

Chapter 4

Sitewide spatial principles

Mural painting by David Samuel, Park Royal

Photo © Zute Lightfoot

Six guiding principles for Old Oak

Six site-wide spatial principles define the key design considerations giving structure and flexibility to the Old Oak masterplan. Each spatial principle provides guidance for how new and existing elements can complement and enhance each other to form something richer.

The Old Oak Mile

The Common Cut

The Old Oak Line

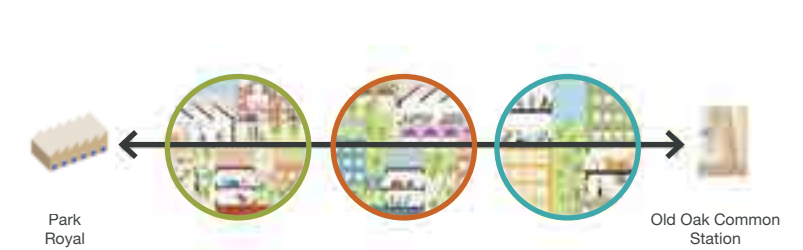
Landscape corridors

Connecting parks and green spaces

One place, two neighbourhoods



Six guiding principles for Old Oak



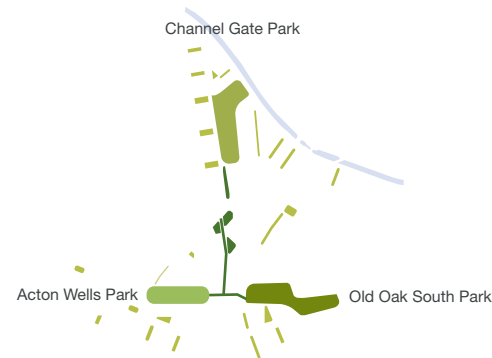
1 The Old Oak Mile

A coherent yet diverse street, stringing together a series of distinct characters.



2 The Common Cut

A green street at the front door of the new station, using planting and public realm to connect the natural assets of the Canal and the Scrubs.



3 The Old Oak Line

Three mixed-use clusters along a green spine of parks, connected by a new place-defining bridge.



4 Landscape corridors

A network of biodiverse corridors, revitalising existing natural assets to provide green amenity and ecological habitats.

5 Connecting parks and green spaces

Three inclusive and welcoming new parks supporting Old Oak and the wider communities.

6 One place, two neighbourhoods

A bustling canalside neighbourhood and a major urban centre fit for London's new economy.

Chapter 4.1

The Old Oak Mile

- 1a Making a sequence of characterful places
- 1b Adopting a human scale
- 1c Creating a tree-lined street with pockets of green
- 1d Connecting parks and landscape corridors
- 1e Defining the street edge
- 1f Intensifying at two urban centres
- 1g Integrating as part of a connected network
- 1h Becoming a spine for active travel
- 1i Easy to cross

A coherent yet diverse street

The Old Oak Mile will transform the existing north-south route formed by Victoria Road and Old Oak Lane into a varied yet cohesive central spine for Old Oak. It will build on London's tradition of mixed, everyday streets for all to use, with heterogeneous qualities in keeping with the city's best streets.

The Mile will be an inclusive, green street supporting active travel and varied uses. It will provide the context for a diversity of people, places, and experiences, supporting businesses, amenities and social interactions.



The Mile threads a string of seven characters along its length from Harlesden to North Acton



These different characters come together to form a coherent, yet diverse street



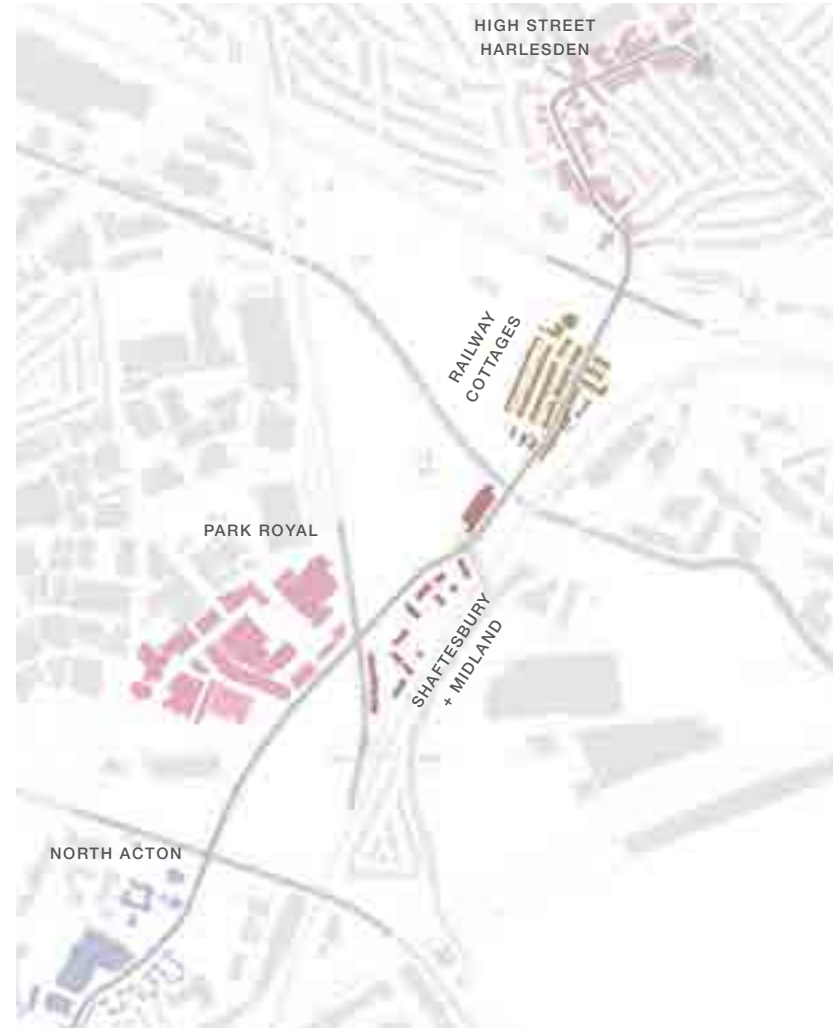
Spatial Principle

Connecting the Mile

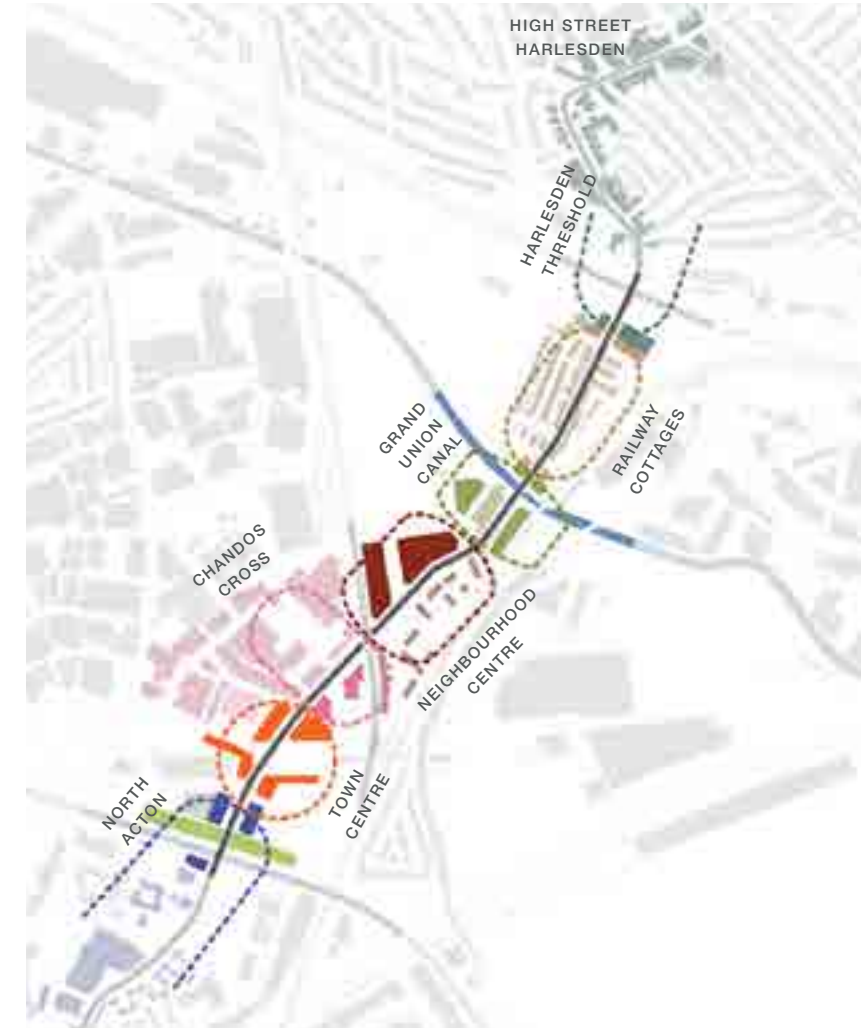
The Old Oak Mile will connect a series of distinct places, key destinations and public spaces, from North Acton to Harlesden, through Old Oak. Its design should amplify and complement each area's identity, to form a street with varied characters along its length, which strengthens connections with surrounding neighbourhoods.

Victoria Road and Old Oak Lane will be transformed to create the Old Oak Mile by:

- 1a. Making a sequence of characterful spaces
- 1b. Adopting a human scale
- 1c. Creating a tree-lined street with pockets of green
- 1d. Connecting parks and landscape corridors
- 1e. Defining the street edge
- 1f. Intensifying at two urban centres
- 1g. Integrating as part of a connected network
- 1h. Becoming a spine for active travel
- 1i. Easy to cross



Existing condition – a road passing through a series of separate areas



The Old Oak Mile as a coherent street in the Masterplan Framework

1a Making a sequence of characterful places

A sequence of distinct areas will derive their character from both existing qualities and new interventions. The Mile will be a legible street that differs along its length, while having an identity as a whole. This should be achieved by:

- each new development considering and complementing the existing character, whether that is buildings, landscape or infrastructure. This means being sensitive to heritage but also being bolder at key moments to enhance urban legibility.
- responding to the spatial and infrastructural transition points between different places and integrating varying existing conditions along the length of the Mile, through the design of architecture and landscape.
- adopting a consistent design approach to frontages at the base of buildings and the way they interact with the public realm to create a coherent street.



