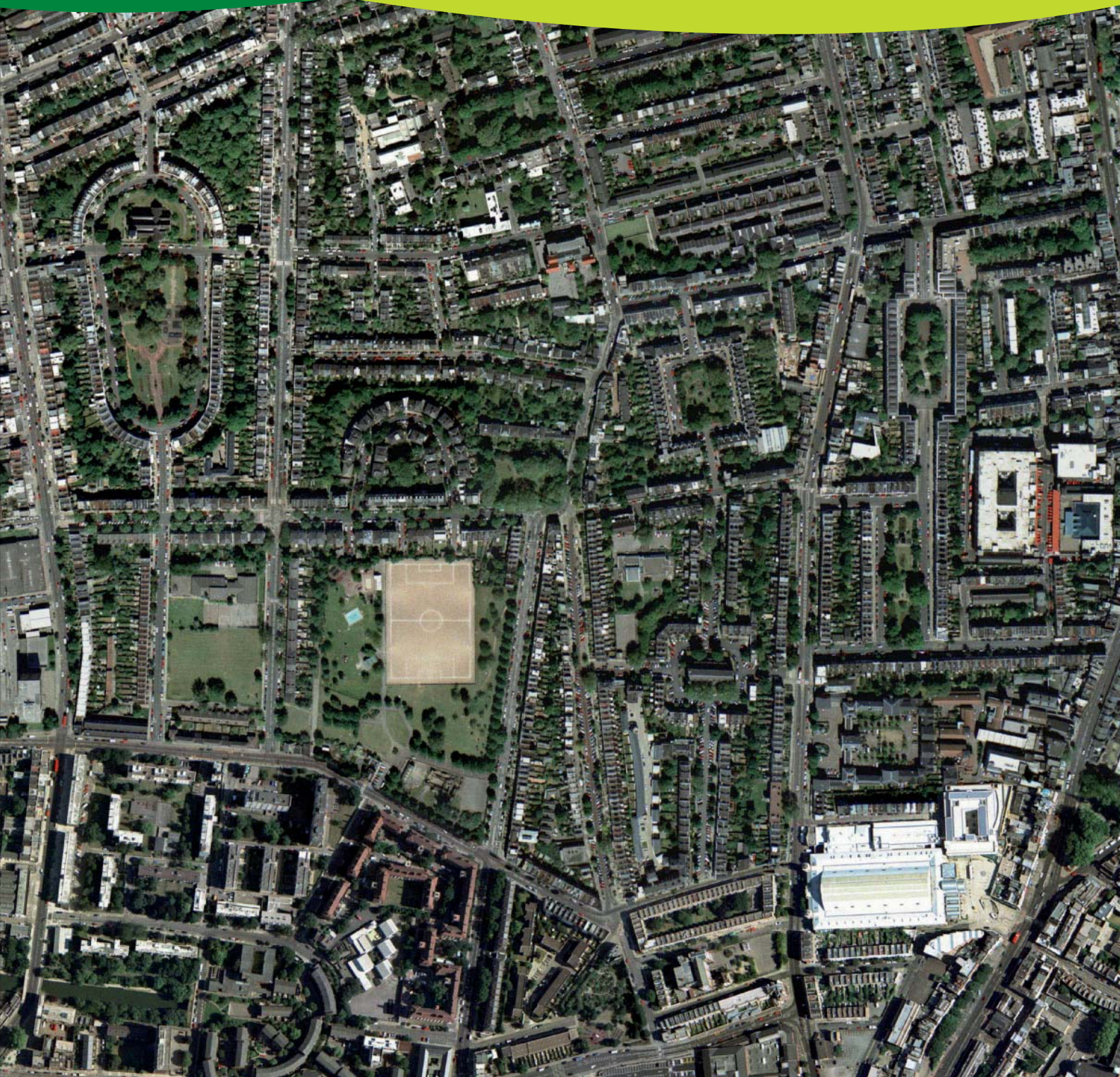




Tall Buildings evidence base to inform Core Strategy 2010



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1. Introduction

This report was produced to provide an evidence base for formulating Local Development Framework policy on tall buildings in Islington. This evidence has been used to inform the Core Strategy policy. Guidance from English Heritage and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) advises local authorities on good practice for developing planning policy for tall buildings. This guidance has been used to set the methodology for the analysis in this report.

The report reviews relevant planning policy for tall buildings at the national, regional and local level. This is followed by a two phase analysis of the borough. The first phase is a strategic assessment of the borough to identify the broad areas which may be suitable for tall buildings, effectively to identify areas of search. The second phase examines in greater detail the areas identified in phase one, and makes recommendations about each area's suitability for tall buildings.

2. What is a tall building?

A tall building is generally considered to be a building that is significantly higher than its surroundings. This definition is difficult to use in a borough wide analysis of tall buildings. Thus it has been necessary to select a height at which buildings are considered tall. Thirty metres has been chosen for this analysis for two reasons:

1. An application for a building that is more than 30 metres high is considered a PSI (Potential Strategic Importance) application where the borough is required to formally notify the Mayor of London under Statutory Instruments 2008 No. 580 Town And Country Planning, England The Town and Country Planning (Mayor of London) Order 2008.
2. Islington used 30m as its definition of a tall building in previous Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policy, following the definition given in the Greater London Development Plan.

3. Policy background

National and Regional Guidance

- Guidance on Tall Buildings (CABE and English Heritage, July 2007)
- The London Plan Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London Consolidated with Alterations since 2004 (GLA, June 2008)
- The draft replacement London Plan (October 2009)
- London Views Management Framework (2007)
- Draft Revised London Views Management Framework (2009)

CABE and English Heritage's guidance calls for a plan-led approach to tall buildings with local authorities identifying locations appropriate for tall buildings and recommending a set of criteria to be used for assessing tall building applications. When assessing the areas suitable for tall buildings local planning authorities should:

“ – take into account the historic context of the wider area through the use

of historic characterisation methods (the English Heritage publications Conservation Bulletin Issue 4: characterisation, using historic landscape characterisation and the forthcoming Using urban characterisation, provide useful guidance) – carry out a character appraisal of the immediate context, identifying those elements that create local character and other important features and constraints, including:

- natural topography
 - urban grain
 - significant views of skylines
 - scale and height
 - streetscape
 - landmark buildings and areas and their settings, including backdrops, and important local views, prospects and panoramas.
- identify opportunities where tall buildings might enhance the overall townscape
- identify sites where the removal of past mistakes might achieve a similar outcome”

The London Plan (2008)

London Boroughs are further encouraged to review their high buildings policy by the Mayor in the London Plan. **Policy 4B.8 Tall Buildings - locations** states:

Policy 4B.9 Tall buildings – location

The Mayor will promote the development of tall buildings where they create attractive landmarks enhancing London’s character, help to provide a coherent location for economic clusters of related activities and/or act as a catalyst for regeneration and where they are also acceptable in terms of design and impact on their surroundings. The Mayor will and boroughs should consider all applications for tall buildings against the criteria set out in Policies 3A.3, 4B.1 and 4B.10. The Mayor will work with boroughs and the strategic partnerships to help identify suitable locations for tall buildings that should be included in DPDs and Sub-Regional Implementation Frameworks. These may include parts of the Central Activities Zone and some Opportunity Areas. Boroughs should take into account the reasons why the Mayor may support tall buildings when assessing planning applications that are referable to the Mayor.

Boroughs may wish to identify defined areas of specific character that could be sensitive to tall buildings within their DPD. In doing so, they should clearly explain what aspects of local character could be affected and why. They should not impose unsubstantiated borough-wide height restrictions.

In considering applications for tall buildings, the Mayor will take into account the potential benefit of public access to the upper floors and may require such access.

The London Plan contains a number of other policies relating to large-scale buildings and the development of compact cities. These include amongst others:

- Policy 4B.1 Design principles for a compact city
- Policy 4B.10 Large-scale buildings – design and impact
- Policy 4B.16 London View Management Framework

- Policy 4B.17 View management plans
- Policy 4B.18 Assessing development impact on designated views.

The London plan is currently being replaced and new draft policy on tall buildings identifies general locations where they should be limited to and criteria for assessing tall buildings proposals:

The draft replacement London Plan (October 2009)

Policy 7.7 Location and design of tall and large buildings

Strategic

A) Tall and large buildings should be part of a strategic approach to changing or developing an area, and should not have an unacceptably harmful impact on their surroundings.

Planning decisions

B) Applications for tall or large buildings should include an urban design analysis that demonstrates the proposal is part of a strategy that will meet the criteria below. This is particularly important if the site of the proposed tall building is not identified as a location for tall buildings in the borough's LDF.

C) Tall and large buildings should:

- a generally be limited to sites in the Central Activity Zone, Opportunity Areas, Areas of Intensification or Town Centres that have good access to public transport**
- b only be considered in areas whose character would not be adversely affected by the scale, mass or bulk of a tall or large building**
- c relate well to the form, proportion, composition, scale and character of surrounding buildings, urban grain and public realm (including landscape features), particularly at street level;**
- d individually or as a group, form a distinctive landmark that emphasises a point of civic or visual significance, and enhances the skyline and image of London**
- e incorporate the highest standards of architecture and materials**
- f have ground floor activities that provide a positive relationship to the surrounding streets**
- g incorporate publicly accessible areas on the upper floors, where appropriate**
- h make a significant contribution to local regeneration.**

D) Tall buildings should not:

- a affect adversely their surroundings in terms of microclimate, wind turbulence, overshadowing, noise, reflected glare, aviation, navigation and telecommunication interference**
- b impact adversely on local or strategic views**
- c be encouraged in areas that would be sensitive to their impact. Such areas might include conservation areas, the setting of listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, the edge of the green belt or metropolitan open land, the setting of World Heritage Sites or other areas designated by boroughs as being unsuitable for tall buildings.**

LDF preparation

E) Boroughs should work with the Mayor to identify areas in their Local Development Frameworks where tall and large buildings might be appropriate. These locations should be consistent with the criteria above and the place-shaping and heritage policies of this Plan.

London Views Management Framework SPG (2007 & 2009)

The London View Management Framework SPG which supersedes supplementary guidance for London on the protection of strategic views (RPG3 Annex A November 1991).

provides guidance on the policies in the London Plan for the protection and management of designated views across London. There are three protected vistas to St Paul's Cathedral which cross Islington: from Alexandra Palace, Kenwood House, and Parliament Hill.

