

# Adopted policy: LBTH D.DH6 Part 3

## Introduction

In addition to Part 1, Policy D.DH6 establishes within Part 3 that tall building proposals will be supported outside of Tall Building Zones where they meet the criteria set out in Part 1 and can demonstrate four criteria (A-D).

These criteria, and an assessment of the Proposed Development against them, is provided across the following pages.

**A. Be located in areas with high levels of public transport accessibility within town centres and/or opportunity areas;**

The Site benefits from a good level of public transport accessibility and part of the site is located within a Neighbourhood Centre, as established in LBTH's Town Centre Hierarchy, and the whole site is within an Opportunity Area, and has been allocated as a site for regeneration within LBTH's draft Leaside Area Action Plan. London Plan (2021) Policy H1 also states that boroughs should optimise the potential for housing delivery on all suitable and available brownfield sites,

especially from sites with PTALs 3 to 6 which are located within 800 metres distance of a station or town centre boundary. The Site benefits from a good level of public transport accessibility. The site specific PTAL calculation for the Site, considering the actual walking distances and public transport service providers, identifies a PTAL ranging from 3 to 4. This is illustrated on the diagram below.

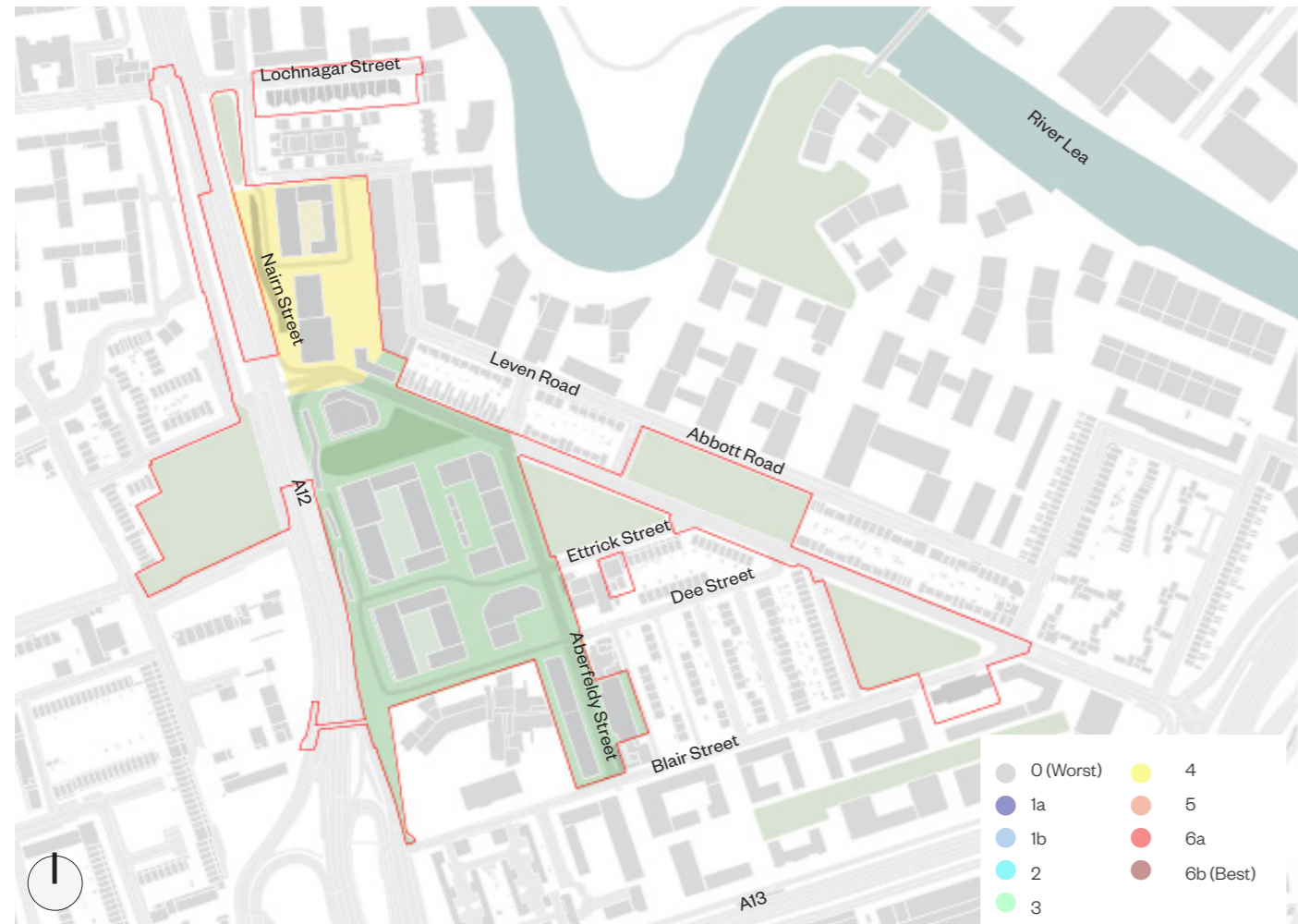


Fig.37 Diagram illustrating the calculated PTAL of the Site

The diagram below shows the opportunity areas within Tower Hamlets. The Site is located within the Lower Lea Valley Opportunity Area, located in the east of the Borough.