The Old Oak Mile as a spine that combines a sequence of places formed between existing context and proposed development



Generous pavements with zones for greening
New Kent Road, Elephant Park
Photo © John Sturrock/Gillespies



Non-continuous or set back frontages
Edgware road, Marylebone

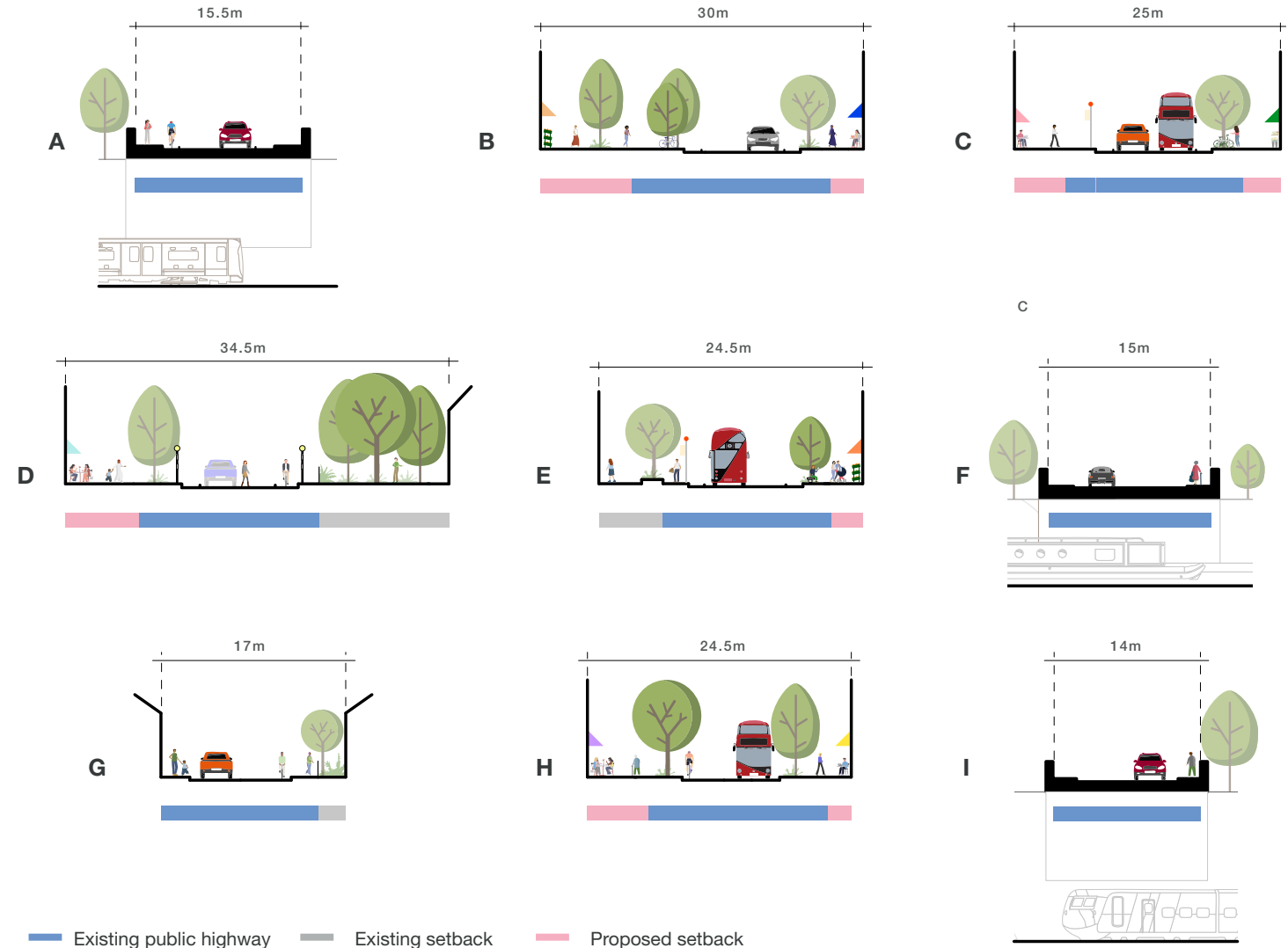


A co-ordinated approach to identity and character
Cricklewood High Street, Ealing
Photo © Thomas Ball

1b Adopting a human scale

The Mile will combine high-density development with a human-scale street enclosure while adapting to a variety of found conditions. To make a meaningful public space, with a comfortable microclimate, it should:

- prioritise footways within the existing public highway, especially where street width is constrained (A,G,H) - also see Principle 6a.
- accommodate 'spill out' space from active frontages without compromising the effective width of footways.
- set back building edges to create moments of generosity at thresholds into North Acton and Harlesden (B,I) or to support the parade of shops in the Neighbourhood Centre (E,F).
- emphasise the quality of materials and architectural detail of ground and first floor street frontages to create a coordinated datum.



1c Creating a tree-lined street with pockets of green

The Mile will have a distinctive, green character, creating a walkable, pleasant, biodiverse route. It should:

- be lined by trees, where possible, designed to form part of the street's legibility, prioritising retention of existing mature trees.
- introduce sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and generous planting zones.

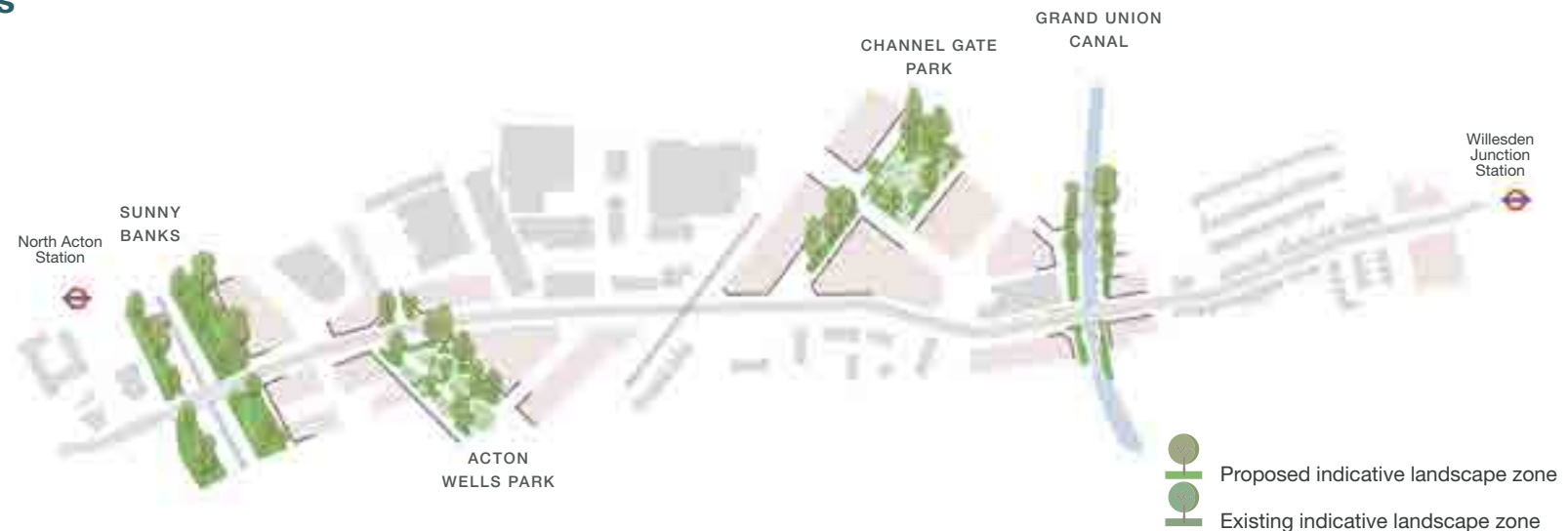
- incorporate at least three pockets of green space to create resting points and spaces to dwell.



1d Connecting parks and landscape corridors

The Mile should connect Old Oak's existing landscape corridors and proposed parks, and support legibility of the green infrastructure, through:

- visibility and legibility from the Mile to Acton Wells Park and Channel Gate Park, two new parks which intersect the Mile and add to the green character of the street.
- providing legible access points to Sunny Banks and the Grand Union Canal.



1e Defining the street edge

New development on the Mile should have a strong and well-defined street edge that complements existing ones to create a continuous and legible frontage by:

- developing street front plots with buildings that are carefully designed to address the street.
- designing the street front as a legible experience, for example with architectural emphasis of key corners.



1f Intensifying at two urban centres

The Mile will intensify to form two distinct urban centres along its length, and be a key connecting route between the two. To achieve this it should:

- concentrate housing and key amenities within an increased scale of development at the Neighbourhood Centre and the Town Centre.
- represent these urban centres through the street front parades.
- maintain clear separation distances between tall buildings with

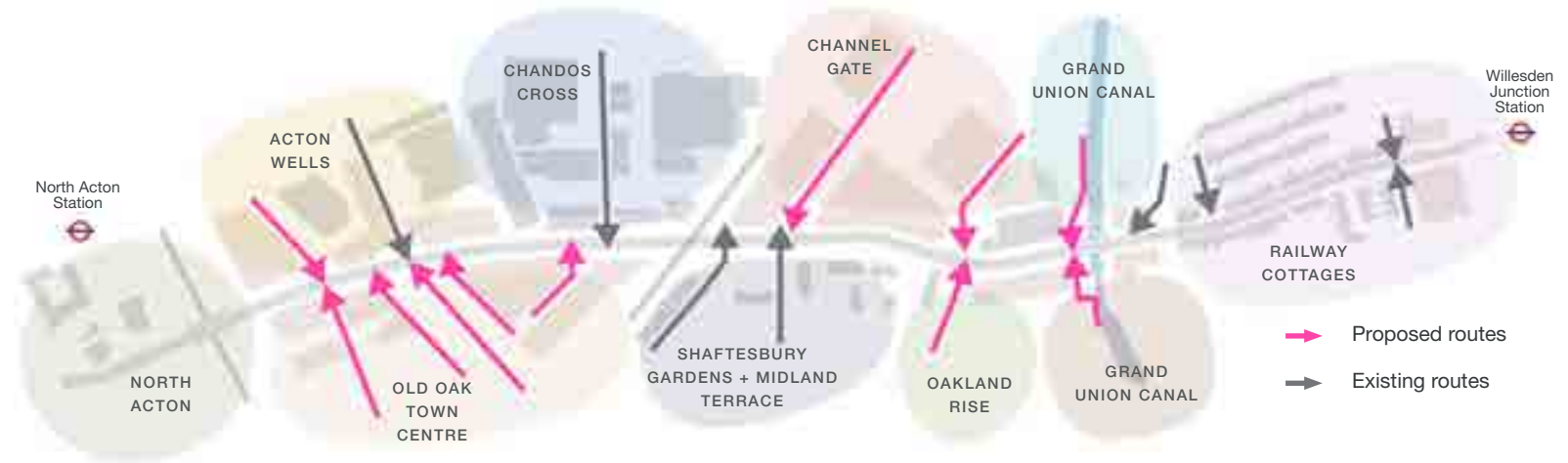
consistently lower shoulder heights coordinated across building plots, so as not to be overbearing on the street.



1g Integrating as part of a connected network

The Mile will be well connected into Harlesden, Park Royal and North Acton to create easy access from existing areas to support footfall and a safe street environment. To achieve this, it should:

- connect new streets and routes into the Mile from new developments.
- improve junctions with existing streets through measures such as tighter road geometries and introducing pedestrian crossings.



1h Becoming a spine for active travel

The Mile will support inclusive, accessible active travel along its length and will integrate with the wider active travel network. This should be achieved by:

- segregated cycle lanes, frequent pedestrian crossings aligned with intersecting routes, and wider pavements to prioritise pedestrians.
- new bus stops at convenient locations integrated with the street design.
- support accessibility and footfall to and between the two centres.