In June 2009, the Mayor published the **Draft Revised London View Management Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance**: the final new SPG is expected later in 2010. The draft SPG made a number of changes to views including widening the viewing corridors and lateral assessment areas.

Islington's UDP Policy

The most relevant UDP policies for tall building applications are set out below:

Local Views

D17 The Council will define and protect important local views and will resist any development either in Islington or elsewhere which blocks or in any other way detracts from these views. The Council will also seek the reduction in height of buildings, which currently adversely affect these views, when redevelopment opportunities arise.

The supporting text states that in addition to the strategic views [*now protected vistas*] from outside the borough which cross Islington, there are also a number of important views from within the borough which merit protection. Seven views of St. Paul's Cathedral have been defined. These are shown on the Proposals Maps and described in schedule 8 of the UDP. It is considered that these views are of no lesser quality than the strategic views defined in government guidance.

The protection of the views of St. Paul's has implications for the control of building heights within the City of London, in front of and behind the view to the Cathedral, and also in the London Borough of Southwark, protecting the background. The co-operation of these two authorities will therefore be necessary.

Local Landmarks

D18 The Council will protect views of well known local landmarks and will exercise stringent controls over the height, location and design of any building which blocks or detracts from important or potentially important views.

Designing in Context

D4 Proposals for new and altered buildings should acknowledge the most important elements of the urban context and create a positive and appropriate relationship with surrounding buildings and spaces. Particular attention should be given to:

- i. defining the public and private spaces through reinforcing building lines and encouraging appropriate infilling of gaps;
- ii. appropriate windows and window arrangements on buildings;
- iii. ensuring that the building relates to the street and/or waterside setting as appropriate by avoiding faceless walls and including entrances;
- iv. encouraging a mix of uses; and
- v. ensuring all alterations and extensions are sympathetic to the building and its surroundings.

Within this framework the Council will encourage architectural innovation and imaginative design solutions.

Townscape

D5 New buildings on cleared sites should respect the form, scale and grain of the surrounding townscape.

New Development (in the Clerkenwell and Smithfield Special Policy Area)

CS5 New buildings and roof extensions to existing buildings should conform to the height of existing development in the immediate area.

The supporting text states that normally no new building or extension will be permitted above five storeys (about 18 metres above ground level).

The main policies relating to building heights, which were set out in Islington's Unitary Development Plan 2002, were deleted in 2007 by the Secretary of State as they were not in conformity with the London Plan. Policies on strategic views have been superseded by the London Views Management Framework 2007. These policies are set out below to give a historical understanding of the policy background against which Islington assessed tall buildings up to 2007.

High Buildings

D9 The Council considers that Islington is an area where high buildings are inappropriate, and will oppose any proposals for such buildings.

The supporting text to this policy defined a high building as any structure higher than 30 metres above ground level. This definition was used in the Greater London Development Plan.

Strategic Views

D14 The Council will protect and enhance the strategic views of St. Paul's Cathedral from Kenwood, Parliament Hill and Alexandra Palace by ensuring that no development, including structures, within the viewing corridors shown on the Proposals Map blocks or adversely affects the view. This includes developments in locations where the strategic view is obstructed by existing buildings which infringe the limits.

D15 The Council will protect and enhance the background and wider setting of the strategic views of St. Paul's Cathedral by resisting development within the defined consultation areas shown on the Proposals Map, where this would have an adverse effect. The improvement of the views will be sought when existing buildings of inappropriate height are redeveloped.

D16 The Council will consult and take into consideration the comments of other local authorities along the line of the view, and other appropriate bodies, before making a decision on any planning application for development exceeding the defined consultation thresholds in the protected areas.

Islington's Planning Advice Note on Building Heights 2005

In 2005, the Council approved an advice note on Building Heights. The note was produced in response to the London Plan (2004), to provide guidance on appropriate building heights throughout Islington, and to prevent the pressure for high buildings leading to a future peppering of incongruous buildings over the Borough. High building developments were directed to a limited number of suitable areas where exceptions to UDP policy (policy D9) would be considered.

The advice note identified areas, which were considered at the time acceptable locations for the development of buildings that are higher than the predominant surrounding building height and where greater scale of development might be permitted. The general areas the advice note identified as potentially suitable for tall buildings were: South Islington- south of Pentonville Road and City Road; Kings Cross Triangle; Holloway Road Station/London Metropolitan University campus; Finsbury Park Station Area; Archway Station Area.

The above advice note was not prepared in line with current CABE/EH guidance. It used a 'broad brush' approach to identify general locations where tall buildings could potentially be suitable subject to more detailed site specific examination.

4. Reassessing Islington's Suitability for Tall Buildings

Since Islington's Planning Advice Note was written in 2005, CABE and English Heritage have jointly produced more detailed advice on how local planning authorities should develop their tall buildings policy. This report uses this more recent guidance and takes into consideration the emerging London Plan policy to reassess if there are areas in Islington suitable for tall buildings.

The analysis of the borough is undertaken in two phases. The first phase is a strategic assessment of the borough to identify the areas that may contain sites that could be suitable for tall buildings. In effect, it identifies areas of search which warrant further assessment. The second phase analysis examines in greater detail the areas identified in phase one.

Phase One - Strategic Analysis

The strategic analysis involves a borough-wide description of Islington's built environment and setting. Following this description strategic level constraints and opportunities for tall buildings have been used to identify areas which may be suitable for tall buildings.

Strategic Level Constraints:

- Protected viewing corridors
- Historically sensitive places
- Predominantly residential areas

Strategic Level Opportunities:

- Location of existing tall buildings
- Proximity to public transport node
- Areas in the Central Active Zone (CAZ), town centres, Opportunity Areas, and Areas of Intensification

Phase Two - Area Focused Analysis

Detailed character appraisal of an area's potential suitability for tall buildings, covering:

- land uses
- building heights
- building blocks and street network

5. Phase One - Strategic Analysis

5.1 Description of the borough's built form

Islington is constantly changing. Its attractive environment and proximity to central London contribute to bringing in visitors and inward investment. This translates to constant development pressures that continue to regenerate the borough.

Islington has a wealth of good architecture and the good fortune to have retained much of its original street pattern. It benefits from an historic environment with a unique townscape, individual buildings, cultural features such as its pub theatres and clubs, street markets and traditional craft quarters. These factors have provided the borough with a successful street based environment and a dynamic mix of uses.

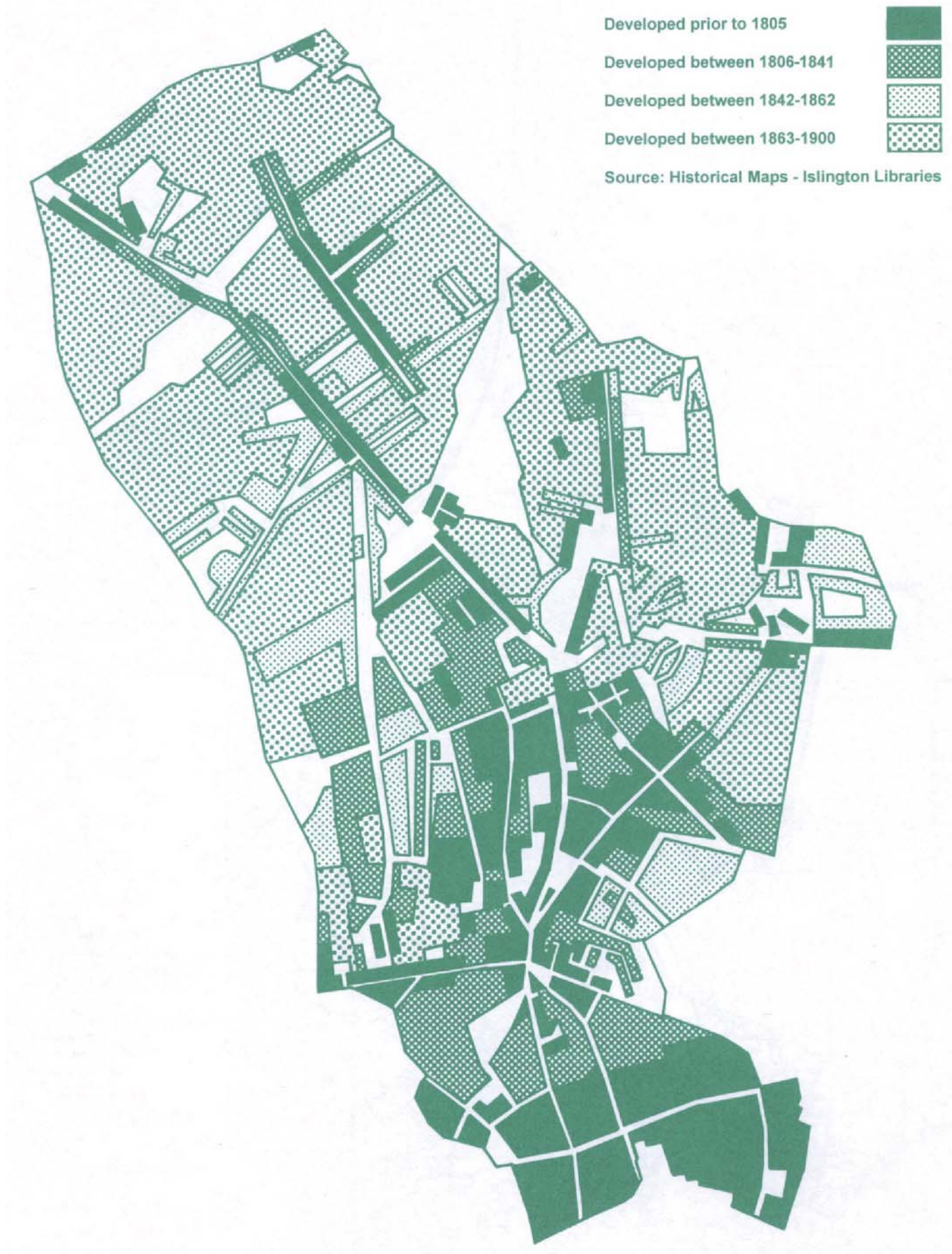
Historic development

Islington's present environment arises from several phases of development going back to the Middle Ages (see **Map 1**). Although very few buildings survive from that period, the main street pattern can be traced back to this time, when development was spreading beyond the northern edge of the City and consolidating around the villages of Islington and Newington Green. Even so, Islington remained a village surrounded by open countryside until around 1800. The main role of the fields around Islington was for dairy farming, supplying milk to the City of London. After the 1820's however, the pace of London's expansion accelerated. The residential areas of Barnsbury and Canonbury were laid out during the first half of the 19th Century in the Georgian pattern of terraces and squares and many parts of these areas still provide a pleasant residential environment. During the latter half of the 19th Century the northern part of the borough was almost entirely built over in the form of closely packed terraces, but occasionally, as in parts of Tufnell Park, streets were laid out to more spacious standards. The railway lines, with their disregard for street pattern and housing, were built across the borough at this time, and most main roads were developed for shops and commercial uses.