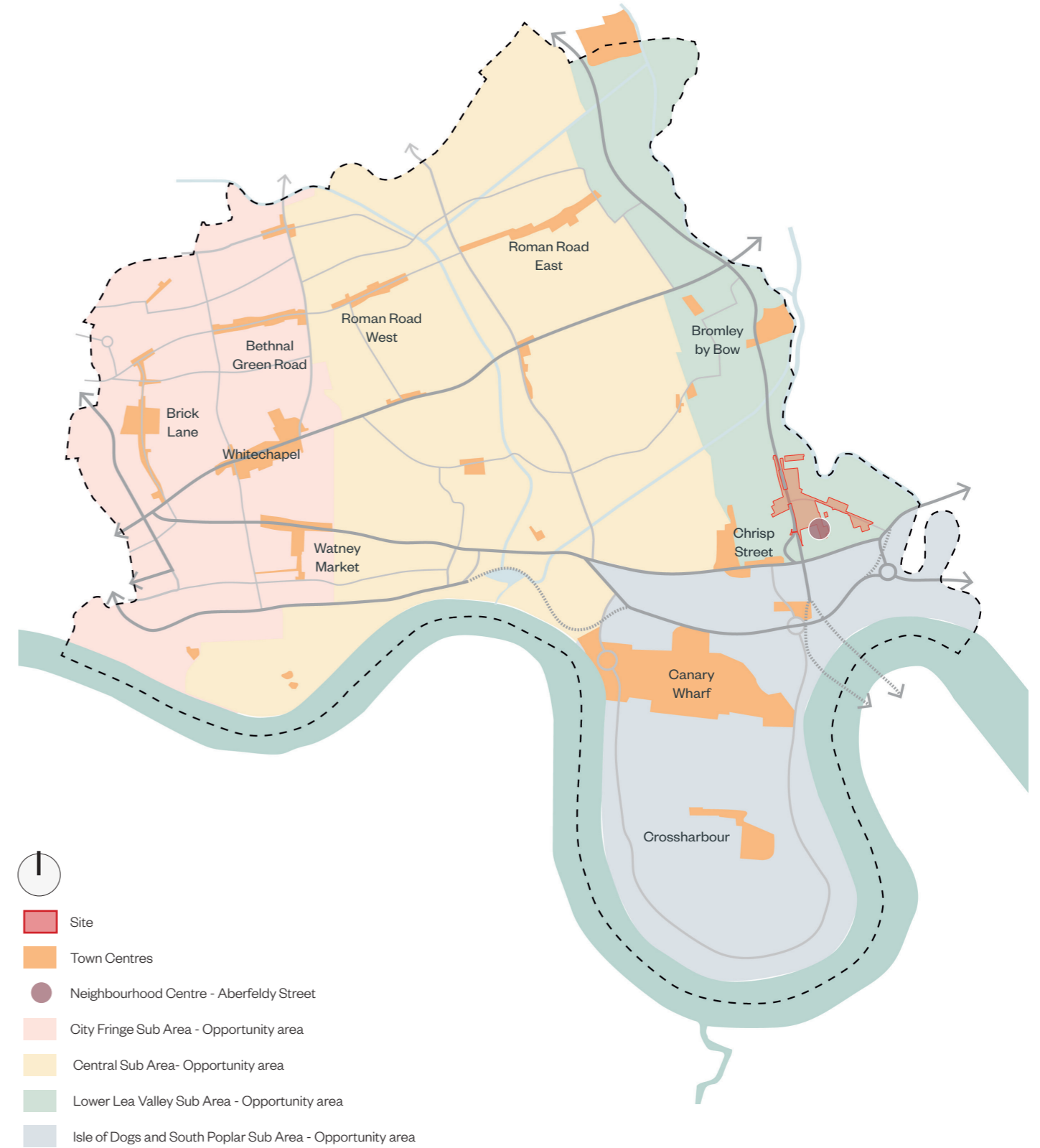


Fig.38 Diagram showing London Borough of Tower Hamlets Opportunity Areas, including the Lower Lea Valley within which the Site is located

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**A. Be located in areas with high levels of public transport accessibility within town centres and/or opportunity areas;**

Whilst continuing to promote a good level of public transport accessibility, the proposed repurposed underpass between Highland Place and the west of the A12 into a pedestrian and cycle Underbridge, will also bring further benefits. It will significantly improve the walking routes to public transport stops and stations by making these more attractive and safer, in addition to improving air and noise quality when crossing the A12.

Proximity of the Site to the local stations and public transport stops is illustrated on the diagram below. The tall buildings will be located at a key nodal point, adjacent to the repurposed underpass, and therefore will aid legibility to and from these public transport hubs.