1i Easy to cross

The space defined between the two sides of the street should function as one enclosure with frequent opportunities to cross, especially in areas with an intensity of retail frontages. This should be achieved by:

- introducing frequent breaks along the length of the planting zones.
- using these breaks to create an 'activity zone' to provide opportunities for seating, cycle parking and other informal uses of the public realm.
- designing buildings with setback zones that provide 'spill out' space for retail as an integral part of the street enclosure.
- introducing as many crossing opportunities as possible to maximise continuity between both sides of the street.
- designing cycle lanes to balance the need to protect cyclists and not create additional infrastructure barriers for pedestrians crossing the street.



The Old Oak Mile will be a varied yet cohesive central spine.

The western footway is more generous as it approaches North Acton to prioritise the route to the Underground station.

New buildings step back to create the impression that the park crosses over road and signal arrival at the Town Centre.

Channel Gate Park meets Victoria Road to form a generous entrance

Buildings are set back to enable landscape improvements to both sides of the street

The eastern footway is more generous as it approaches Harlesden to prioritise the route to Willesden Junction Station.

New buildings step down to transition in character towards Old Oak Lane Conservation Area.

New buildings are set back to preserve a line of existing mature street trees.

Footprints of new buildings are shaped to transform Atlas Junction an arrival space.

A new connection to Chandos Road and Park Royal links into Acton Wells Park.

Public realm improvements integrating with existing green spaces at Cerebos Gardens and Midland Terrace playground.

Diagram showing illustrative proposals for The Mile



Chapter 4.2

The Common Cut

- 2a **Creating an active travel route**
- 2b **Optimising the available frontage**
- 2c **Making a continuous landscape**
- 2d **Celebrating the station front door**

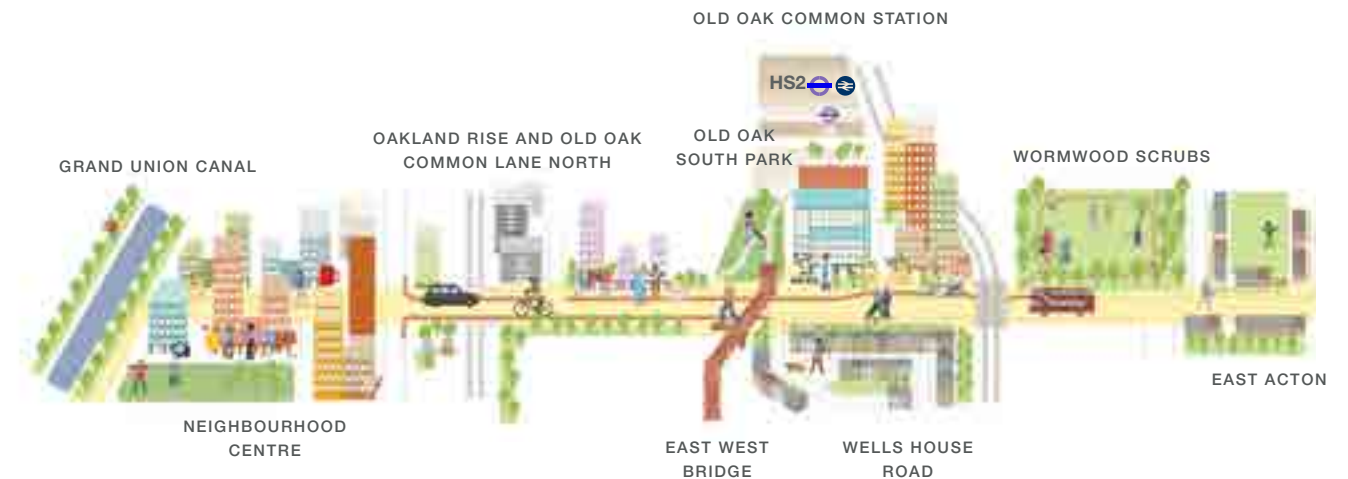
A green street from the Canal to the Scrubs

The Common Cut will transform the existing Old Oak Common Lane, to make a green, sunny, landscaped, safe route that prioritises active travel and public transport.

This route will connect the Neighbourhood Centre and Grand Union Canal with Wormwood Scrubs through North Common Lane, marking the intersection with Old Oak South Park as the front door to the new station and creating a focal point along its length.



The Cut will be animated by two key moments of activity, forming a better connection with Wormwood Scrubs, the Canal and the new Neighbourhood Centre



Old Oak Common Lane will be transformed into a green active travel route with cycling, wheeling, walking and public transport at its heart



Spatial Principle

Defining the Cut

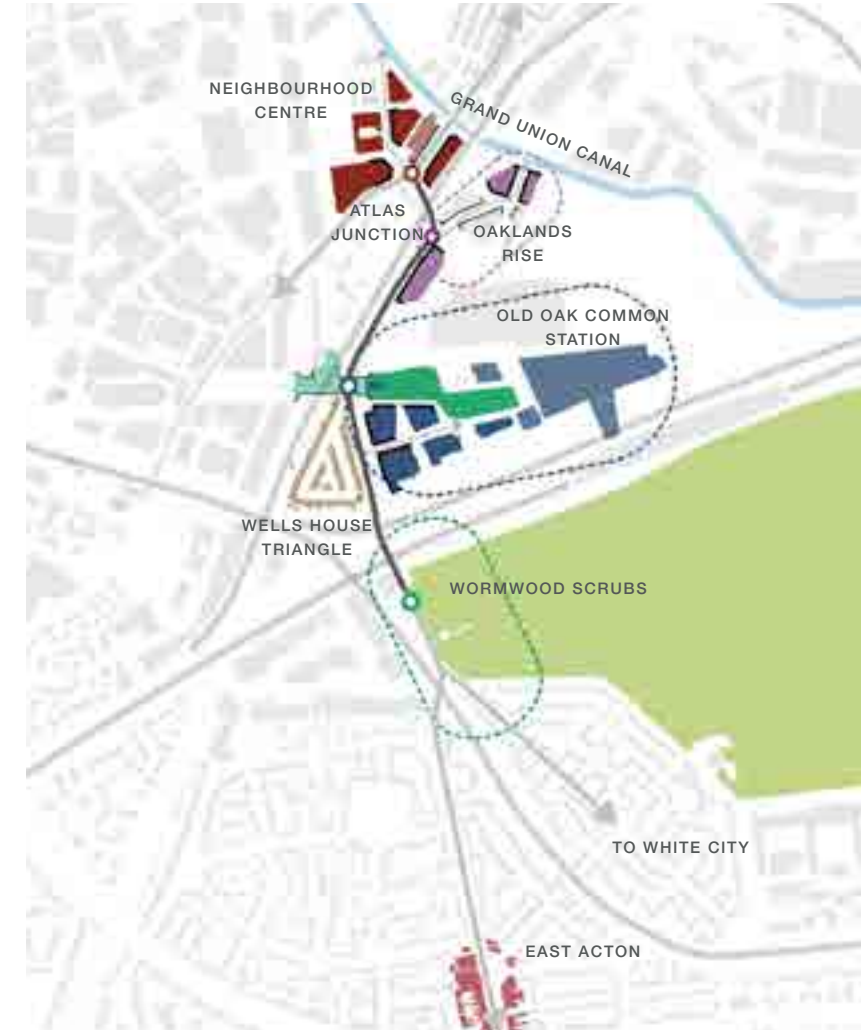
Old Oak Common Lane will be a key active travel route for Old Oak. Spanning from Atlas Junction where it meets the Mile at the heart of the Neighbourhood Centre, through to Wormwood Scrubs and East Acton via a railway underpass, it will connect existing and new communities either side of the railway viaduct.

The existing road's transformation into the Common Cut – a safe, inclusive and attractive active travel route – will be guided by the following:

- 2a. Creating an active travel route
- 2b. Optimising the available frontage
- 2c. Making a continuous landscape
- 2d. Celebrating the station front door



Existing condition – a vehicle-dominated road with few frontages






The Common Cut connecting communities in the Masterplan Framework

2a Creating an active travel route

The Cut will be a pedestrian- and cycle-friendly active travel route. It should support better local connectivity within the Framework area, with surrounding neighbourhoods, and further afield, through:

- introducing new dedicated cycle lanes, pedestrian crossings, generous landscaped pavements and on-street bus stops.
- supporting access to the bus and rail interchange at Old Oak Common Station, providing access to the East-West Bridge and the wider transport network as far afield as Birmingham.
- reinforcing the connection to Wormwood Scrubs and local areas south of the railway viaduct.

-  Old Oak Common Station
-  Proposed cycle lanes
-  Pedestrian crossings

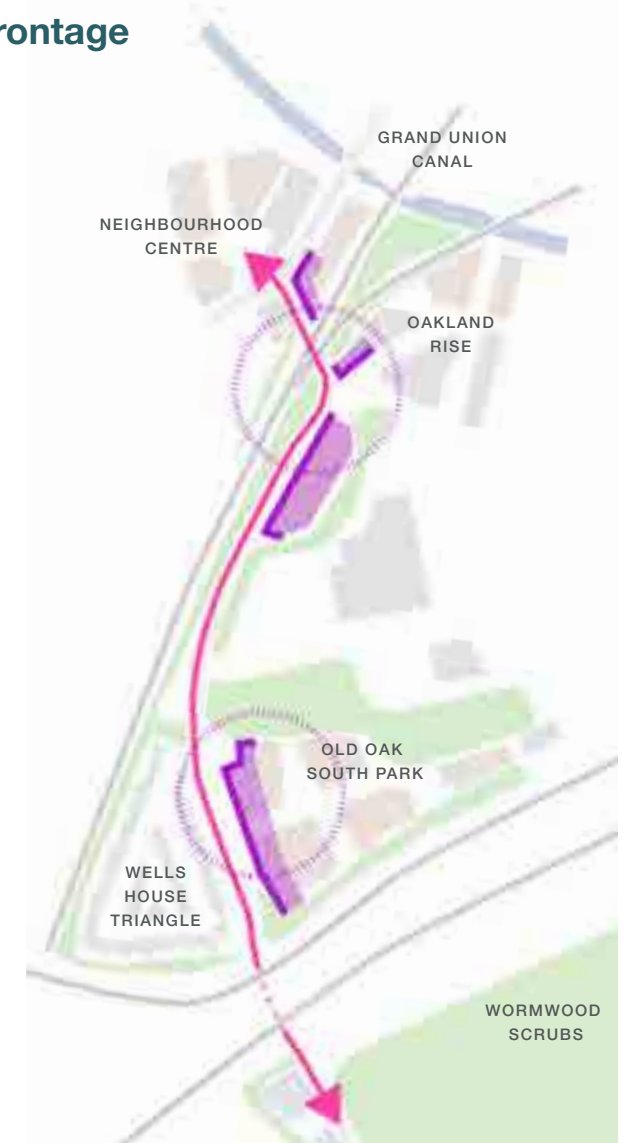


2b Optimising the available frontage

The Cut should leverage existing characteristics of single-sided, intermittent street frontage, to make a safe and attractive route, by:

- making the most of the aspect, daylight and sunlight afforded by the intermittent development, to support positive landscape and street character.
- maximising opportunities to intensify active frontages to create a critical mass in specific locations.