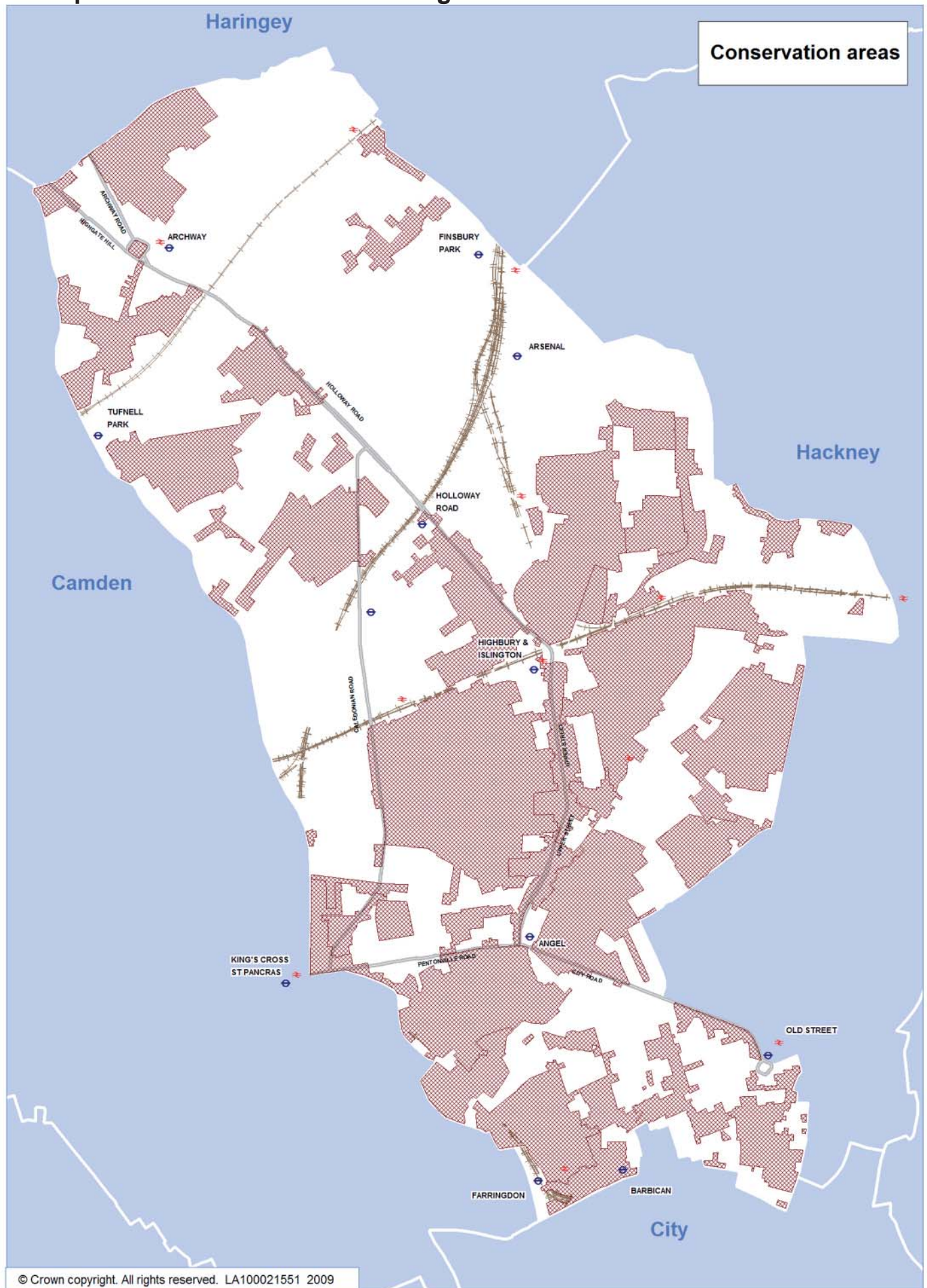
Widespread redevelopment occurred in the 19th century when residential areas, particularly in Finsbury, were replaced by industrial and commercial uses. After the Second World War extensive areas were redeveloped across the borough for housing, causing major changes to the street pattern and scale of development. On the edges of the City there has been a concentration of high density commercial development, substantially occurring within the existing street pattern.

The historical development of the borough has left a legacy of many fine buildings. About 4,200 are on the national list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (Listed Buildings). The Council has also compiled a 'local list' of several thousand other buildings which are of less architectural or historic importance but are still worthy of retention. The general pattern of the borough is of sound, consistent buildings representative of their time. Over one third of Islington is now included within conservation areas as shown on **Map 2**).

Map 1 Historic Development Pattern of Islington (from Islington's UDP 2002)



Map 2 Conservation Areas in Islington



Land use pattern and built form

Commercial Areas

Like other inner London boroughs, Islington radiates out from the central area into the outlying inner suburbs approximately following the pattern of growth along its corridors during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Superimposed upon this are a series of historic settlements, many of which have developed into polycentric sub centres including important commercial nodes such as the Angel, Nags Head/Holloway Road, Archway, Kings Cross and Finsbury Park. In the south of the borough the financial centre has also extended its boundaries. As well as being the areas of greatest activity, these areas have tended to suffer most from degradation in the quality of their physical environment during the post war years.

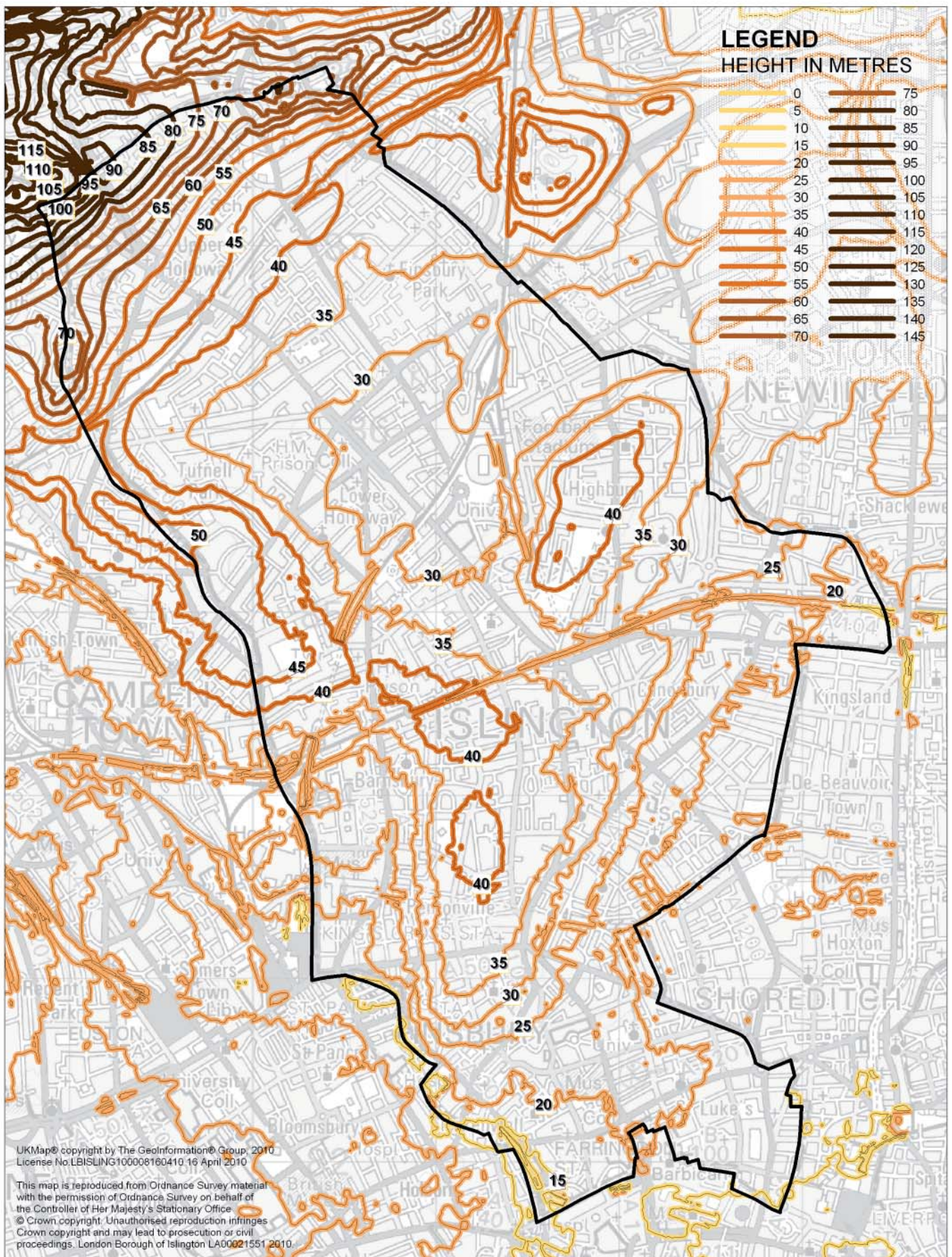
As long as development is sensitive to the historic fabric, most of these areas provide significant potential redevelopment opportunities to maximise their advantages (including their proximity to public transport, shops, facilities as well as jobs). Significant redevelopment opportunities have already been taken; most notably associated with Arsenal Football Club on both sides of Holloway Road. The redevelopment of Kings Cross area has already had an impact on the scale of buildings along York Way and the proposed redevelopment will create a new city centre location with buildings of significant height.