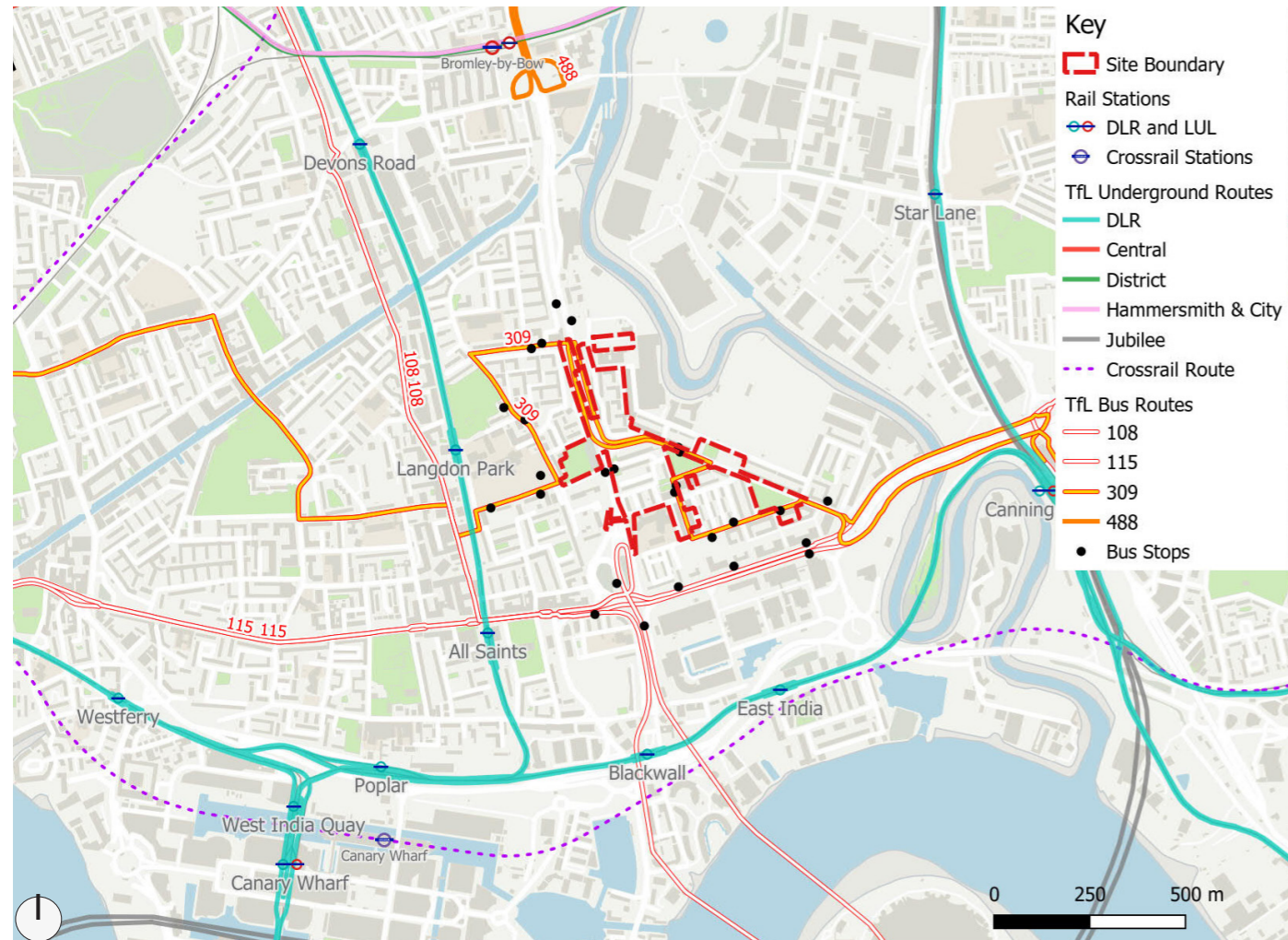


Fig.39 Diagram illustrating the current rail and bus routes surrounding the Site

Through public consultation, resident engagement and youth engagement with Langdon Park School, residents of the Aberfeldy Estate, young people and members of the local community have identified the existing subways at both Dee Street and Abbott Road as feeling unsafe. Additionally, the at-grade crossing takes a long time to cross with pedestrians and cyclists required to wait in the central reserve of the A12 for 60 to 90 seconds before crossing to the other side of the A12. The Underbridge will provide a well lit, safer route across the A12 that is wide enough to comfortably accommodate the number of pedestrians and cyclists using it.

As illustrated on the diagram below, the Underbridge will help to overcome the barrier and severance caused by the A12, and better connect the existing and proposed green spaces, local centres and transport hubs. Collectively this will help to promote walking and cycling, and sustainable travel.

- Site boundary
- Major roads
- Significant east west severance
- Emerging east west connection and Underbridge
- Aberfeldy Island
- Local Centres
- Outdoor amenity spaces
- Shopping Centre



Fig.40 Diagram illustrating the existing green infrastructure, routes to local centres and bus stops and the severance caused by the A12

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## B. Address deficiencies in the provision of strategic infrastructure

At present the Site is surrounded by large infrastructure such as the A12, A13 and River Lea, resulting in the “Aberfeldy Island” being severed from its surroundings, with the A12 in particular causing a significant barrier to the east-west movement. This can often hinder walking and cycling, and separates many of the key development areas from the existing community, local centres and transport hubs as illustrated in the diagram below.

- Site boundary
- Major roads
- Significant east west severance
- Aberfeldy Island
- Local Centres
- Outdoor amenity spaces
- Shopping Centre



Fig.41 Diagram illustrating the severance caused by the A12 and the disconnection between Aberfeldy and surrounding infrastructure

The Proposed Development will address the severance caused by the A12 through the repurposing of the vehicular underpass into a new pedestrian and cycle Underbridge. This is illustrated on the plan below. This key strategic route will benefit the whole of the Poplar Riverside and the many developments coming forward along the River Lea, notably the Leven Road Gasworks and East Riverside development sites.