-  Available frontage



2c Making a continuous landscape

The Cut will be transformed by landscape design to make an especially verdant street, which also reinforces pedestrian and cycle links. It should:

- be experienced as a landscaped green route.
- create biodiverse habitats and contribute to sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
- extend the experience of greenery from Old Oak South Park, Wormwood Scrubs and the Grand Union Canal.

-  Indicative landscape zone - Proposed
-  Indicative landscape zone - Existing
-  Indicative landscaped route - Proposed



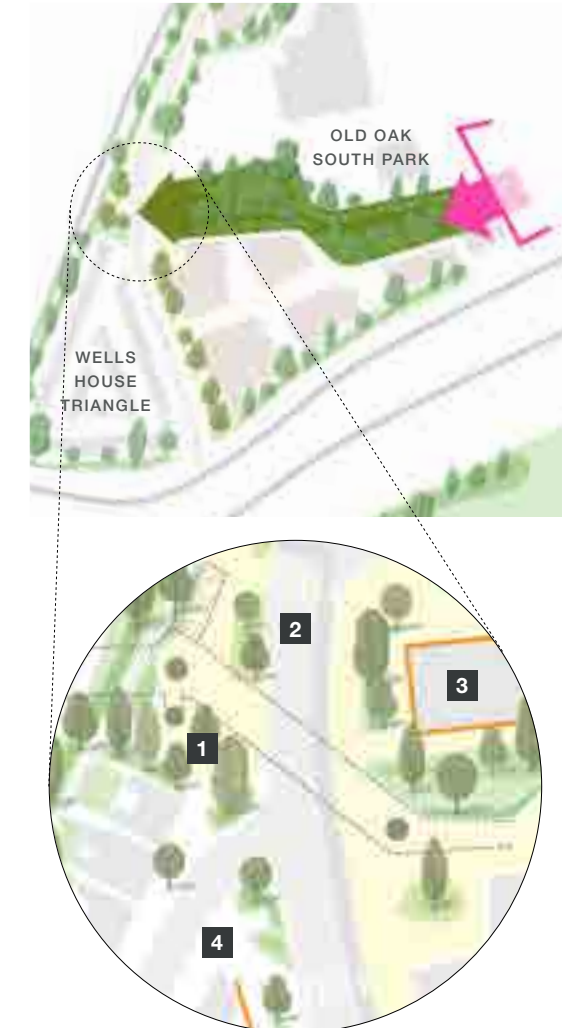
2d Celebrating the station front door

The Cut will be the point of access to Old Oak South Park, in front of Old Oak Common Station. It should:

- strengthen connections to Old Oak Common Station through a coordinated design with Old Oak South Park, the Town Centre Station Hub, and the East-West Bridge.
- incorporate public art to humanise structural and infrastructural elements.
- incorporate a pocket park opposite the station front door which may have a potential small retail and community use to help activate the space.

— — Indicative bridge design

- 1** Pocket park space
- 2** Pedestrian crossing
- 3** Artwork installation on HS2 headhouse
- 4** Artwork on retaining wall



The Common Cut should have a new pocket park at the junction of Wells House Road and Old Oak Common Lane, to act as a green buffer to the existing terraces and a welcoming public space. Generous landscaping should provide existing residents with visual privacy and separation from movement generated by Old Oak Common Station and the new East-West Bridge.

The pocket park should be a threshold space between the scale of the existing residential street, and Old Oak South Park, with carefully considered integrated lighting, planting, seating, and curated public art promoting a civic yet intimate space. A potential small retail and community use could help activate the space and provide additional overlooking and a sense of safety.



Indicative view of the pocket park. Landscape design should balance public use with the privacy of the existing terraced houses.



School La Pau Square, Barcelona
Photo © Del Rio Bani



East Street Exchange, Southwark
© We Made That, Photo © Jakob Priestersbach

The Common Cut will transform the existing road into a green, sunny and landscaped safe route that prioritises active travel.



Diagram showing illustrative proposals for The Cut



The Cut integrates existing Oakland Rise.

Active frontages are intensified to form a confident terminus to the Cut where it meets the Mile with clear connections to the canal.

The railway embankment is intensified as a green and biodiverse corridor.

Movement along the Cut is supported by comprehensive active travel improvements and generous public realm.

The Cut forms the front door to Old Oak Common Station. A new pocket park reinforces the welcoming arrival while providing a buffer to existing dwellings.

New buildings are set back for footways, planting and utilities while sensitively managing massing to Wells House Road.

Opportunity for street improvements to be extended to create further activity at the entrance to Wormwood Scrubs.

Chapter 4.3

The Old Oak Line

- 3a A new bridge to unlock the Line
- 3b Connecting three clusters
- 3c A sequence of parks
- 3d Connected into a green network
- 3e Framed by active uses
- 3f At the heart of a walking and cycling network
- 3g A safe and inclusive bridge
- 3h A place-defining bridge

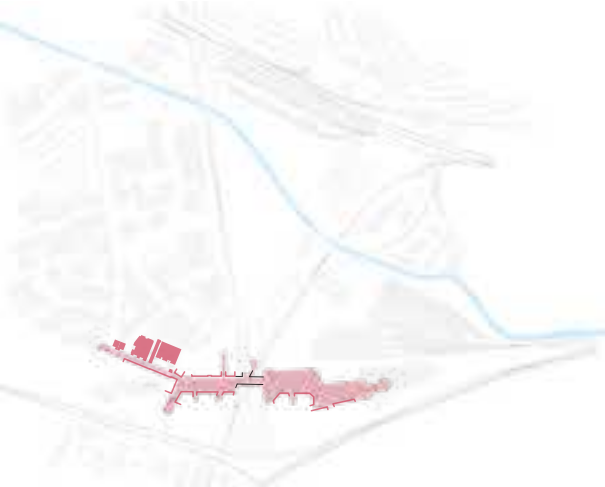
One line, three places

The Old Oak Line will be a safe, animated and green route at the heart of the new Town Centre, with three distinct workspace-led clusters along its length. Commercial uses will be complemented by residential development, establishing a place for working and living.

The Old Oak Line defines a new high-quality east-west route connecting Old Oak Common Station with the new development, Park Royal and North Acton, a linchpin for improved connectivity within the local area.



The Old Oak Line will combine three mixed-use clusters and connect between Old Oak Common Station and Park Royal



Spatial Principle



The Old Oak Line will combine mixed-use development, new landscape and the East-West Bridge to connect with the new Old Oak Common Station

Creating the Old Oak Line

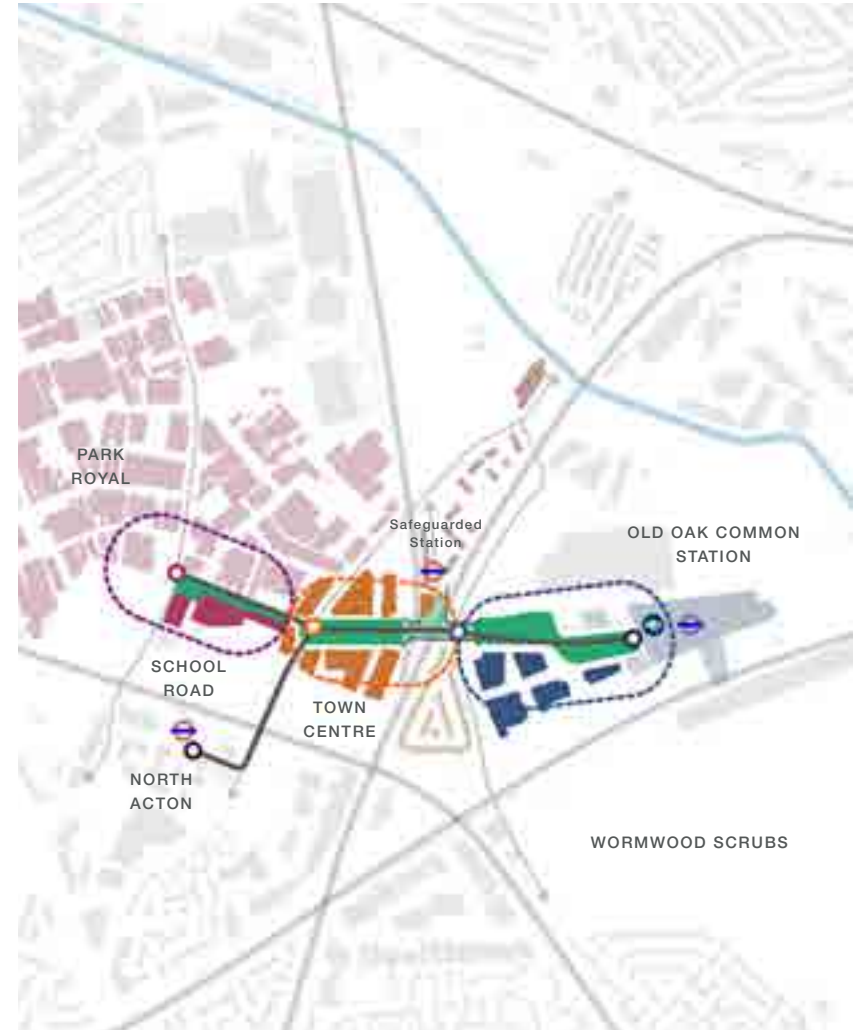
By connecting previously isolated sites across Old Oak, the Old Oak Line will connect three new mixed-use clusters along a new east-west landscaped route. While each will have a distinct character, together the three clusters will form the heart of the new Old Oak Town Centre.

Old Oak currently lacks east-west permeability, as the site is criss-crossed by existing railway lines which separate the new station from Acton Wells, North Acton and Park Royal. The Old Oak Line will be defined by the following principles:

- 3a. A new bridge to unlock the Line
- 3b. Connecting three clusters
- 3c. A sequence of parks
- 3d. Connected into a green network
- 3e. Framed by active uses
- 3f. At the heart of a walking and cycling network
- 3g. A place-defining bridge
- 3h. A safe and inclusive bridge



Existing condition – travelling east-west is a circuitous and indirect experience



The Old Oak Line unlocks east-west connectivity in the Masterplan Framework

3a A new bridge to unlock the Line

The new east-west link formed by the Old Oak Line will be unlocked by a new pedestrian and cycle bridge. The new bridge should:

- span the railways and Old Oak Common Lane, connecting the new station to North Acton and Park Royal.
- give access to the safeguarded Overground station at Midland Gate.

- be supported by strategically located new pedestrian crossings on Old Oak Common Lane, Victoria Road and Chase Road.