The Post War Residential Estates

As well as its main centres, Islington also has a number of post war housing estates, many of which suffer from high levels of deprivation. These estates are spread across the borough. There are nevertheless concentrated pockets of estates, which are close to many of the commercial centres. These include the City Fringe area/ Tollington (Finsbury Park) / Elthorne (near Archway) / the “Ten Estates” (near Kings Cross). These estates are mostly characterised by systems built construction. Their poor layout and poor relationship with the surrounding area has contributed to some of their social problems. Some of these estates are now the subject of urban renewal programmes that provide the opportunity to address many of their problems and integrate these areas back in to the surrounding street network.

Pre 1939 Residential Streets

Outside the commercial centres and post war estates, most of Islington’s built form is characterised by largely Victorian (as well as Georgian, Edwardian and inter war) residential streets. These buildings are usually organised as continuous terraces of typically two, three or four storeys within a perimeter block layout. With the boom in house prices there is considerable pressure to extend and alter these residential buildings.

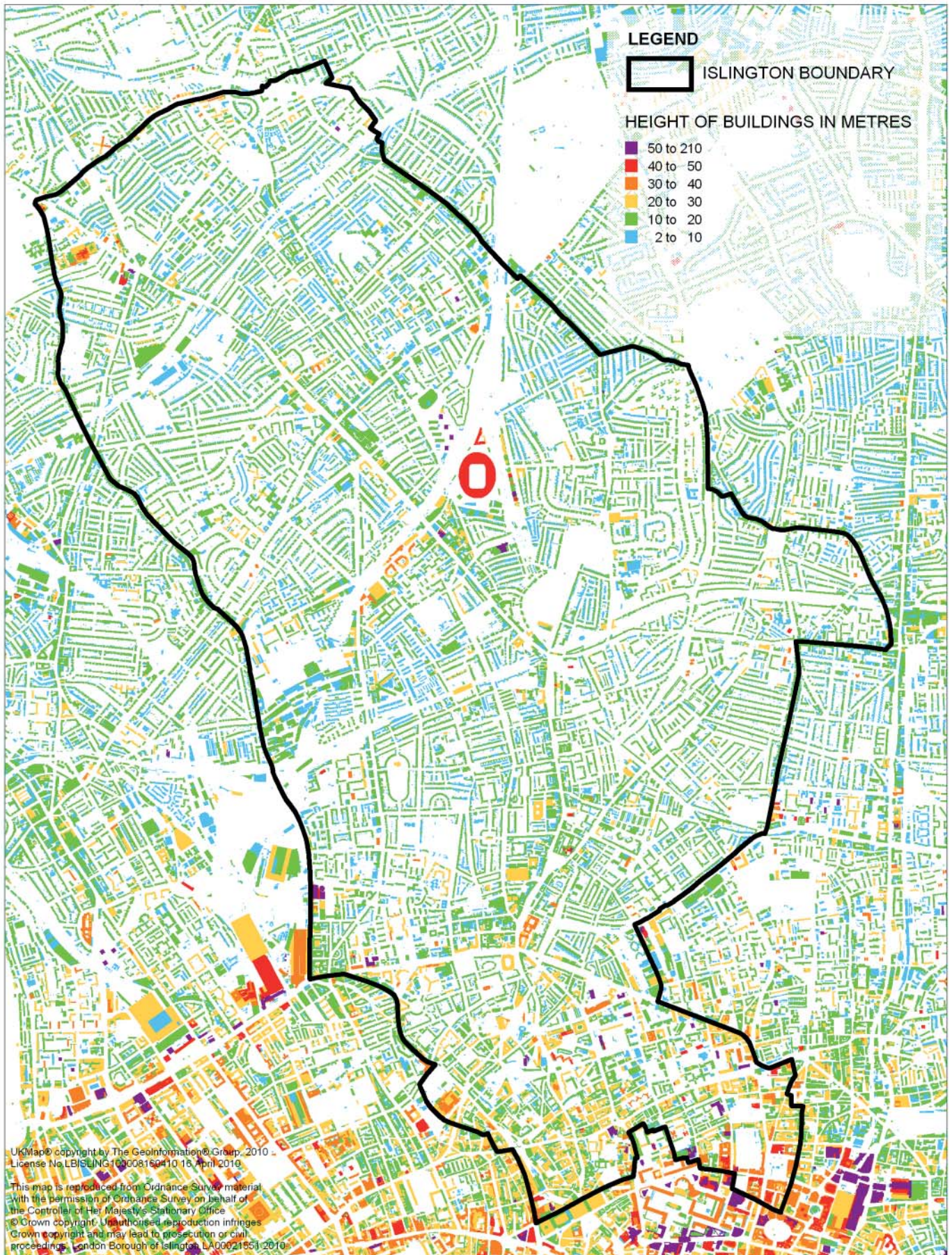


Topography

The topography of the borough (shown on **Map 3**) plays an important role in defining its urban form. Buildings located on the higher parts of the borough can be visually prominent even if they themselves are not particularly high. Generally, the land rises gently from the low level of the City fringe, around 17m AOD to 40m AOD (Above Ordinance Datum) in the north. However, in the northwest of the borough it rises relatively steeply up to the Highgate Ridge, which reaches over 125m AOD just outside the borough boundary. Developments built on the high ground within the borough need to be particularly sensitive to their impact on this ridge.

Existing building heights

Overall, Islington's built form is relatively low to medium rise (see **Map 4**) with the majority of buildings being between two to four storeys in height organised around a traditional street pattern. The few existing tall buildings are scattered throughout the Borough with a slightly greater concentration in the south-east section of Islington around the City Fringe. Many of these tall buildings are considered to be poor in architectural quality and use of materials, and pay little regard to their local and broader setting. Inappropriately located poor quality tall buildings have blighted areas for decades, and prove difficult and costly to remove.



5.2 Constraints and Opportunities

The following series of maps (**Maps 5 - 7**) illustrates constraints and opportunities for tall buildings to identify potential areas where tall buildings may be appropriate. These factors are used to exclude parts of the borough from further search, and identify areas where further investigation should be focused. **Map 7** shows the **remaining areas** (or areas of search) of the borough that are not covered by constraints to tall building development and relatively close to transport nodes as well as factors that may favour tall buildings such as town centres and the Central Activity Zone.

Constraints:

- **Protected viewing corridors (Map 5)**

Although the protected viewing corridors do not necessarily prohibit buildings above 30m, the protected vistas and the local views are not areas where tall buildings should be promoted. Therefore, areas covered by these views are removed from possible locations that might be suitable for tall buildings.

- **Historically sensitive places (Map 5)**

Tall buildings by their nature have a significant visual impact. Islington's conservation areas are generally low to medium height areas and sensitive to the scale of new development. Islington's Conservation Area Design Guidelines Supplementary Planning Guidance (2002) restricts the height of development in conservation areas to the height and scale of existing buildings. It is therefore considered inappropriate to promote tall buildings in Islington's conservation areas, so they have been removed from possible tall building areas.

Listed buildings and other individual heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, are also sensitive to the impacts of tall buildings. However they are distributed throughout the borough on small sites. It is not practical to assess the impact on these individual buildings and monuments at this strategic level.

- **Predominantly residential areas (Map 6)**

Islington's predominantly residential areas are more sensitive to the impacts of tall buildings than commercial or mixed use areas. These areas are predominantly low to medium rise and privacy and local microclimate effects are of greater personal importance to people in locations where they live than where they work and shop. Thus because predominantly residential areas would be adversely impacted by overshadowing, overlooking and microclimate effects caused by tall buildings they have been removed from possible tall building areas. (NB. The south of the borough has a significantly finer grain urban character than the rest of Islington so more detailed analysis of the predominantly residential areas in the south is needed to determine their appropriateness for tall buildings. This is being addressed in the Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan)

In addition, the role of tall buildings, in townscape terms, is to help define public places rather than private environments, e.g. by marking commercial areas and public transport interchanges. Tall buildings are also better suited to commercial uses than residential use due to the difficulties of providing sufficient private amenity space and high management costs of residential towers.

Opportunities:

- **Close proximity to public transport node (Map 6)**

Tall buildings, by having a greater number of users, tend to have a greater impact on the local transport infrastructure than lower level buildings. Thus tall buildings should be located close to public transport nodes, such as train stations, with the capacity for higher passenger volumes.

The tall buildings, as mentioned above, can also be used to mark the location of stations and help people navigate through the city. Thus areas where tall buildings are promoted should be close to a train station. Locations in Islington that are within 400 metres of a train station are identified as being potentially suitable for tall buildings. [This does not apply to areas also covered by a constraint listed above].

- **Location of existing tall buildings (buildings 30m + in height) (Map 7)**

Tall buildings can be used to mark the location of an important node, and a concentration of high buildings can mark the focus of many nodes, such as in the City. Clustering of tall buildings in central locations provides a strong visual reference reinforcing a sense of hierarchy to the urban form, which is not achieved with individual isolated tall buildings. Thus a supporting factor for new tall buildings would be to strengthen an existing cluster of tall buildings that mark an important location in the borough.

- **Areas in the Central Actively Zone (CAZ), town centres, opportunity areas, and areas of intensification (Map 7)**

These areas are strategically significant areas of commercial activity, high intensity mixed uses, and areas of greater development opportunity in London and so are generally the most appropriate locations to place high density tall buildings. The draft replacement London Plan (October 2009) states in policy 4B.9 that tall buildings should be generally limited to these areas. In Islington many of these areas are not suitable as they are covered by one or more constraints to tall buildings.

The boundaries for the district town centres of Finsbury Park and Archway have not been shown as they currently do not have formally designated town centre boundaries. The council is in the process of formally defining these boundaries as part of Development Management Policies. This document is scheduled for adoption in late 2011.

Map 7 shows the areas of the borough where more detailed analysis is potentially needed. These areas have been rationalised into the detailed study areas shown on **Map 8**. The detailed study areas have been identified because they have: 'remaining areas', fall within special policy boundaries such as town centres and Intensification Areas, may have some existing tall buildings, and are not covered by constraints. Archway and Finsbury Park are district town centres and have 'remaining' areas thus they have been selected for further analysis.