Connections to new services and amenities within the previously approved Aberfeldy Village Masterplan Phases 1-3 will be enhanced, and connections to Aberfeldy Street strengthened. Routes to other local centres, including Crisp Street Market and All Saints local centre would also be improved through reduced A12 severance, and the improved legibility offered by tall buildings at this important nodal point along the new east west connection.

Local primary and secondary schools would benefit from improved, more attractive connections, with students, teachers and parents able to travel to and from schools more safely.

- Site boundary
- Enterprise Yard
- Community Lane
- High Street
- Healthy Street
- East West links
- New East West connection



Fig.42 Diagram illustrating the emerging east to west connection overcoming severance caused by the A12

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## B. Address deficiencies in the provision of strategic infrastructure

The Proposed Development will create additional open space and improve the connections to the existing provision, linking the spaces of Millennium Green, Leven Road Open Space and Braithwaite Park, in addition to the proposed Highland Place

along the Healthy Street. This will create a green grid promoting and aiding accessibility to these spaces and encouraging active lifestyles. This builds on the LBTH Green Grid Strategy (2017) and is illustrated in the diagram below.

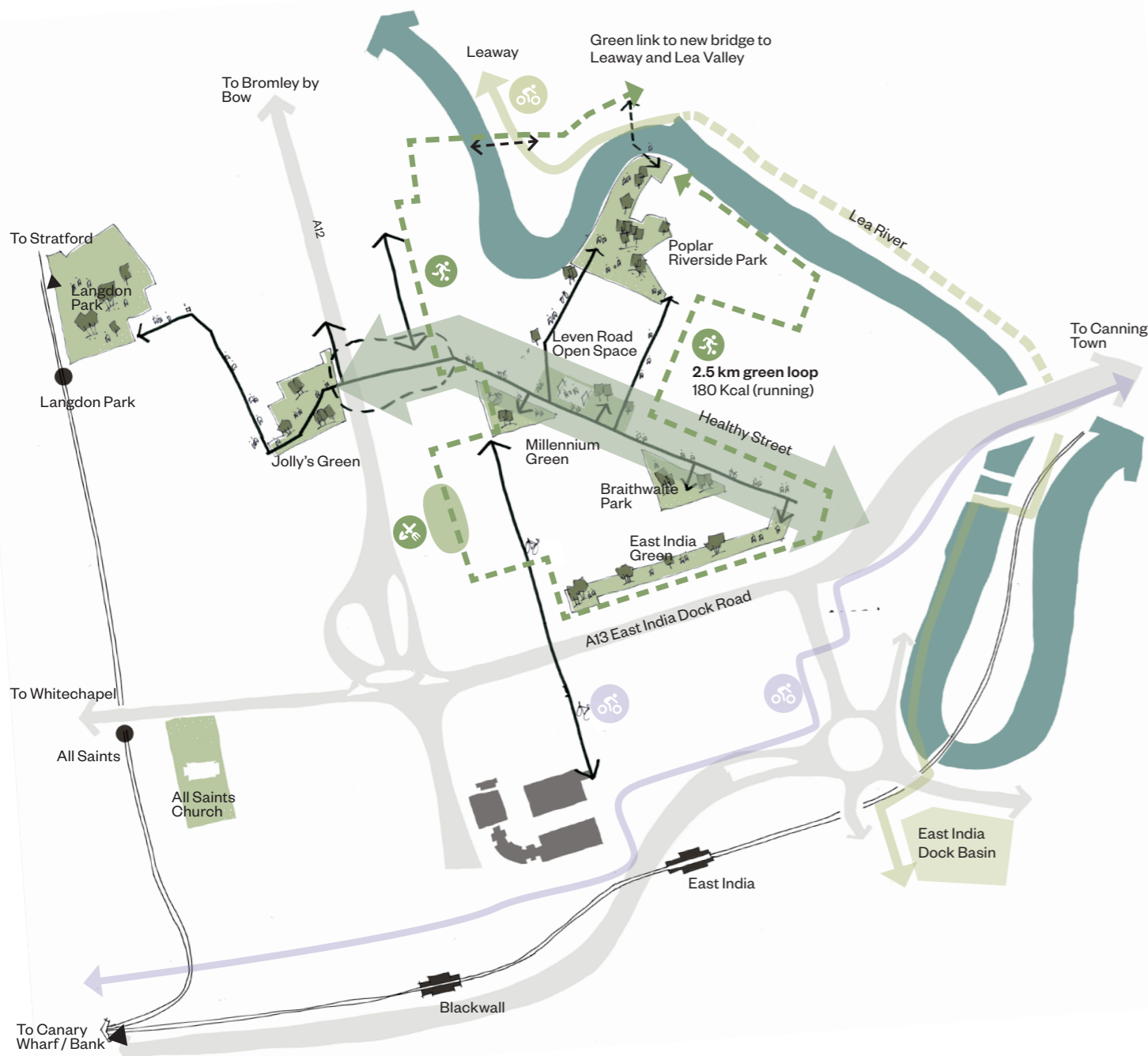


Fig.43 Diagram to illustrate the proposed green network

The Proposed Development will deliver an enhanced connection from Aberfeldy to the west of the A12 via the pedestrianisation of the existing vehicular underpass and a new direct link to Jolly's Green. This will add valuable spaces to the open space network, and connect them along clear, legible pedestrian and cycle routes. Images showing the proposals for the Underbridge connecting Highland Place with the Slip Road and Jolly's Green, and the journey between these spaces are shown on this page.

Following validation of the Hybrid Application, the Applicant has been in discussions with LBTH officers in relation to the



Fig.44 Visualisation of the approach to the Underbridge in Highland Place



Fig.46 Visualisation of the entrance to the Underbridge



Fig.48 Visualisation of the direct connection to Jolly's Green

aspirations for a direct link from the pedestrianised underpass into Jolly's Green and works to Jolly's Green. The Applicant and LBTH officers have jointly agreed that the works to Jolly's Green should be included within the red line and secured as part of the future planning permission. Further information on the proposals for a direct link from the pedestrianised underpass into Jolly's Green and works to Jolly's Green are included in the Masterplan Design and Access Statement.