— East-West Bridge
 ||||| Pedestrian crossing

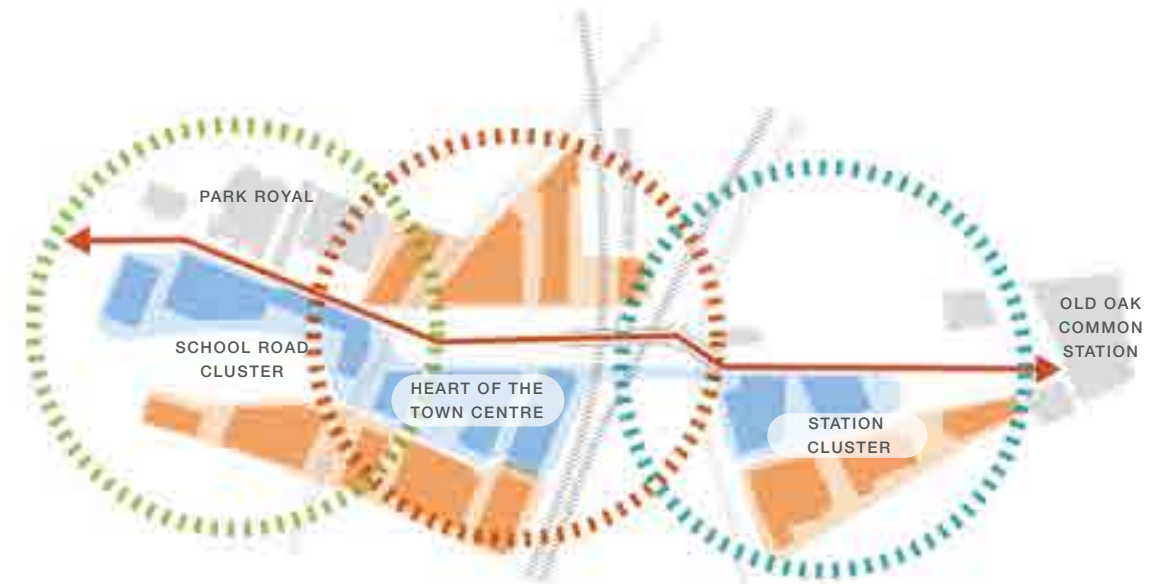


3b Connecting three clusters

The Old Oak Line will connect three mixed-use clusters of different characters, related to their different contexts. The clusters should:

- complement each other with a range of workspace and residential typologies.
- incorporate retail, cultural uses and social infrastructure where appropriate.
- together form a new spine of workspace for West London.

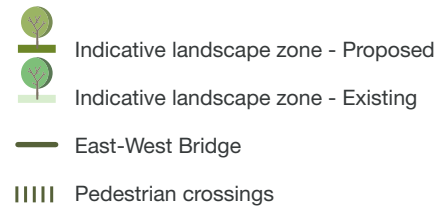
— Primarily Commercial
 — Primarily Residential



3c A sequence of parks

The Old Oak Line will be a journey through a sequence of parks with vibrant landscape. It should:

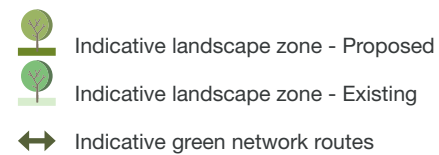
- connect Old Oak South Park through a new park in Acton Wells, all the way to the existing green space of Acton Cemetery, via new tree planting and a pocket park on School Road.
- be punctuated with moments of greenery on the East-West Bridge.



3d Connected into a green network

The landscape of the Old Oak Line will connect into a green network to provide greater access to nature, and form a network of new and existing biodiverse habitats. It should:

- be supported with a series of pocket parks which define local addresses and help transition between residential and commercial uses.
- connect with the ecologically-diverse habitats of the Sunny Banks along the railway.



3e Framed by active uses

The Old Oak Line will be framed and activated by a range of ground floor uses to support Town Centre amenity, provide activation and enhance safety. It should:

- support retail ground floors, workspace building lobbies, social infrastructure and cultural uses.
- maximise opportunities for active frontage by locating servicing and secondary access to buildings away from the east-west route.

- promote a wide range of retail uses that help animate the route during daytime and night-time to enhance the sense of safety and activity.

Active frontage

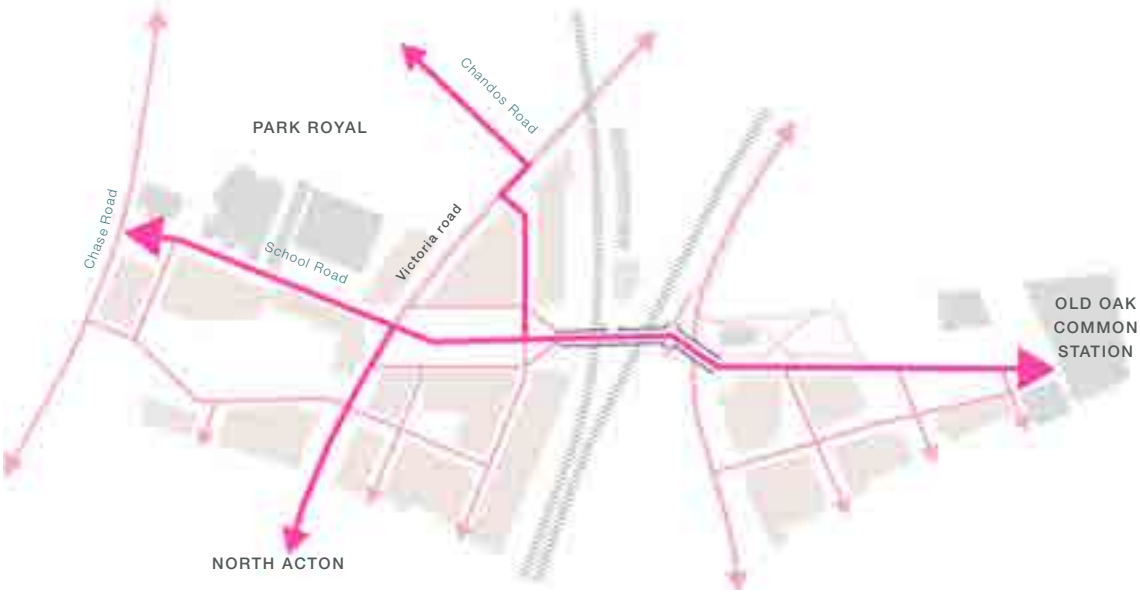


3f At the heart of a walking and cycling network

The Old Oak Line will connect to the surrounding network of existing and new walking and cycle routes, adding to the permeability of the new neighbourhood and enhancing the sense of safety. It should:

- intersect with a new route towards Park Royal, through Chandos Road.
- intersect with Victoria Road (the Mile) to connect to North Acton.

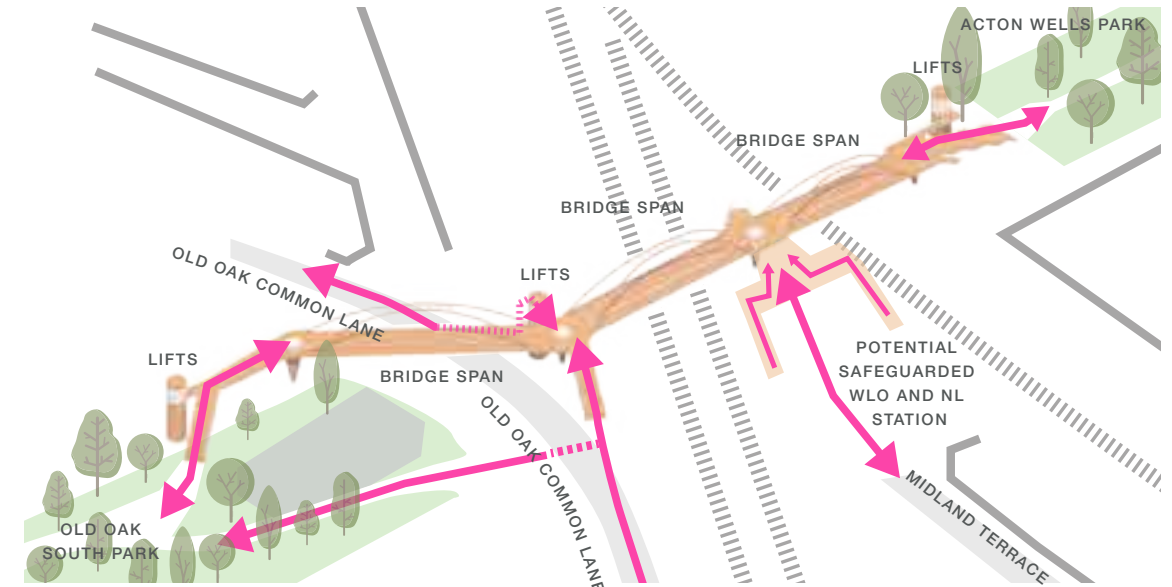
- Indicative tertiary routes
- Indicative primary/secondary routes



3g A safe and inclusive bridge

The East-West Bridge design will prioritise safety to create an inclusive and welcoming environment, supporting a safe and pleasant route along its length. The bridge should:

- connect with different places in the local area, by providing multiple landings and points of entry and exit. These points include the Old Oak South Park, Old Oak Common Lane, the safeguarded West London Orbital station, and Acton Wells Park.
- be subdivided by incorporating landscaped, podiums between the main bridge spans. These podiums will provide resting spaces, soften the bridge through greenery and enhance the quality of public realm and overall sense of safety.
- integrate well-designed lighting on all publicly accessible areas of the bridge to enhance the sense of safety after dark.
- provide adequate protection from falling including appropriately scaled parapets and anti-climb balustrades. Where solid barriers are required above railway, the bridge design will explore solutions to avoid the feeling of being unduly enclosed. Visibility and openness will be maximised outside of the live railway zones to maintain a sense of transparency, visual permeability, natural surveillance and safety.
- mitigate against high wind speeds, working with balustrade solutions where wind assessment deems relevant.
- provide adequate number of lifts to accompany stair access in order to provide for universal access.



The East-West Bridge will have a series of entry and exit points along its length (Indicative design illustrated)



Well designed and integrated lighting enhances the sense of safety

Esperance bridge, King's Cross

Photo © Simon Kennedy



Integrated planting creating a welcoming route

The High Line Moynihan Connector bridge, New York

Photo © Lucas Blair Simpson © SOM

3h A place-defining bridge

The East-West Bridge is a key piece of infrastructure that will support the viability of the Town Centre by creating a new, direct, legible and high quality east-west route that will add to the character and identity of Old Oak. The bridge should:

- provide a pleasant public realm environment, with high quality, durable and low-maintenance materials and detailing, for longevity.
- provide a spacious route with a generous width, in keeping with its significance. This is also to provide space for landscape and seating and adequate space for the expected pedestrian and cycle flows.

- have an iconic design that is rooted in the area’s character. This is to mark the east-west route and enhance its legibility whilst also contributing to the identity of the place.
- employ lightweight, elegant structural design to minimise its visual impact on the existing surroundings.
- be constructed of robust and low maintenance structural elements such as weathering steel. This is to reduce maintenance costs and minimise the need for access to the underside of the bridge.
- integrate sustainable design principles with focus on material efficiency and low embodied carbon.
- have a well considered and designed underside to the bridge, particularly as it crosses Old Oak Common Lane, with an elegant, lofty and delicate appearance that contributes to the environment of Old Oak Common Lane.



An efficient yet memorable structural form
Chiswick Park Footbridge, London



A generous width to accommodate large pedestrian flows
Stratford Town Centre bridge, London
Photo © Knight Architects



Indicative cross-section and long-section of the East-West Bridge

The Old Oak Line will be a safe, animated and green route, with three distinct clusters.