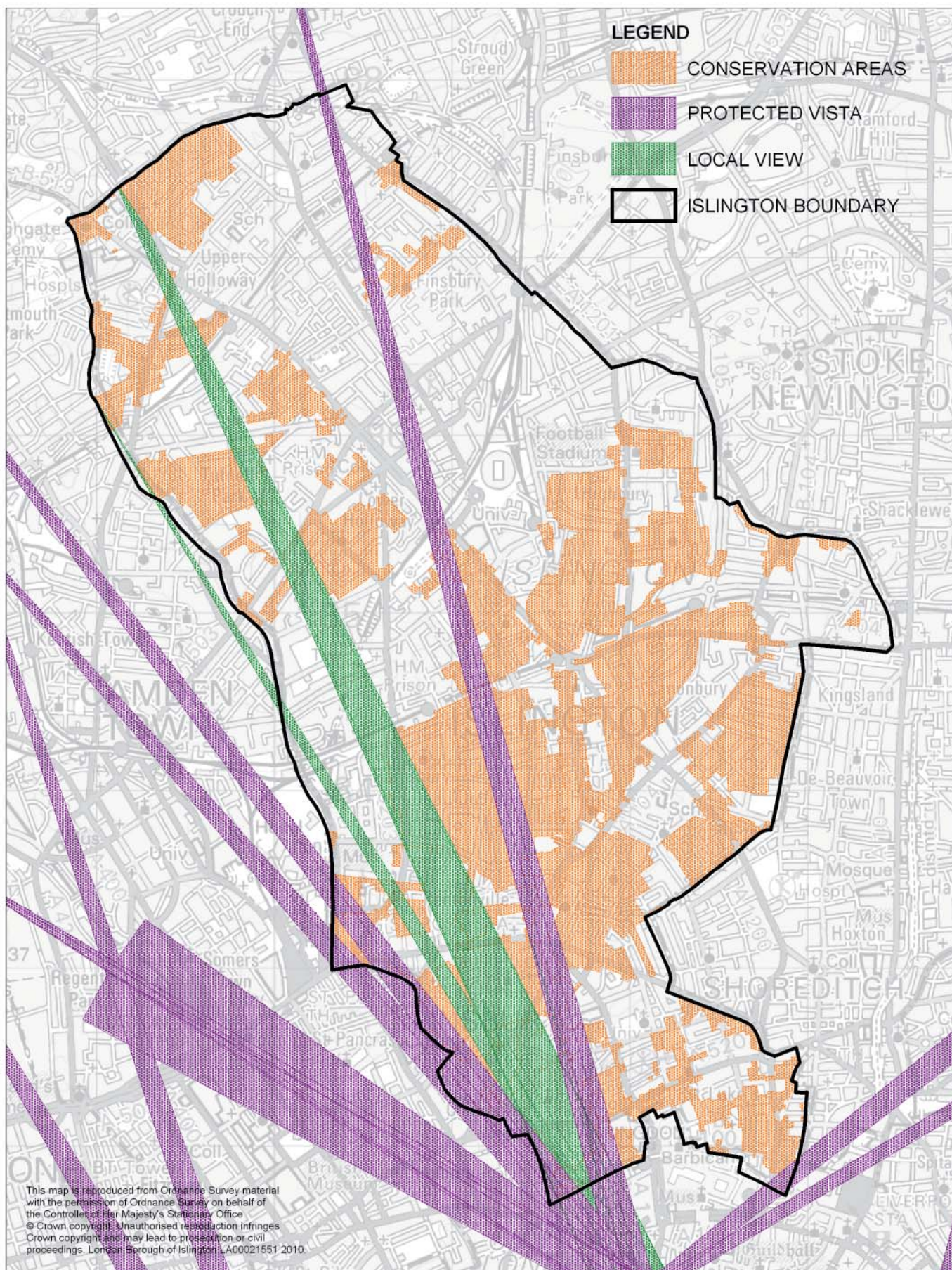
The south of Islington, south of Pentonville Road and City Road (all in the CAZ), has areas that would merit more detailed analysis. However, this area of Islington is being covered in detail by the Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan (AAP). It is considered that the AAP and its evidence base is the appropriate policy document to determine if tall buildings are acceptable in parts of this area. Thus this document will not consider the south of the borough in detail.

There are other 'remaining' areas (areas of search) that have not being analysed in greater detail such as the area around Highbury and Islington station. These areas are not being considered further because:

- they are not in a policy area that would justify new tall buildings as specified in the draft London Plan policy e.g. a town centre, Area for Intensification, Opportunity Area
- the areas do not contain existing clusters of tall buildings that would potentially justify additional new tall buildings to strengthen the clusters visual coherence.

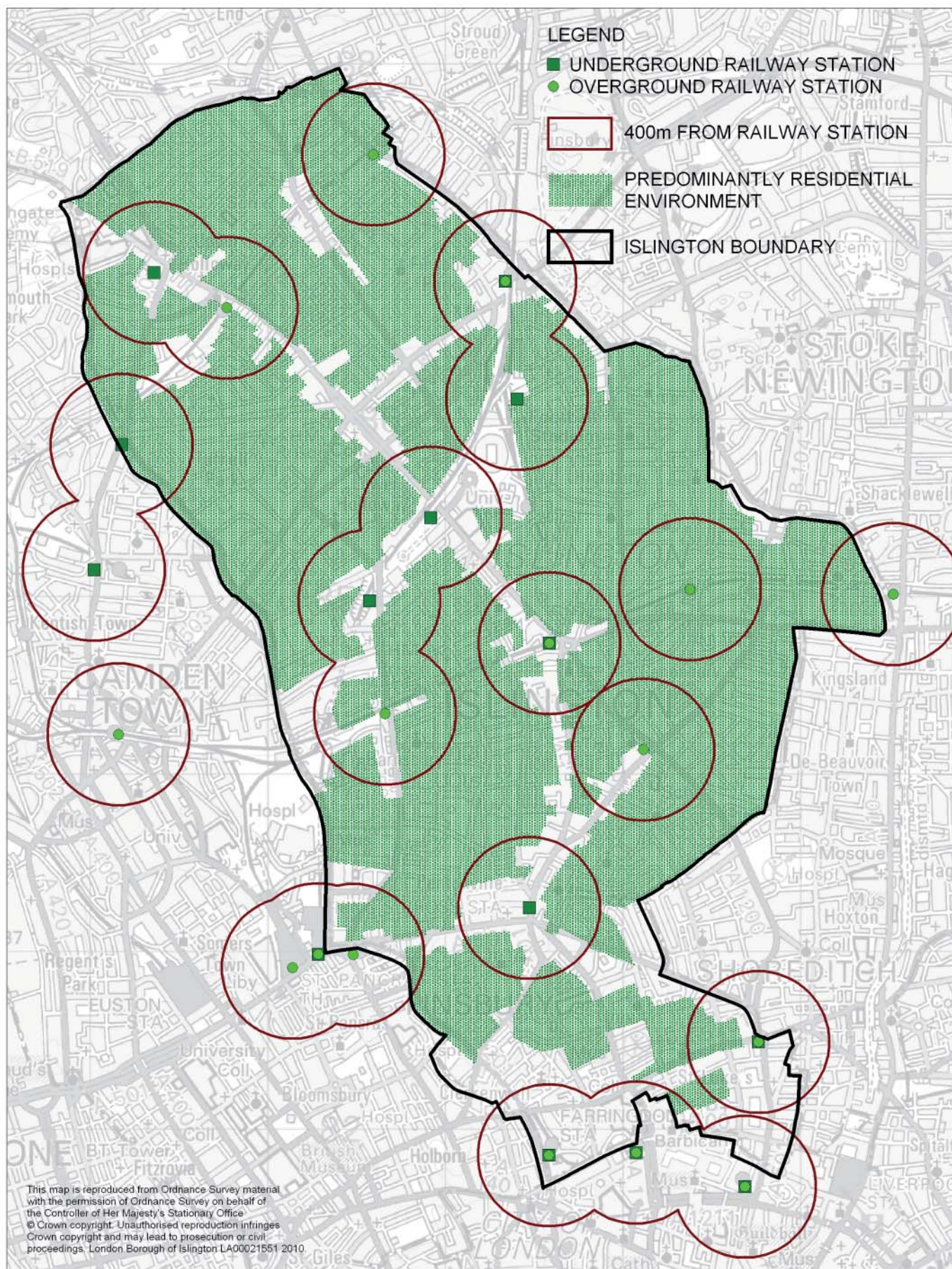
Conservation Areas, Protected Vistas and Local Views