In addition, the Proposed Development will result in significant CIL and s.106 contributions which will be used to fund significant infrastructure improvements to the local area.



Fig.45 Visualisation of the Underbridge connecting to the Slip Road



Fig.47 Visualisation of the Slip Road adjacent to the A12



Fig.49 Visualisation of the route along the Slip Road

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**C. Significantly strengthen the legibility of a Major, District or Neighbourhood Centre or mark the location of a transport interchange or other location of civic or visual significance within the area**

The Proposed Development has been designed in consultation with LBTH officers and the heights strategy has evolved to respond to the key local and wider townscape and views, as well as neighbouring heritage assets. The latter includes Balfour Tower and the conservation area within which it sits. A Built Heritage Assessment and a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment have been prepared which demonstrate that the proposed tall buildings do not harm any designated and non-designated heritage assets or key views. These have been submitted as part of this hybrid planning application.

The Proposed Development will help to reshape and regenerate the area, acting as a marker of significant change.

The tall buildings will act as a marker for Aberfeldy Village itself and signal the transformation of this large regeneration area.

The Proposed Development will enhance the legibility of the area by emphasising the new key east-west route: the transformed vehicular underpass to the new pedestrian and cycle Underbridge beneath the A12, which opens into the new public space, Highland Place. This is a strategically important east to west route which will finally address the segregation of Poplar Riverside from the rest of Poplar by the A12. It is also part of a wider network of masterplan threads, shown on the adjacent diagram, which improves both east-west and north-south connectivity and legibility and connects Aberfeldy into its surroundings.



Fig.50 View along Abbott Road showing the tall buildings marking Highland Place and the entrance to the Underbridge (Illustrative proposal)

The location of tall buildings adjacent to the repurposed underpass will also mark Highland Place as a significant area of new public realm and civic space for the existing and future residents of Aberfeldy and the surrounding neighbourhoods. This space, as illustrated in the image below, will offer play and amenity space, affordable workspaces, retail opportunities and cafés, creating a hub of community activity at the heart of the neighbourhood.