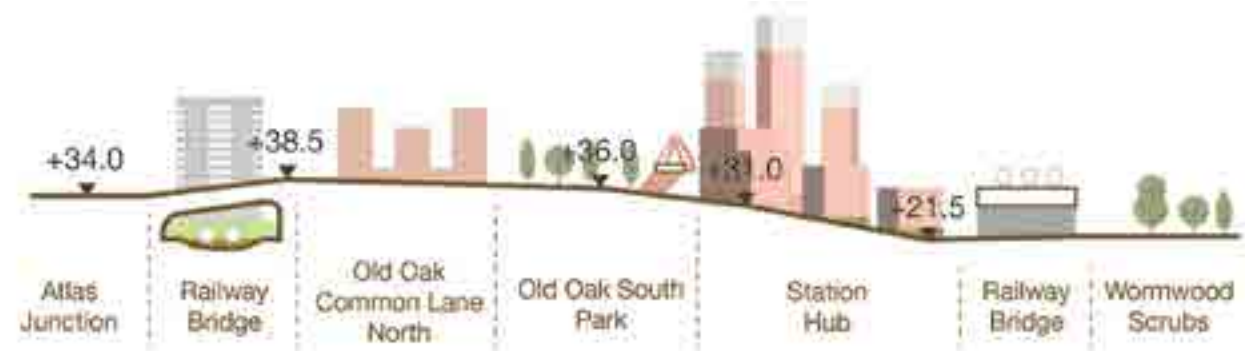
Diagram showing illustrative proposals for The Line

Working with topography

The Mile, the Cut and the Line will respond to the existing topography of the site. These three spines will thread together the varied existing topographical levels to form accessible routes across Old Oak which are suitable for active travel. The design of building ground floors should enable frontages that positively interact and address the public realm.



The Mile



The Cut



The Line



Chapter 4.4

Landscape corridors

- 4a Establishing a green movement network
- 4b Strengthening biodiversity
- 4c Activating the Grand Union Canal
- 4d Creating an ecological asset at Sunny Banks

A Green network of amenity and habitats

Landscape corridors will form green and blue threads that stitch neighbourhoods together, linking local parks, pocket spaces, railway embankments and the Grand Union Canal into a coherent network. These corridors – whether tree-lined streets, canal edges or sunny embankments – will support active travel and ecological connectivity by:

- 4a. Establishing a green movement network
- 4b. Strengthening biodiversity
- 4c. Activating the Grand Union Canal
- 4d. Creating an ecological asset at Sunny Banks



Spatial Principle



Existing condition



Landscape corridors in the Masterplan Framework

4a Establishing a green movement network

The green movement network will transform movement corridors in Old Oak into active travel routes with naturalistic planting framed by active and positive frontages. This should be achieved by:

- establishing a green movement hierarchy where strategic corridors form major ecological and active travel spines connecting parks and districts; neighbourhood green loops provide safe, green routes linking local amenities and community spaces; and local green lanes enhance fine-grain connectivity between homes, streets, and pocket green spaces.
- retaining mature and semi-mature trees where possible and introducing supplementary planting to provide canopy cover, mitigate overheating of nearby buildings and filter air pollution.
- integrating SuDS to capture, slow, and filter water.
- establishing layered planting structures that connect ecological habitats across Old Oak while bringing seasonal colour and sensory variety to daily journeys.



The Meridiana promenade in Barcelona layers trees, flora and shrubs to accompany pedestrians and cyclists
Photo © Antonio Navarro Wijkmark



Chestnut Road in Tottenham is enhanced by SuDS, biodiversity and play-on-the-way
Photo © Adams & Sutherland © Anthony Coleman

- Strategic green corridors
- Neighbourhood green loops
- Local green lanes
- Canal towpath connection

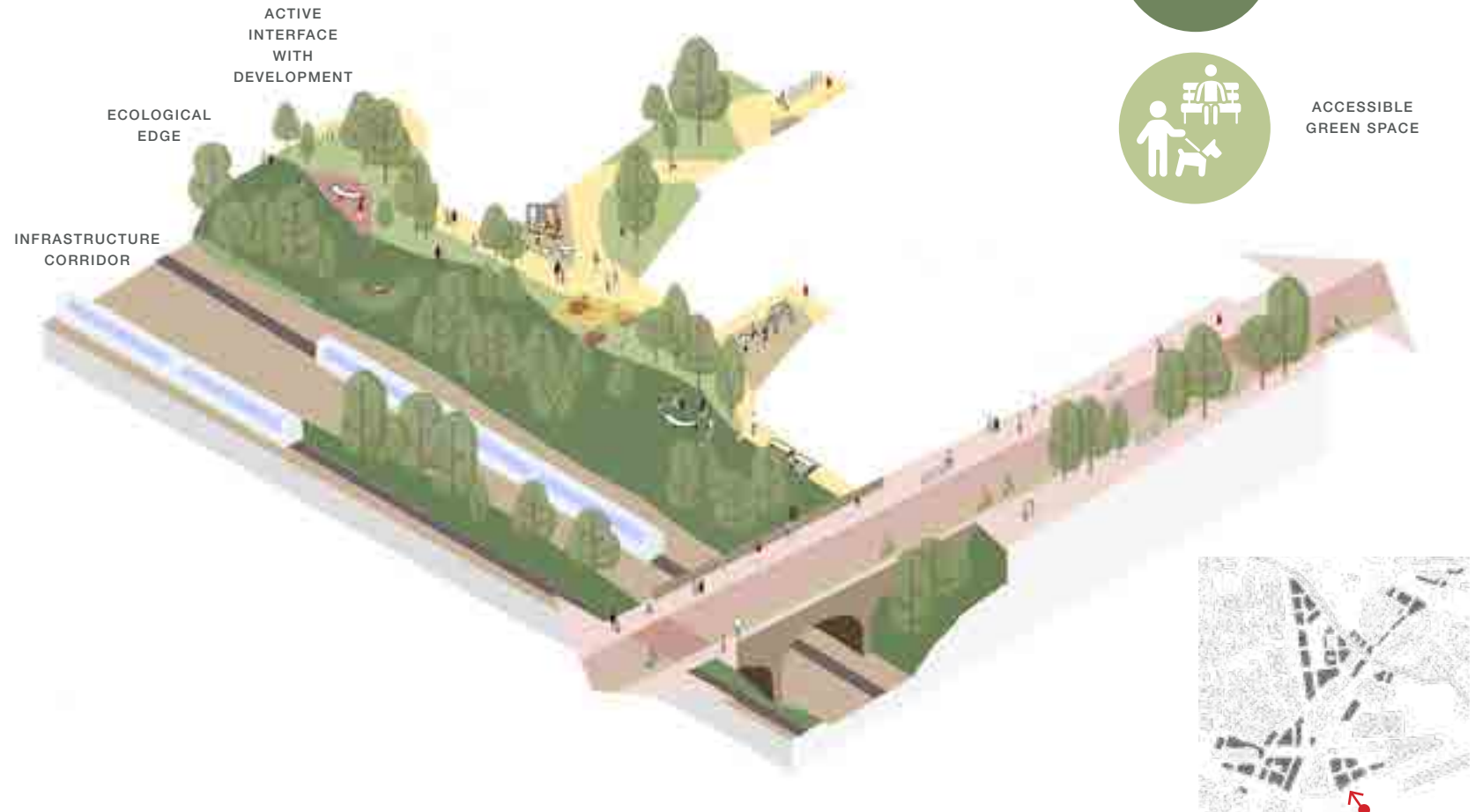


Sequence and hierarchy of green connections within Old Oak

4b Strengthening biodiversity

Multifaceted biodiversity will be achieved through a connected landscape network where parks, pocket spaces, canal edges and infrastructure corridors combine to form a cohesive ecological system. This urban ecology should be strengthened by:

- linking accessible and inaccessible landscapes, safeguarding railway verges, Sunny Banks, and other ecologically-significant areas as integral parts of the wider habitat structure.
- embedding layered planting, from meadows and wetlands at ground level to tree canopies, green roofs, and living walls at height.
- creating continuous ecological corridors that enable wildlife to move freely.



4c Activating the Grand Union Canal

The Grand Union Canal will be a vibrant destination for leisure, movement and daily life. It will balance civic activity with ecological edges, creating a space that is both a social heart and a natural corridor. This should be achieved by:

- focusing public activity at bridges and junctions, particularly where the Old Oak Mile and Common Cut meet.
- improving permeability through direct, purposeful connections between the canal and development.
- addressing level changes between the towpath and Channel Gate Park, using terraces, steps and seating edges to create safe, accessible and lively transitions to the water.
- enhancing and protecting the wild qualities and biodiversity whilst establishing softer edges, with planting and quiet spaces to dwell and rest.
- enhancing the towpath as a generous and inclusive route with facilities for the boating community, widened where possible and complemented with seating and planting to support movement and social use.



Existing towpath along Grand Union Canal

Photo © Zute Lightfoot



Social spaces along the green edges

Photo © Zute Lightfoot



Canal activities and clubs

Photo © Zute Lightfoot

4d Creating an ecological asset at Sunny Banks

The Sunny Banks will transform the former railway sidings into a south-facing green edge, combining ecological richness with visual amenity. It will become a distinctive address that strengthens both landscape character and ecological resilience. This should be achieved by:

- celebrating the railway's character by extending and reinforcing the mature habitats of the embankments, safeguarding existing ecology.
- drawing nature into the neighbourhood through green linear spaces and pocket parks, with walking trails that invite interaction with nature.
- integrating landscaping features that are inclusive and can appeal to all senses through scent, colour, sound, wildlife and edible fruit trees/plants.



