, it wishes to see housing, including affordable housing, well integrated with other uses at all major stages of development. In this context, proposals for sustainable social housing should avoid excessive concentration or create accommodation that is immediately identifiable as social housing. The Council is concerned that the development provides the full range of types of housing accommodation including family units and special needs housing, including wheelchair standard units. The house boat moorings provide limited residential accommodation and in addition their presence is valued for community safety and local interest. Subject to the overall requirements of policy KC4, the Council will negotiate the provision of affordable housing for each phase of the development with the developer(s) and will seek a significant proportion of family housing to reflect local needs and the potential for more balanced communities. Homes suitable for families are a Camden priority, built at appropriate densities with appropriate supporting amenities to ensure their social and economic viability and their contribution to long term sustainable development. All housing should be designed to minimise lifetime management and maintenance costs, and the design of family units should, wherever possible, minimise internal communal areas. Housing design should also incorporate the principles of lifetime homes, which would allow the dwelling to accommodate residents in all stages of life with minimal adjustments required to the property. This will contribute to the sustainability of the development.

KC5 - Transport

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area which improve public transport interchange and services and provide a safe and accessible environment for all users of existing and proposed public transport systems. Where appropriate developers will be expected to contribute to improvements to transport infrastructure.

- 9.50 In accordance with PPG13, the Council is keen to ensure any development scheme promotes a better transport network for everyone through greater choice and easier access to workplaces, homes and other facilities within the Opportunity Area and surrounding areas. The CTRL and the current London Underground improvements provide a good basis on which to build effective local transport provision.
- 9.51 There are high levels of public transport accessibility to the Opportunity Area. It is expected that the development will be fully integrated with this public transport network. To achieve expected high levels of use, access to public transport will also need to be safe. This will include considerations such as footpath widths relating to expected usage, making provision for disabled users, and using landscaping, lighting and signage positively to bring about a safer environment. A mix of uses incorporating active frontages will provide informal surveillance, creating lively streets and a feeling of safety.
- 9.52 Much of the existing public transport and road network at King's Cross is already operating at or near capacity and assessments of the impact of any new development upon these services and networks will be required. It is also required that the developers will take account of, and where appropriate contribute to, proposed improvements within the Area. These improvements will be relative to the scale of development and its impacts and could include:
- > the construction of a new railway station serving the site on the North London Line if deemed feasible and desirable;
 - > the extension of the Cross River Tram into the site, including intermediate CRT stops throughout the site and the appropriate support facilities;
 - > enhancement of the canal corridor as a facility for safe and attractive water-borne, cycle and pedestrian movement; and
 - > the safe and effective movement of people through the Opportunity Area connected as appropriate to the provision of local transport serving the wider area.
- 9.53 The Council is particularly keen to promote the establishment of good public transport links in the northern part of the site, which currently has only a limited number of bus services.

KC6 - Transport accessibility and safety

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area that provide high levels of accessibility, facilities and safety for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities.

- 9.54 A high quality network of ~~walkways and cycleways~~ walking and cycling routes³⁸⁷ within and through the Opportunity Area will be essential in achieving high levels of accessibility and permeability. It is essential that these are fully integrated and conveniently linked ~~into existing and future facilities in the~~ to the³⁸⁸ surrounding areas. The Council attaches particular importance to cross-site links and full public access to all parts of the developed site. As part of the proposed network, the Council will expect full consideration of options for:
- > a pedestrian/cycle bridge that facilitates east-west and north-south movement across the site;
 - > a dedicated pedestrian/cycle route from the northern part of the site to King's Cross and St. Pancras stations;
 - > the movement of people within the site that provides safe and convenient access to public transport services; and
 - > connections ~~into those~~ to the London Cycle Network ~~routes passing through and adjacent to Opportunity Area and the green corridors,~~ Metropolitan Walks, Green Chains and Corridors and other new or existing pedestrian and cycling routes in the surrounding areas.³⁸⁹

KC7 - Parking

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area where proposed car usage and car parking provision is at minimum levels necessary and where the provision of car-free housing is maximised.

- 9.55 In accordance with PPG3, PPG13 and the Urban White Paper, and by virtue of the exceptionally high levels of public transport accessibility enjoyed by the Opportunity Area, the Council expects to see car parking provision at very low levels. The Council expects that non-residential car parking provision will not exceed the maximum standards for the Central London Area. Based on current circumstances within the Borough, the Council will seek a significant proportion of car-free housing possibly up to about the 75% level. The priority is to minimise car usage, drawing on a range of measures to reduce traffic and pollution. The Council will discourage Park and Ride within the Opportunity Area, and discourage proposals which would increase the general highway capacity beyond that required to serve the development.
- 9.56 The Council will expect the site's developers to demonstrate how traffic generation will be minimised. There are many examples of existing successful mixed use developments with limited additional vehicular provision. A concern in the area is the existing reliance on high numbers of taxis with high emission levels. The Council will encourage the adoption of traffic-reducing measures such as higher occupancy vehicle systems. The Council recognises the importance that taxis play in the distribution of passengers and wish to see taxi facilities improved.
- 9.57 The Council expects to see measures such as car free residential schemes, shared community transport facilities like 'city car clubs' and 'city bike schemes' and detailed green travel plans extensively adopted. Vehicles powered by alternative fuels will also require special facilities. The Council will wish to work with the site developers to identify and implement the options considered appropriate for the Opportunity Area and ensure the impact of the approach used will not adversely affect car parking provision or traffic in adjacent areas, for example, due to rat-running.