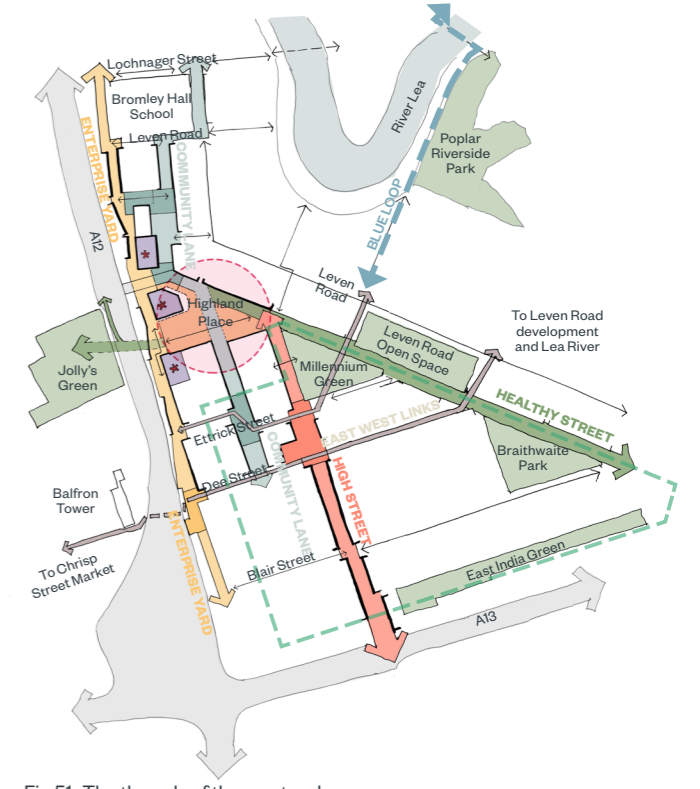


Fig.51 The threads of the masterplan



Fig.52 The Underbridge in Highland Place, at the heart of the neighbourhood (Illustrative proposal)

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**D. Not undermine the prominence and/or integrity of existing landmark buildings and tall building zones (taking account of the principles set out in Figure 8).**

The proposed tall buildings are located to mark the transformed underpass at Highland Place and away from Balfroon Tower, which is a local landmark. Buildings in the vicinity of Balfroon Tower will be lower and so will not undermine the existing building's impact and imposing scale. By keeping buildings in this area low, the 'sky-space' around Balfroon Tower and the Balfroon Tower Conservation Area will be protected,

ensuring that the Proposed Development and the historic buildings read as separate and distinct from one another.

The buildings which will sit directly across the A12 from Balfroon Tower are lower rise and horizontal in form. This will preserve key views of the existing building and retain the reading of important architectural elements including the expressed circulation core and access galleries.