Existing green railway infrastructure corridor

Photo © Zute Lightfoot



Playful terraces and embankments

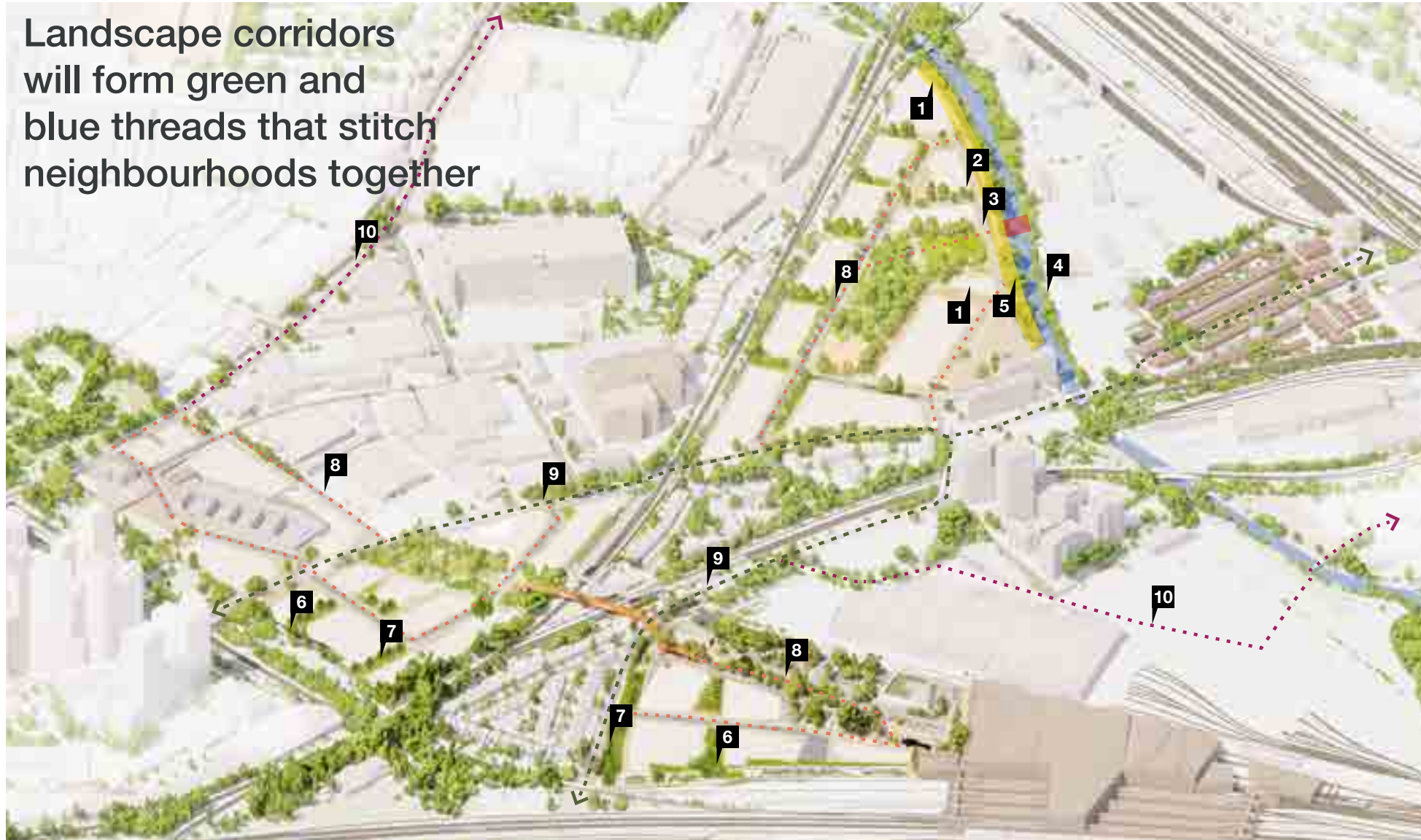
Photo © Jordi Surroca + Stupendastic Films



Immersive green spaces with sensory planting

Photo © OKRA © Melle van Dijk

Landscape corridors
will form green and
blue threads that stitch
neighbourhoods together



- 1** Active and attractive development edges with positive frontage along the canal.
- 2** Improved permeability through direct connections between the canal and development.
- 3** Integration of level changes between the towpath and Channel Gate Park, using terraces, steps and seating.
- 4** Softer, wilder edges established along the waterway with planting, ecology and quiet spaces.
- 5** Towpath enhanced as a continuous, accessible route, widened where appropriate or with complementary parallel paths.
- 6** Railway character celebrated by extending and reinforcing the mature habitats of the embankments.
- 7** Linear spaces and pocket parks integrated with walking trails adjacent to the Sunny Banks.
- 8** A green movement network with neighbourhood loops and local lanes linking to strategic corridors.
- 9** SuDS integrated into green routes. Mature and semi-mature trees retained where possible with new supplementary planting to provide canopy cover.
- 10** Connections to the wider network of strategic green routes.

Diagram showing illustrative proposals for Landscape corridors

Chapter 4.5

Connecting parks and green spaces

- 5a **Delivering two new parks at the heart of Old Oak**
- 5b **Providing everyday access to nature**
- 5c **Creating play for all**
- 5d **Making landscapes where water runs through**
- 5e **Embedding biodiversity in new planting**
- 5f **Channel Gate Park: shaping a canalside destination**
- 5g **Acton Wells Park: establishing a civic heart**

Three welcoming parks

Connecting parks and green spaces will transform predominantly grey land into distinctive, inclusive, accessible and welcoming places at the heart of Old Oak, supporting both people and nature by:

- 5a. Delivering two new parks at the heart of Old Oak
- 5b. Providing everyday access to nature
- 5c. Creating play for all
- 5d. Making landscapes where water runs through
- 5e. Embedding biodiversity in new planting
- 5f. Channel Gate Park: shaping a canalside destination
- 5g. Acton Wells Park: establishing a civic heart



Spatial Principle



Existing condition



Connecting parks and green spaces in the Masterplan Framework

5a Delivering two new parks at the heart of Old Oak

Two new parks - Channel Gate Park and Acton Wells Park - together with the Old Oak South Park will form the green keystones of Old Oak, providing multifunctional spaces for recreation, inclusive play and community life. Each will have a distinct context-driven character rooted in cultural and industrial heritage, offering a diverse and complementary range of experiences across the neighbourhoods. This should be achieved by:

- establishing identifiable and accessible entrances that present the parks as civic destinations.
- shaping park edges to be active, safe and welcoming, with strong connections to green streets and ecological corridors.
- creating naturalistic environments that provide calm, restorative settings.
- providing flexible areas that accommodate community events, social gatherings and seasonal activities alongside everyday use.
- embedding a day- and night-time strategy that balances safety, accessibility and ecological sensitivity.



Claremont Park in Brent Cross is well used and loved by local residents

Photo © John Sturrock



Lewis Cubitt Park in King's Cross is framed by tall mixed-use buildings

Photo © John Sturrock



Two new parks at the heart of Old Oak

5b Providing everyday access to nature

Parks and green spaces will create a diverse and inclusive series of open spaces that respond to the scale and grain of the neighbourhoods, bringing nature to people's doorsteps. This should be achieved by:

- introducing pocket green spaces that create everyday moments of joy and respite.
- incorporating shaded seating courts, orchards, edible planting beds and creative public realm features.



5c Creating play for all

Parks and green spaces should make inclusive play integral to the landscape approach across Old Oak, improving health and wellbeing by:

- creating inclusive and welcoming environments that feel safe and comfortable for adults to linger as well as for children to roam and discover freely.
- providing social, physical and sensory engagement for all ages and abilities.



5d Making landscapes where water runs through

Parks and green spaces should manage water through attractive, multifunctional features by:

- applying robust and dynamic water-sensitive design through attenuation basins, swales and rain gardens.
- creating opportunities for play, recreation and biodiversity that invite safe interaction with water and seasonal change.



5e Embedding biodiversity in new planting

Parks and green spaces should create resilient habitats that support wildlife and enhance ecological richness by:

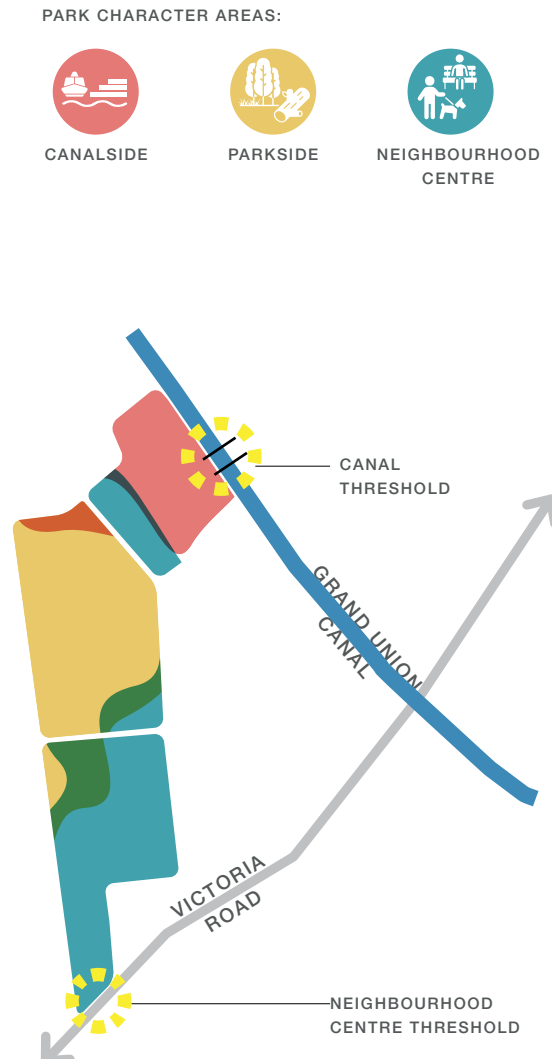
- retaining existing trees wherever possible to preserve maturity and habitat value.
- prioritising native, climate-resilient and non-wind-pollinated species for new planting to provide seasonal interest and adaptability.
- delivering productive landscape with food growing areas and edible planting where appropriate.



5f Channel Gate Park: shaping a canalside destination

Channel Gate Park is a two-hectare park in the Canalside Neighbourhood. The park will be an inclusive place to play, stay and grow with high ecological value and public health benefits. It will directly face the Grand Union Canal acting as a distinctive gateway to the waterside towpath. It should have three main characters as follows:

- Canalside: celebrating water, ecology and views, strengthening the identity of the canal within the neighbourhood.
- Parkside: green core of formal and informal spaces, offering play and areas for recreation, rest and social activity.
- Neighbourhood Centre: civic interface, animated by busier uses and larger gatherings.



Programme

Channel Gate Park will be a lively everyday destination, with festive events and moments of delight across the year. This should be created by:

- framing canal views with active and accessible frontages to provide welcoming places to dwell.
- hosting waterside uses such as mooring and boater facilities, bringing life and movement along the canal edge.
- providing quiet, restorative zones within the Parkside for relaxation, informal nature play and community gardening.
- making use of the park's relationship with the new school to provide spaces that can host play, sport and community life beyond school hours.
- accommodating a broad year-round programme including community gatherings, play for all ages and abilities, flexible event lawns and health and wellbeing activities.

INDICATIVE PROGRAMME:



Inclusive Play

Channel Gate Park should offer a range of intergenerational play opportunities benefiting from natural surveillance by:

- integrating naturalistic play into the parkland to encourage imaginative, self-directed activity.
- providing formal play areas for children and young people including fitness elements, seating and interactive features such as art or water.

PLAY TYPOLOGIES:



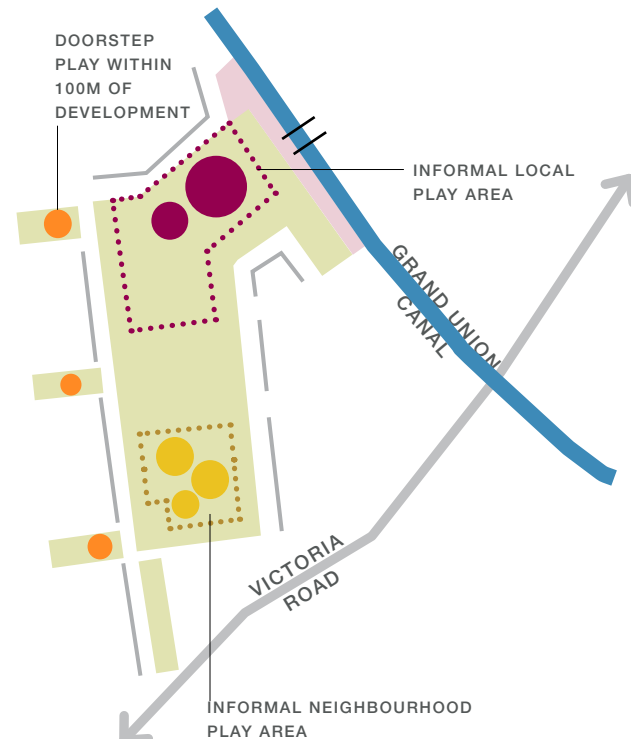
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAY (AGE 12+)
WITHIN 400M OF
DEVELOPMENT



PLAY IN
NATURE



LOCAL PLAY
(AGE 5-11)
WITHIN 200M OF
DEVELOPMENT



Floodable Landscape

Water management should serve as both climate resilience strategy and defining element of the park by:

- designing the park as a floodable landscape that is a celebrated aspect of its character.
- designing spaces so they can support community use when dry and provide vital water storage during heavy rainfall.
- selecting planting for seasonal interest and water tolerance to create biodiverse wetlands and rain gardens.

SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE FEATURES:



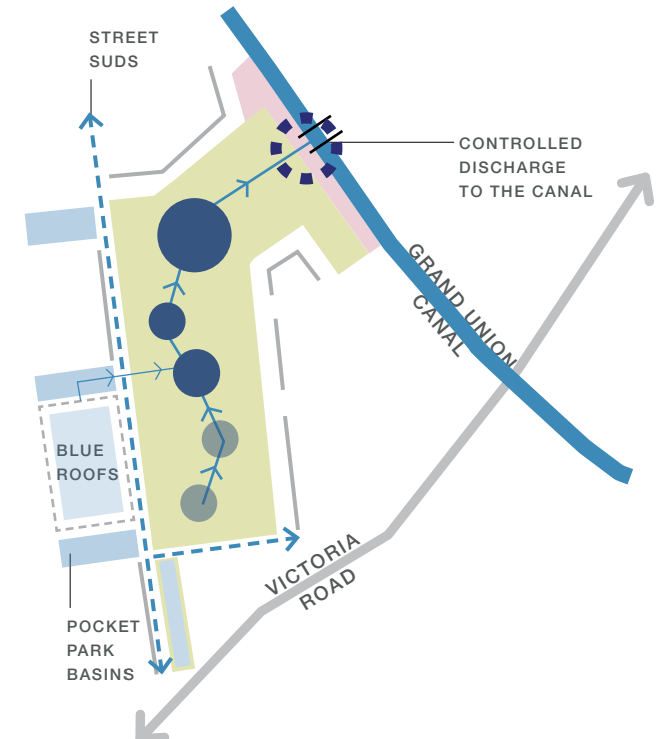
RAIN
GARDENS



WATER
ATTENUATION
FEATURES



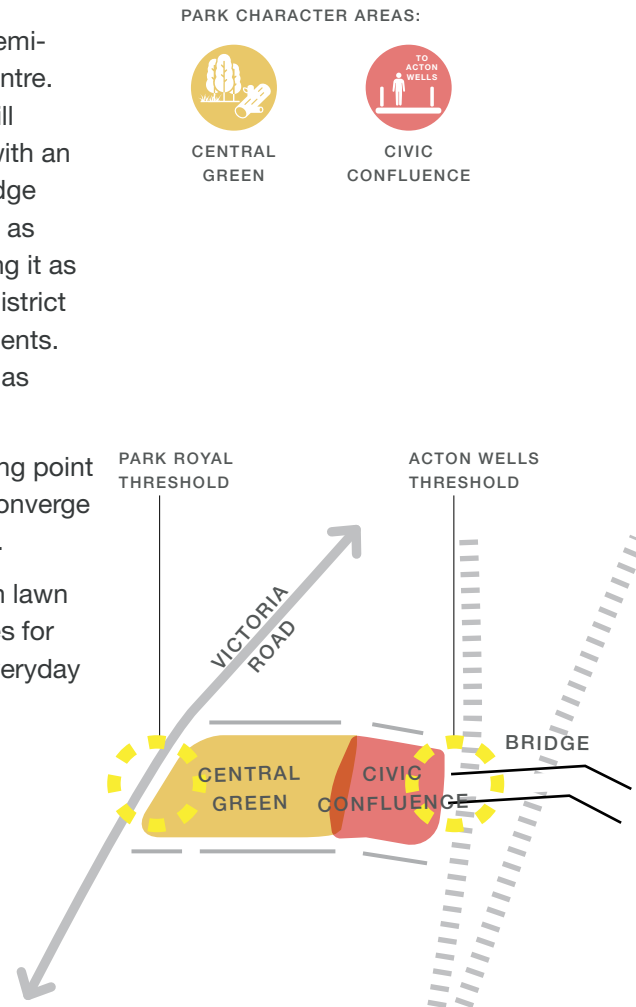
DRY BASINS
FUNCTION AS
PLAY AREAS



5g Acton Wells Park: establishing a civic heart

Acton Wells Park will be a central semi-urban park within Old Oak Town Centre. Located above the HS2 tunnel, it will respond to engineered conditions with an east-west pedestrian and cycle bridge linking to Old Oak Common Station as part of the Old Oak Line, establishing it as both a valued local amenity and a district landmark for new and existing residents. It should have two main characters as follows:

- Civic confluence: a lively meeting point where neighbourhood routes converge with flexible hardscape spaces.
- Central green: a generous open lawn framed by trees, offering spaces for relaxation, informal play and everyday activities.

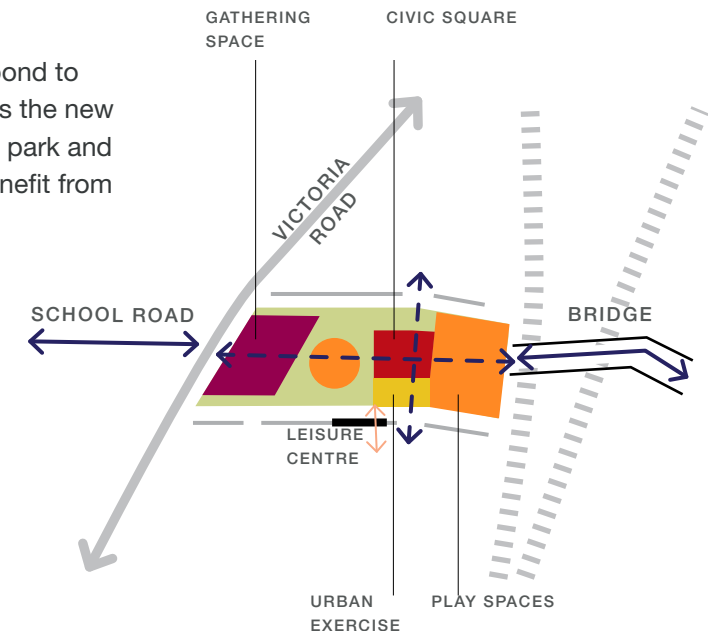


Programme

Acton Wells Park will support daily urban life, balancing active spaces for neighbourhood events with quieter areas for rest and refuge from the bustle of the Town Centre. This should be achieved by:

- providing flexible hardscape spaces that can adapt for markets, festivals and cultural programming.
- creating softer planted areas that support informal social gatherings and play.
- designing the park to respond to key adjacent uses, such as the new leisure centre, so both the park and neighbouring buildings benefit from shared activity.

INDICATIVE PROGRAMME:



Inclusive Play

Play in Acton Wells Park should have a semi-urban character, encouraging informal and social activity within an immersive, naturalistic environment by:

- providing sculptural seating edges, playable water rills and interactive public art that combines with provision for all ages and abilities and that creates opportunities for exploration and discovery.
- providing tree planting that frame the play areas.
- creating soft threshold to the adjacent development.

PLAY TYPOLOGIES:



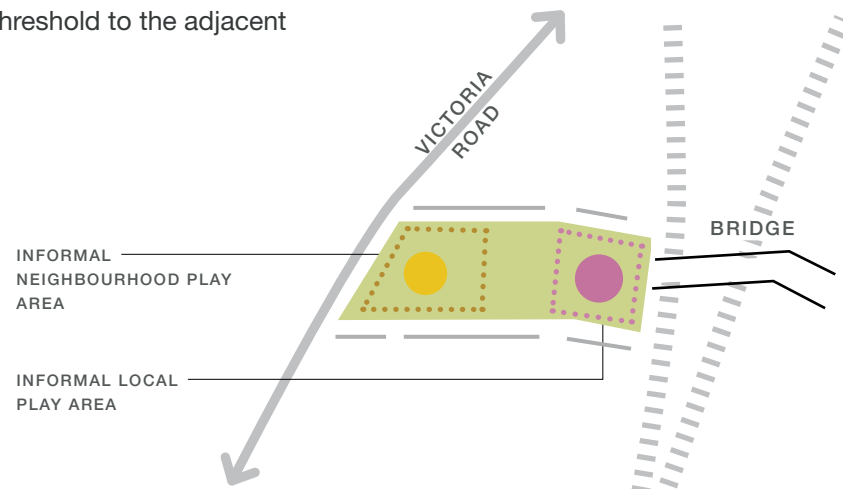
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAY (AGE 12+)
WITHIN 400M OF
DEVELOPMENT



PLAY IN
NATURE



DOORSTEP +
LOCAL PLAY
(AGE 0-11)
WITHIN 100M OF
DEVELOPMENT



Floodable Landscape

Acton Wells Park should have water-sensitive design that enhances biodiversity and regulate microclimate and add sensory variety by:

- incorporating surface water management as an integral part of its landscape.
- using rain gardens, planted channels and permeable surfaces to capture and filter run-off.

SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE FEATURES:



RAIN
GARDENS



WATER
ATTENUATION
FEATURES



DRY BASINS
FUNCTION AS
PLAY AREAS

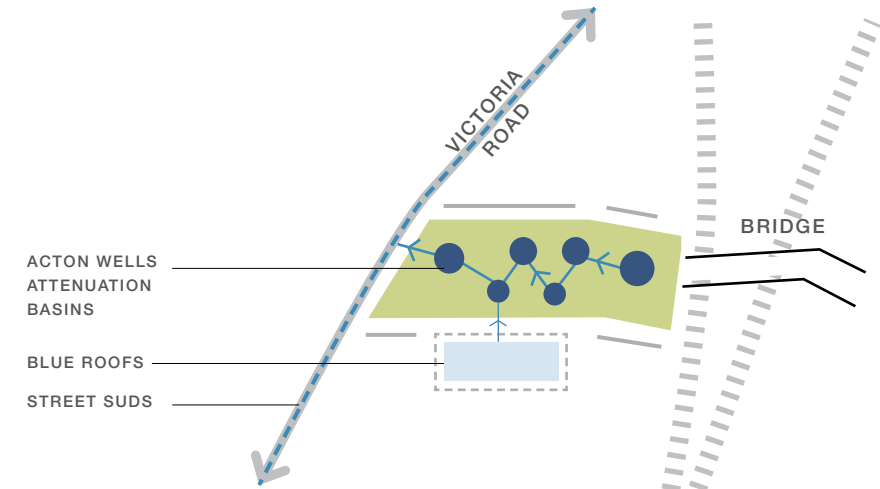




Diagram showing illustrative proposals for Connecting parks

Together with Old Oak South Park, Channel Gate Park and Acton Wells Park will form the green keystones of Old Oak.