Map 5

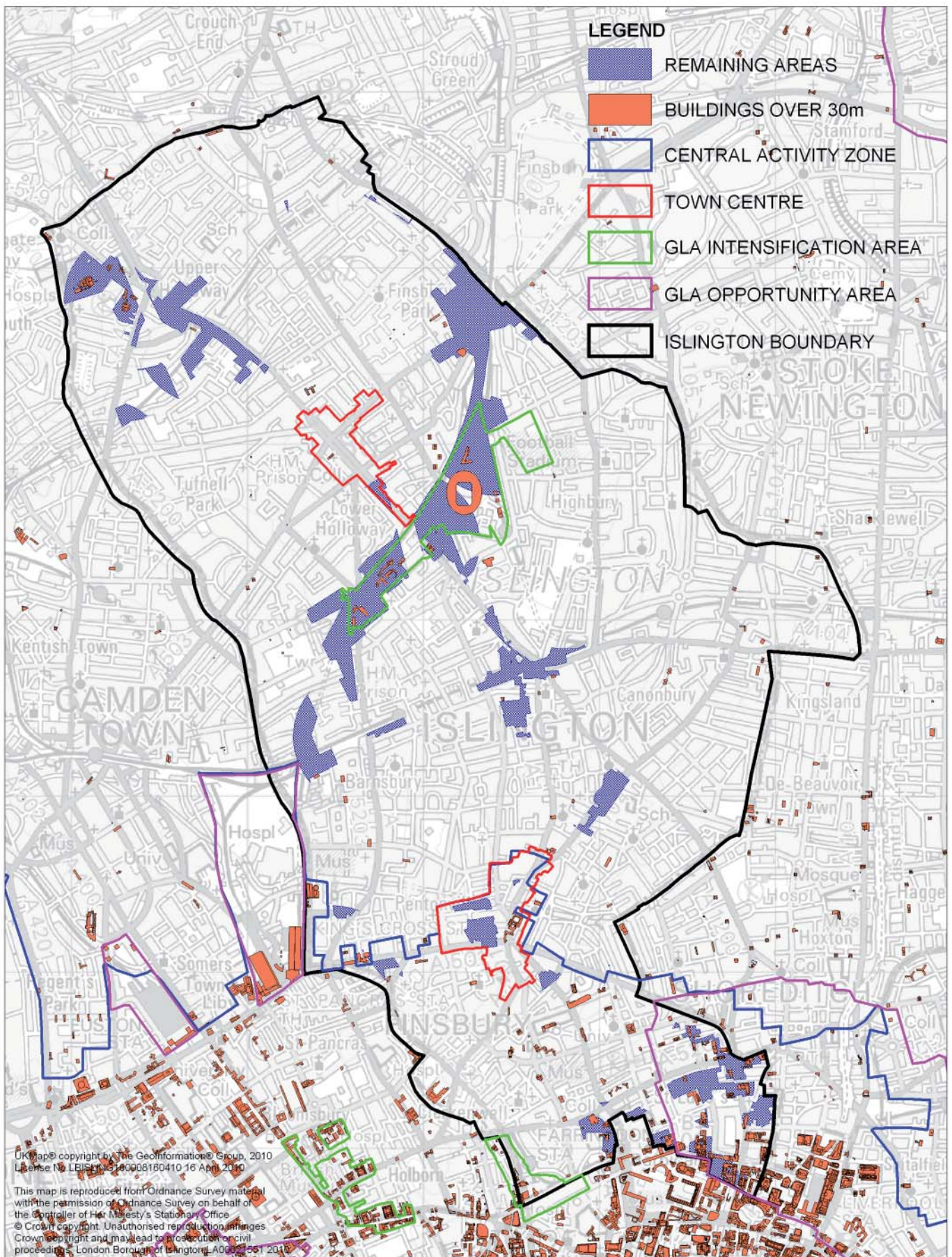


Predominantly Residential Environment and Access to Public Transport Nodes

Map 6



Map 7



6. Phase Two – Area Focused Analysis

Phase Two involves a more detailed analysis of the areas potentially suitable for tall buildings. **Map 8** shows the areas identified for focused analysis; which are:

1. Archway
2. Finsbury Park
3. Lower Holloway
4. Angel

Each area has the following maps showing:

- land uses
- building heights map
- building blocks and street network

The maps in this report are used as a basis for analysis of the areas and the discussion of the area's potential for tall buildings.



Archway

Land uses - Map 9

Archway has a cluster of non-residential land uses around the station and along the main radial roads. These uses are primarily retail, services and offices. The major non-residential land uses are to the north of the station and include Whittington Hospital and university campus (University College London). The commercial area generally consists of a thin strip along the main roads with residential streets behind.

Building heights - Map 10

The area has predominantly low level buildings. However, there are a number of medium height buildings around the station and one distinctive tower (Archway Tower) which rises 56m above ground level (about 114 m AOD). This tower dominates the area and is of poor design quality (slab form, poor interaction with street level, poor quality building façade material) and is not in context with the height of the surrounding area (see photos on page 26-27).

Street network and building blocks - Map 11

This map clearly shows that the surrounding street network focuses at Archway and creates a strong sense of a centre. The area around the station is highly permeable but the gyratory traffic system at the junction of Holloway Road and Archway Road restricts pedestrian movement. The area's importance is defined by the street network and does not require tall buildings to emphasise it.

Topography - Map 3

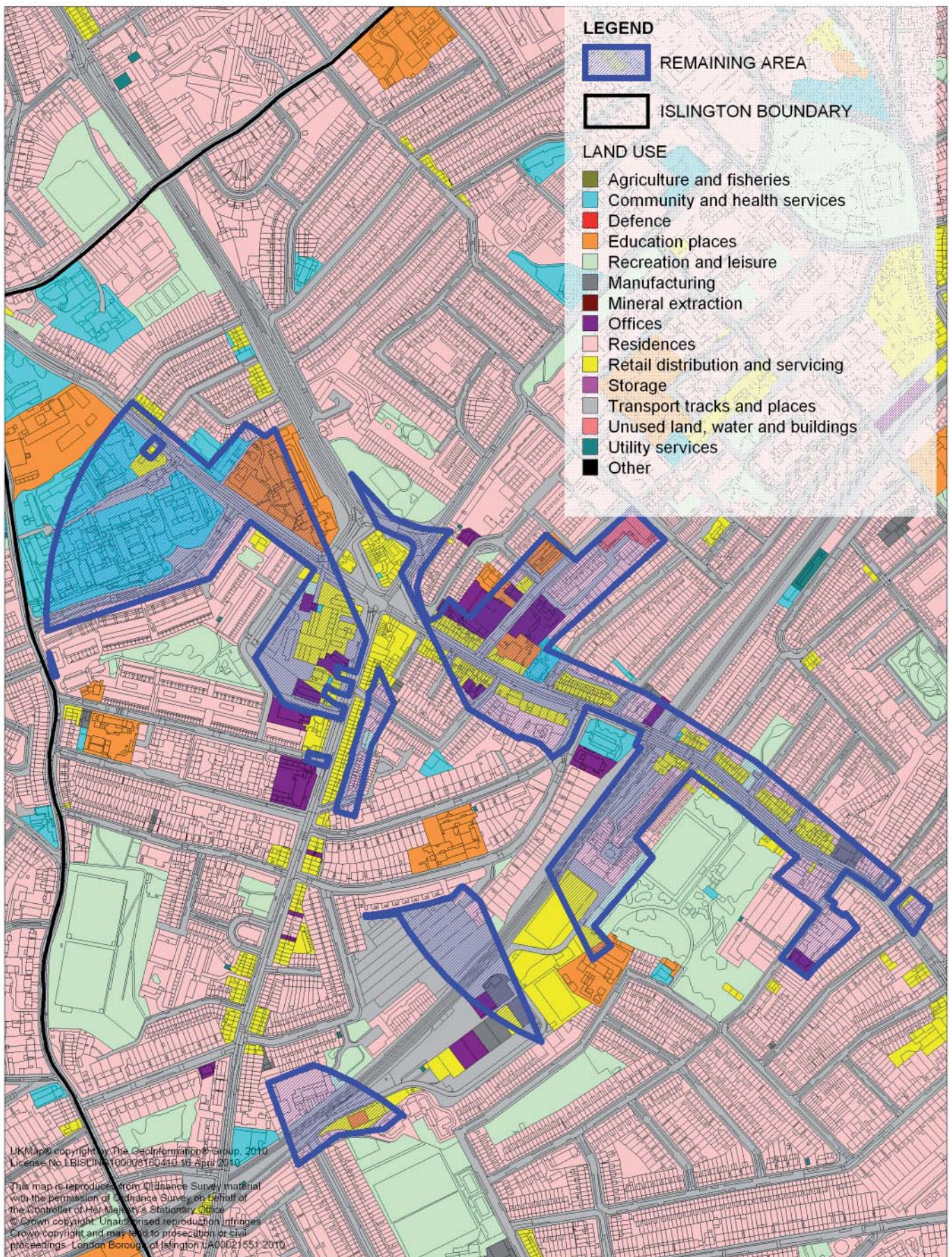
Archway's key characteristic for the purpose of this study is its topographic location, being one of the highest locations in Islington above sea level. The land increases in height rapidly to the north of Archway station towards Highgate Ridge as shown on **Map 3**. This topographic vantage point is recognised by protected local views from Archway Road and Bridge to St Paul's Cathedral (see photos 5 and 6, page 26-27). Viewed from the south, the buildings in Archway are set against Highgate Ridge.

Discussion

The protected views and conservation areas, and the presence of large residential areas significantly limit the area in the centre of Archway that could potentially be suitable for tall buildings. This is shown by the location of the 'remaining areas' on the map. There is already a tall building that marks the location of the station and an important road junction. However, tall buildings are out of context with the area and likely to have a detrimental impact on the views to and from Highgate Ridge. Thus there is little justification for new tall buildings in this area.