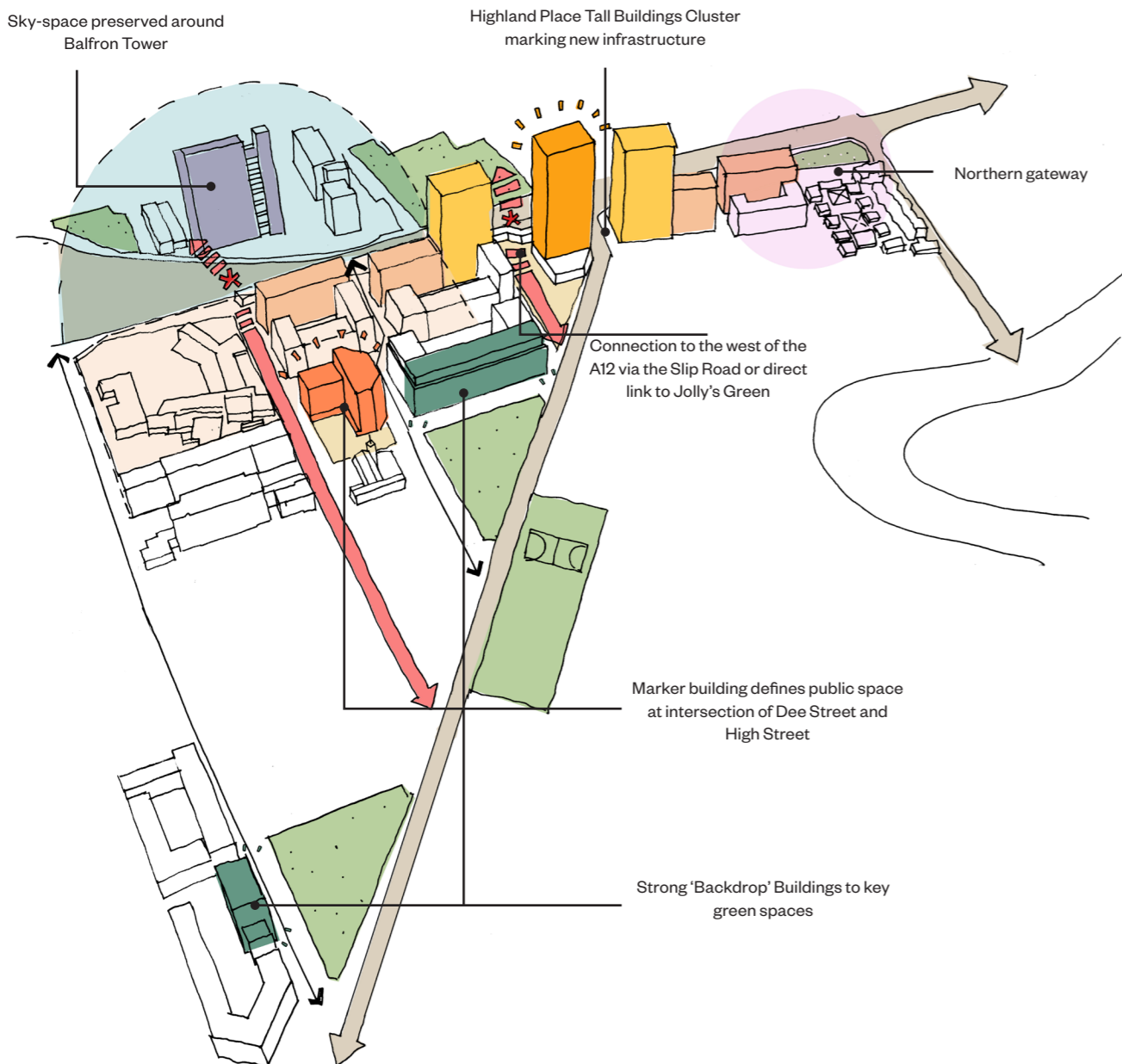


Fig.53 Massing and tall buildings strategy

The tall buildings set around Highland Place have been designed to take account of the 'Figure 8: Principles of Tall Buildings Clusters' set out in the explanatory text of Local Plan Policy D.DH6 and are located at a significant distance from the designated Tall Building Zones within the LBTH Local Plan, notably Canary Wharf, Blackwall and Leamouth tall building zones.

Building heights step down significantly at the edge of the Proposed Development, ensuring that the cluster of three buildings at Highland Place is clearly defined. This will avoid the merging of tall buildings clusters. Tall buildings are positioned in such a way as to avoid breaking the silhouette of any tall buildings clusters when seen from the southern bank of the Thames riverfront.

The three tall buildings will display variation in height and a

clear hierarchy of importance. The tallest element, which marks the entrance to the Underbridge and acts as a terminus to Abbott Road, will be expressed differently to its neighbours, both of which are slightly lower. This is the key moment of height and tall buildings which could undermine this cluster are not proposed in other areas of the Site.

The massing and tall buildings strategy has been developed through a number of consultations with LBTH and significant changes have been made to minimise any impact on heritage assets.

The image below and the dynamic views along Dee Street and Abbott Road, included on the following page, demonstrate the sensitive design of the proposed tall buildings, to ensure that they do not undermine the prominence of existing landmark buildings or have a negative impact on key views.



Fig.54 View of the Proposed Development and Balfroon Tower Conservation Area, looking east from Langdon Park