KC8 - Design

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals in the King's Cross Opportunity Area with a very high standard of design that capitalises on the remaining high quality architectural and engineering works and:

- a) protects the strategic views across the Opportunity Area to St. Paul's Cathedral and, where appropriate, views to and from important local landmarks;
- b) achieves an attractive, safe, legible and stimulating environment for resident, worker and visitor alike;
- c) achieves a high degree of physical integration with the surrounding area; and
- d) promotes sustainable design principles and also maximise opportunities for improved energy efficiency to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

- 9.58 Consistent with government guidance, good design and a high quality environment are among the outcomes sought from the development of the Opportunity Area. Creating safe, attractive places where people want to be enhances the long-term sustainability of communities.
- 9.59 Over and above encouraging bold and innovative design, particular emphasis will be placed on protecting strategic views as well as enhancing the special characteristics of the Area. It is expected that there will be a range of densities and groupings of buildings on the site. Building heights at the perimeter should aim to complement those of buildings in the surrounding

areas. Spaces around and between buildings, including landscaping, should be of the highest quality so as to provide an appropriate setting for buildings and other features. The integration of the site with the surrounding area must be achieved through the physical design of buildings as well as by creating linkages enhanced by open space and landscaping.

- 9.60 Strategic views are protected by policies in the wider UDP and are under review in the ~~draft~~³⁹⁰ London Plan. King's Cross Station, St Pancras Station, German Gym, the Granary and the Midlands Goods Shed are amongst the many important local landmarks and other buildings³⁹¹ identified in Conservation Areas Statements for King's Cross/St Pancras and the Regent's Canal and will influence and help shape a much wider development.
- 9.61 There is an opportunity to create an outstanding development in the King's Cross Opportunity Area based on the principles of sustainability. Particular facilities such as waste management and recycling provision may have the capacity to serve a wider area. Developments should incorporate the following sustainable design principles to:
- > minimise materials, energy and water use in building construction and operation;
 - > use materials that are not scarce and are obtained without damaging important habitats, ecosystems or landscapes;
 - > recycle materials;
 - > minimise air and water pollution;
 - > minimise waste creation and provide effective waste management;
 - > minimise ambient noise;
 - > design and construct buildings to be flexible, adaptable and maintainable with minimal use of resources and environmental impact;
 - > protect, create and enhance habitats and overall biodiversity;
 - > minimise the risk of flooding;
 - > conserve water; and
 - > minimise surface water run-off through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

KC9 - Design of transport services and features

The Council will promote a unified approach to the design, appearance and location of the various surface and sub-surface transport services and features, in order to achieve a townscape solution of the highest urban quality.

- 9.62 The open precinct between and in front of King's Cross and St. Pancras stations presents a particular urban design challenge. It is the context for numerous transport activities and flows, where physical structures and surface movements need to be reconciled with high architectural quality.
- 9.63 The Council's aim is to achieve a highly attractive public space, a fit setting for the Grade I listed stations, and legible access to efficiently managed underground, bus and taxi services.

KC10 - Open space

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area that include well managed and maintained, high quality open spaces that:

- a) provide recreation areas accessible to where people live and work;
- b) incorporate a network of linkages for pedestrian and cycle ways through the site;
- c) protect and enhance Camley Street Natural Park and the Regent's Canal; and
- d) complement and separate groups of buildings and other features.

- 9.64 Well designed open space is essential in creating an attractive place for people to live and work. It will also assist in achieving physical integration of buildings within the site and also within the surrounding areas. Open space may take many forms. For example, it may be paved areas with seating, open grassed areas, playgrounds or accessible natural green space providing wildlife habitats. Artwork can enhance people's enjoyment of these spaces.
- 9.65 A framework for open space within the Opportunity Area is already provided with the Camley Street Natural Park and the Regent's Canal. New open spaces should build on the positive values of Camley Street Natural Park and the Canal, and relate these well to the new and existing buildings and structures as part of the masterplanning process. The network of walkways and cycleways that needs to be developed as an integral part of this development will also contribute to open space provision. It should also form a part of the Borough's wider metropolitan walkway. An open space strategy and hierarchy will be expected to inform any Master Plan for the Opportunity Area.