Archway Area Land Use

Map 9



Archway Area Building Heights

Map 10

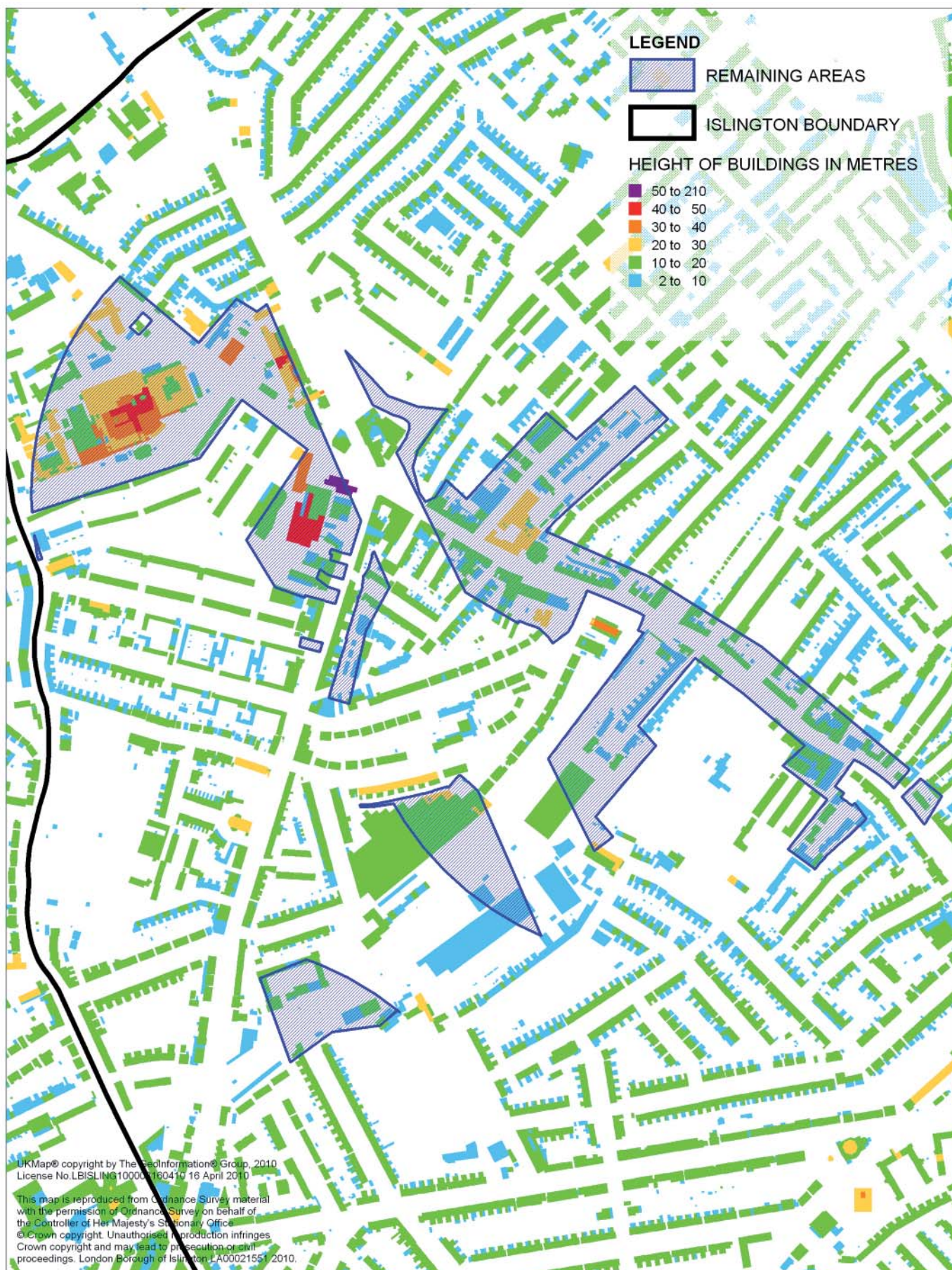






Photo 1
View south from Highgate Hill showing the dominating effect of the tower on the local area



Photo 2 View of Archway Tower from St John's Way



Photo 3 Highgate Hill ridge, 3-4 storey scale of buildings



Photo 4
View north-west from Holloway Road with the predominantly lower scale buildings in foreground

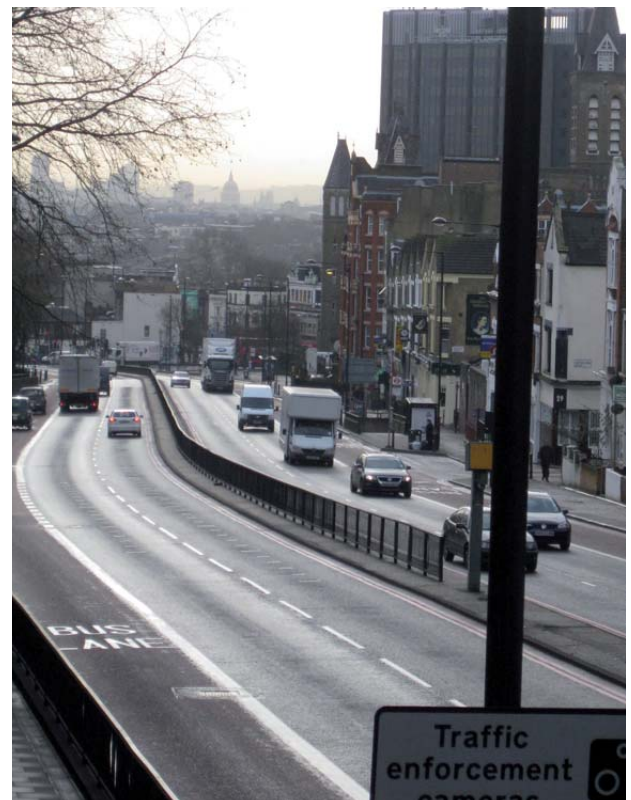


Photo 5 View from Archway Road, Archway Tower is on the right



Photo 6 View from Archway Bridge.
Archway Tower to the right shows how tall buildings can impact on this view



Photo 7 Harberton Road, typical scale 2-3 storey terrace housing



Photo 8 View from Boothby Road to the west, with typical two-storey terrace housing in local area

Finsbury Park

Land uses Map 12

Finsbury Park has a clear commercial focus around the station. The non-residential land uses extend from the station along the main roads of Seven Sisters Road (SW-NW route), Stroud Green Road and Blackstock Road (NW to SE route). The mainline railway viaduct cuts through the area from the southwest to the northeast. The parkland of Finsbury Park dominates the northeast of the area. The commercial uses are predominantly retail and servicing and distribution. Educational and community uses are distributed throughout the area.

Building Heights Map 12

Finsbury Park is characterised by Victorian townscape of dense relatively low level buildings (see photos on page 32-33). The majority of the buildings are less than 20 metres tall. There are only a few buildings above 30m tall, one is the grade II* Rainbow Theatre (photo 14, page 33) on the corner of Isledon Road and Seven Sisters Road and the other prominent building is the Clifton Court in Six Acres estate in the west of the area. Clifton Court sits incongruously in this predominately Victorian low level area (see photo 17, page 33).

Street Network and Building Blocks Map 14

The area surrounding Finsbury Park station has traditional Victorian street blocks with good permeability. However, the housing estates (Six Acres) to the west disrupt this street pattern. The combination of the railway viaduct and bridges and the large commercial buildings directly to the east of the station further inhibits the permeability of the area.

Topography Map 3

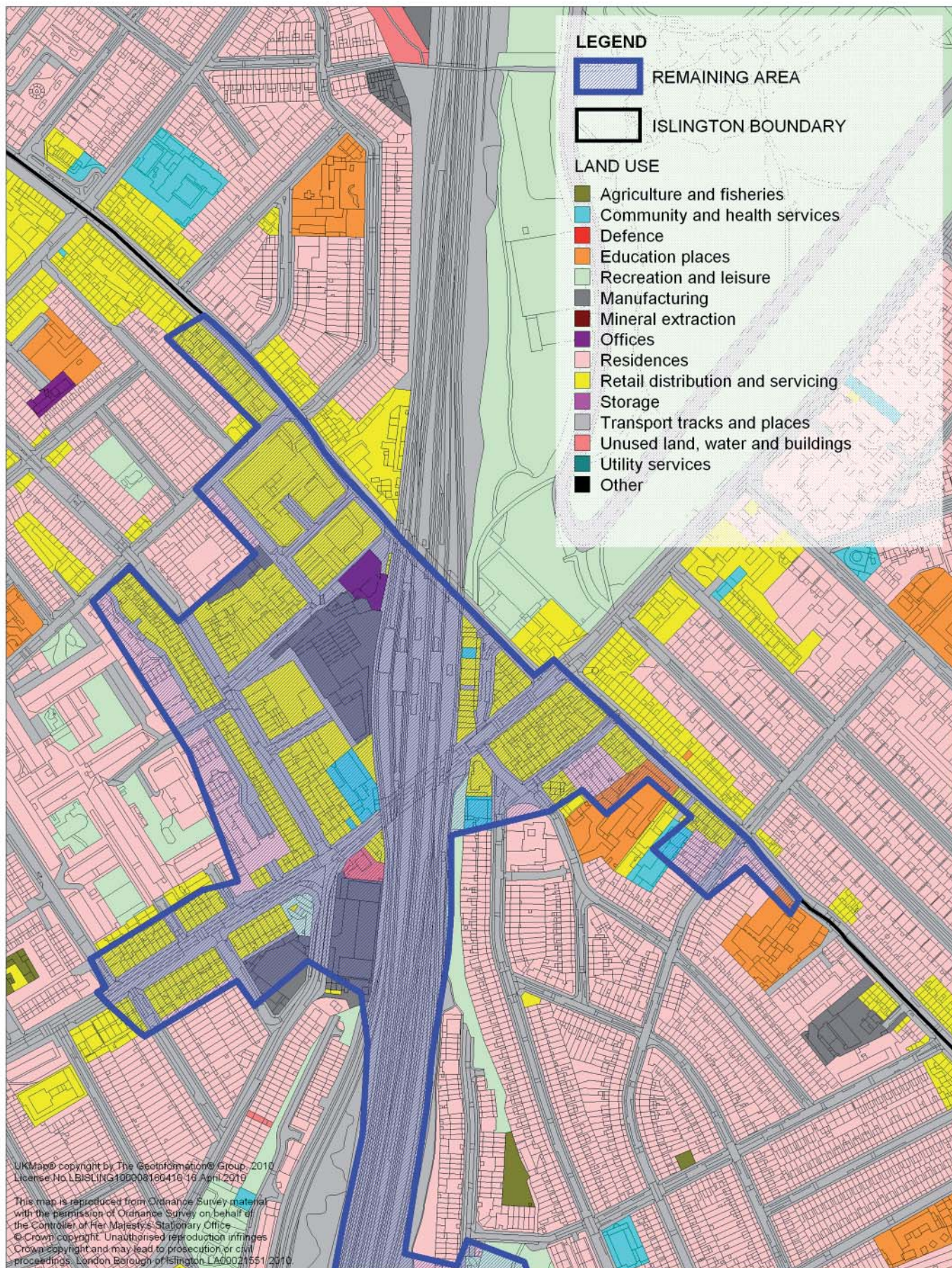
The Finsbury Park area is about 30m AOD and gently sloping upwards to the north. Taller buildings in this area would be clearly visible from the historic Finsbury Park.

Discussion

The low level Victorian buildings that make up the majority of Finsbury Park and the clear lack of tall buildings are significant factors when considering new tall buildings. Any new building taller than 30m would be clearly visible and likely to be at odds with the surrounding townscape. It could be argued that the legibility of the area around the station may benefit from an increase in building height in the existing low level commercial core but this should still be in keeping with the surrounding scale i.e. 20-30m, and help define the public space and station entrances.