KC11 - Heritage

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area that:

- a) preserve listed buildings or structures and their setting;
- b) preserve or enhance buildings, structures and other features of character and historic interest, and their setting, within the Conservation Areas; and
- c) preserve remains of significant archeological importance and their settings.

- 9.66 The Opportunity Area has a diverse and unique character with a distinct sense of place. It is of outstanding national architectural, historical and industrial archeological importance. Because the Opportunity Area contains one of the more important and complete Industrial Archaeology sites in the country, this is an area of archeological potential. The St. Pancras Archeological Priority Area is also partly located within the Opportunity Area. The Council will require development to meet the requirements set out in policy B8A and B8B on archaeology and of PPG16.
- 9.67 The King's Cross/St. Pancras and the Regent's Canal Conservation Areas include a number of Grade I and II Listed Buildings. King's Cross and St. Pancras are listed Grade I and are the finest complex of railway stations in the world. The Council will seek to secure a successful civic setting for the stations, which would include the removal of the temporary concourse facility to the front of King's Cross station and the provision of a new concourse. This should be part of a co-ordinated design strategy for the area between the two stations.
- 9.68 Heritage buildings and features are a positive asset. Re-using heritage buildings and bringing disused properties into use is an integral part of the sustainable regeneration of the area. Furthermore, redevelopment may provide the opportunity to salvage and re-use historic items of streetscape and street furniture on the site. Developers will have to demonstrate the balance between the protection of heritage buildings against other social and economic considerations to fulfil wider policy objectives and, as such, to justify any proposals for the removal of heritage buildings and other features in the context of PPG15.
- 9.69 The Regent's Canal is of strategic importance and is a key feature of the King's Cross Opportunity Area. Specific policies relating to Regent's Canal are contained in section 10. It is important that the redevelopment of the area captures the potential that the canal offers. In particular the Council will seek development that achieves a successful balance of:
- > the protection of the historic canal environment;
 - > the enhancement of the canal's biodiversity;

- > access to and along the canal for pedestrians;
- > the use of the canal for recreation; and
- > the use of the canal for transportation, especially during the construction of development.

KC12 - Integration, regeneration and community development

The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area, which seek to ensure that:

- a) the benefits of and impacts from the development take account of the needs of local communities, employees and other visitors;
- b) local communities and businesses in the surrounding area are able to engage constructively in the development process and the design and content of the scheme; and
- c) effective links with wider regeneration initiatives in surrounding areas are established.

- 9.70 The development of the Opportunity Area will bring new economic opportunities and inward investment as well as impacts on local areas in both Camden and Islington. The government, the Council, and others have identified parts of these areas as being in need of new investment and regeneration, as the number of regeneration strategies and initiatives referred to in 9.8 above indicates.
- 9.71 The development will also have a range of impacts on local services and give rise to substantial employment opportunities. The Council is keen to ensure that both the impacts of development and the employment and other opportunities created take account of the requirements of existing communities and that the development of the Opportunity Area is integrated with the aims and objectives of local regeneration programmes and initiatives.
- 9.72 The types of benefits that will be sought from the developers will be related to the needs and demands generated by the development scheme and, as required by Circular 1/97, the viability of providing them. Community involvement is desirable at the earliest possible opportunity. The necessary resources (including independent technical aid and local capacity building) and structure need to be in place to ensure a successful working partnership can be achieved. In addition to affordable housing, some of the benefits sought could include:
- > funding for traffic and environmental management, including management of construction traffic, through the King's Cross Opportunity Area as well as other areas in the Borough affected by the development;
 - > funding for community safety initiatives/projects necessary as a result of the development;
 - > funding for access to and improvements to public transport in and around the Opportunity Area such as:
 - > the construction of a new railway station serving the site on the North London Line;
 - > improvements to bus services and interchange infrastructure;
 - > the extension of the Cross River Tram into the site, including intermediate CRT stops throughout the site and the appropriate support facilities;
 - > funding for a range of community and accessible transport alternatives such as shuttle buses, and 'city car' clubs and 'city bike' schemes;
 - > funding for art in public places;
 - > funding for a high quality network of walkways and cycleways within and through the Opportunity Area;
 - > provision of a primary health care centre;
 - > provision of cultural facilities;
 - > implementation of a Code of Construction Practice;
 - > improvement works to roads which bound the Opportunity Area;

- > environmental improvements including works to improve the recreational, amenity and ecological value of Regent's Canal and the Camley Street Natural Park and to create new habitats where appropriate;
- > open space, including formal and informal open space, and play space;
- > provision of Street Cleaning Depots;
- > support for jobs and training services particularly for local people and a local business support strategy;
- > support for school places and educational facilities;
- > provision of community and leisure facilities particularly facilities for young people;
- > support for partnership agreements to deliver any of the above and associated social, educational and health projects, including resources to facilitate sustainable communities;

9.73 The benefits sought will be assessed at the appropriate time in relation to the development proposals put forward.