Finsbury Park Area Land Use

Map 12



Finsbury Park Area Building Heights

Map 13

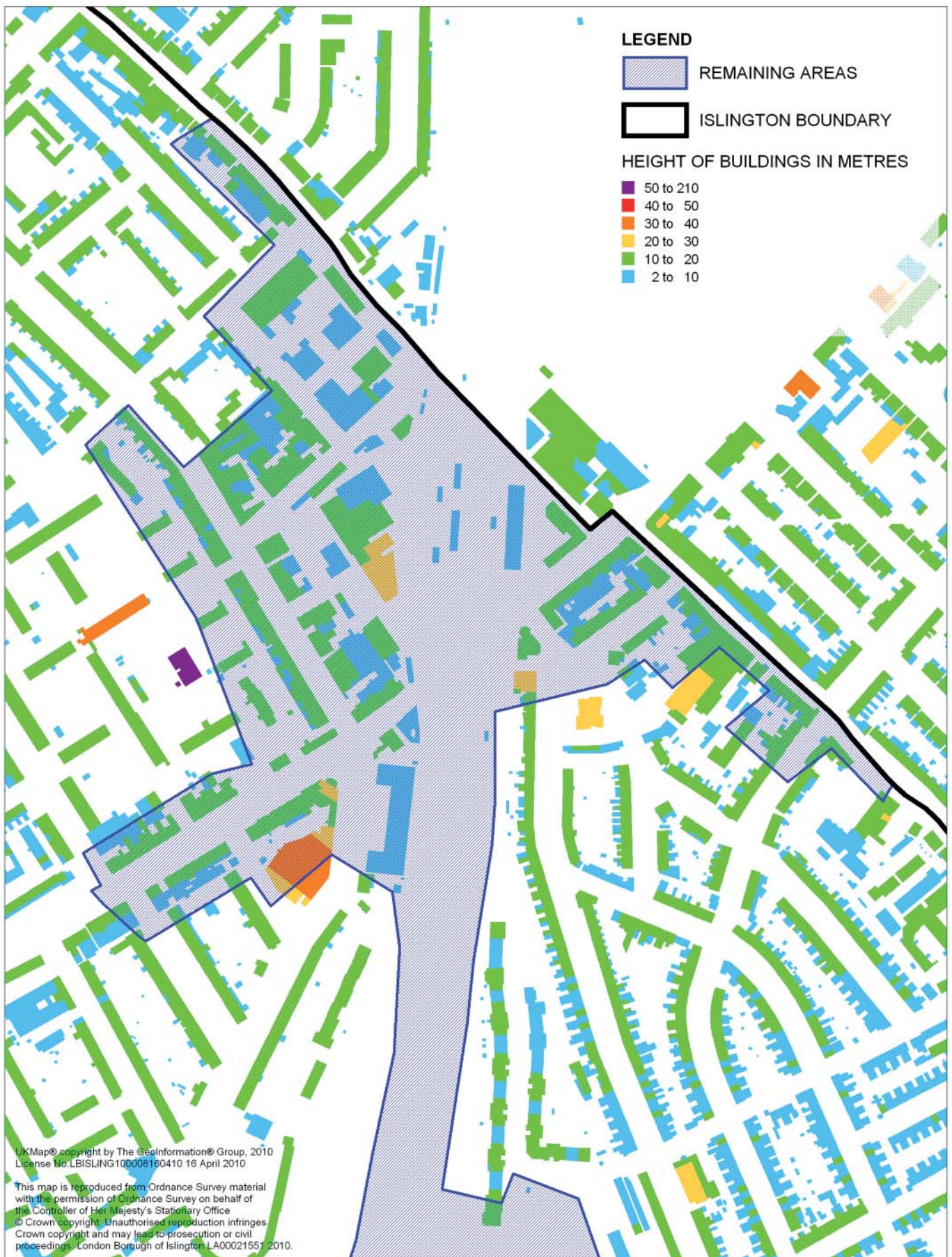






Photo 9
View east on Lennox Road
Shows predominant building scale in the area



Photo 10
View north on Stroud Green Road from
junction with Lennox Road



Photo 11
View south on Clifton Terrace towards Station
and centre of commercial core from junction
with Lennox Road



Photo 12
View south on Stroud Green Road showing
Morris Place and rail station.
The existing commercial core has relatively
low level buildings heights



Photo 13

View south of the front of Finsbury Park station bus interchange (Station Place) from Stroud Green Road. Showing existing modest building scale



Photo 14

View west along Seven Sister Road to Rainbow Theatre. The height of this building reflected its original use as a public theatre and its corner location.



Photo 15

View northwest on Fonthill Road from Junction with Seven Sister Road. This key commercial street consists mainly of Victorian 3-4 storey buildings



Photo 16

View north from Isledon Road to buildings surrounding Finsbury Park (Seven Sisters Road and Fonthill Road junction). Predominance of 3-4 storey Victorian buildings



Photo 17

View south west from Stroud Green Road over Morris Place to Clifton Court (tower)

Lower Holloway Area

Land Uses Map 15

Holloway Road runs from the southeast to the northwest through this area and the mainline railway runs from the southwest to the northeast. Along Holloway Road, are retail and service uses. Holloway Road underground station is located at the intersection of the mainline railway and Holloway Road.

The area is now known as the location of Arsenal Football Club's stadium (photo 18-23, page 38-39) and associated housing development (photo 24 p39) following the line of the railway. The London Metropolitan University (LondonMet) buildings (photo 26, page 39) to the southwest of the stadium are the other main land use.

Part of this area is designated by the London Plan as an area of intensification. However the draft London Plan (2009) proposes to delete this policy designation as most of the development has now been completed as part of the Arsenal schemes. The small area 'remaining area' which falls within the Nag's Head town centre boundary is predominantly small Victorian shop units with residential accommodation on the upper floors (photos 25, page 39).

Building Heights Map 16

Arsenal's stadium and the LondonMet buildings are the dominant building forms in this area (see photos on page 38-39). Both the stadium and the LondonMet tower are significantly taller than the surrounding townscape which is predominantly under 30m. Although the stadium is a large structure, its height is not overly dominant on the area (see photo 22, page 38)

Street Network and Building Blocks Map 17

Holloway Road is the principal road in the area. The area of focus for possible tall buildings is dominated by large irregular shaped blocks which reflect the area's history as an industrial area adjacent to the railway. There is no clear core to this area with the main centre being to the north at the Nag's Head town centre.

Topography Map 3

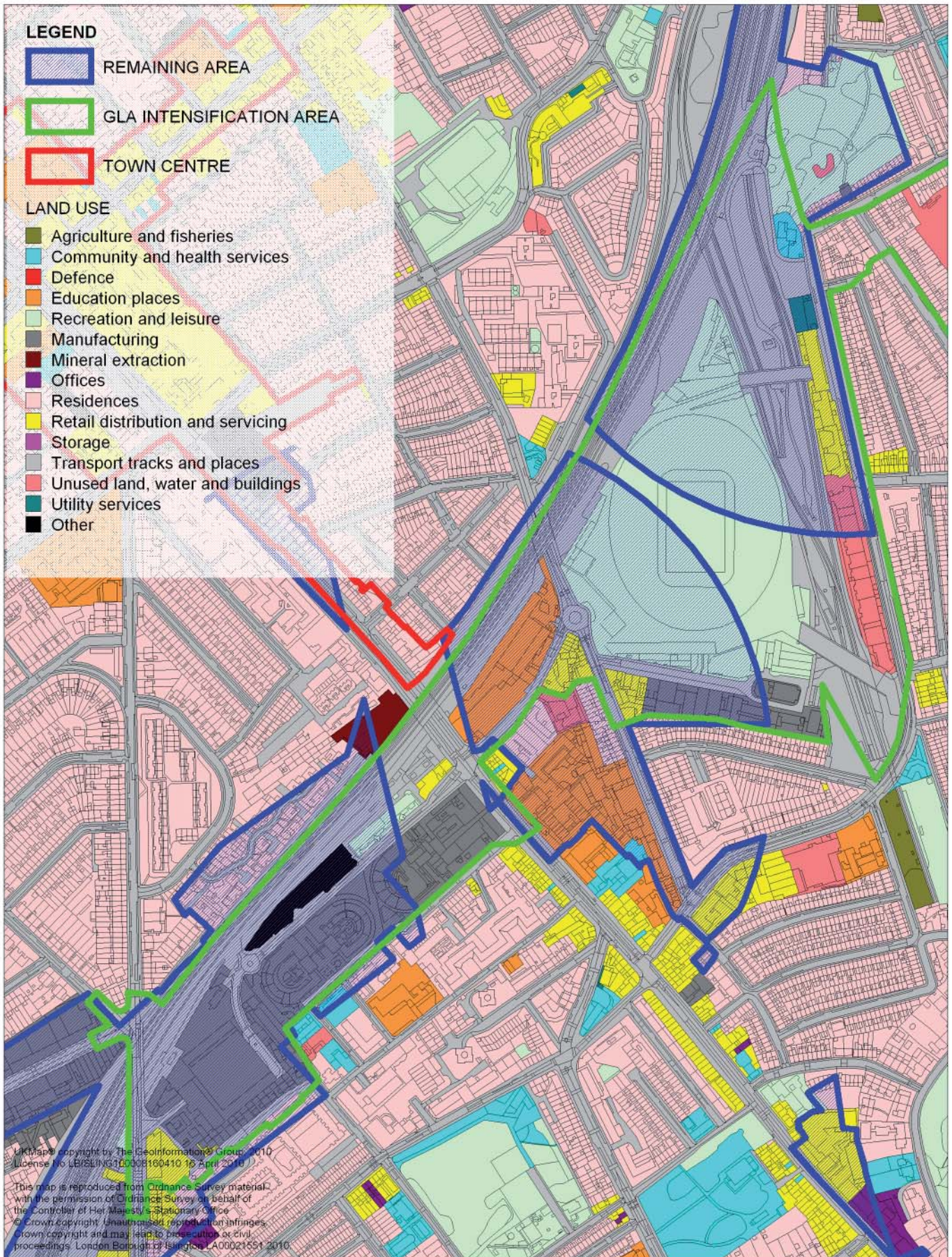
The Lower Holloway area is about 30m AOD and generally level. The land increases in height most noticeably directly to the west of this area.

Discussion

The key element of this area is the stadium, which is the major landmark for this part of London. It is important to maintain views of the stadium to aid legibility of the area and help people navigate to this major land use. The stadium should remain the main focus for this area, with the Nag's Head town centre being the principal centre. New tall buildings in this area would detract from the importance of Nags Head as the area's centre and the landmark of the stadium, resulting in a confusing, illegible townscape.

Lower Holloway Area Land Use

Map 15



Lower Holloway Area Building Heights

Map 16

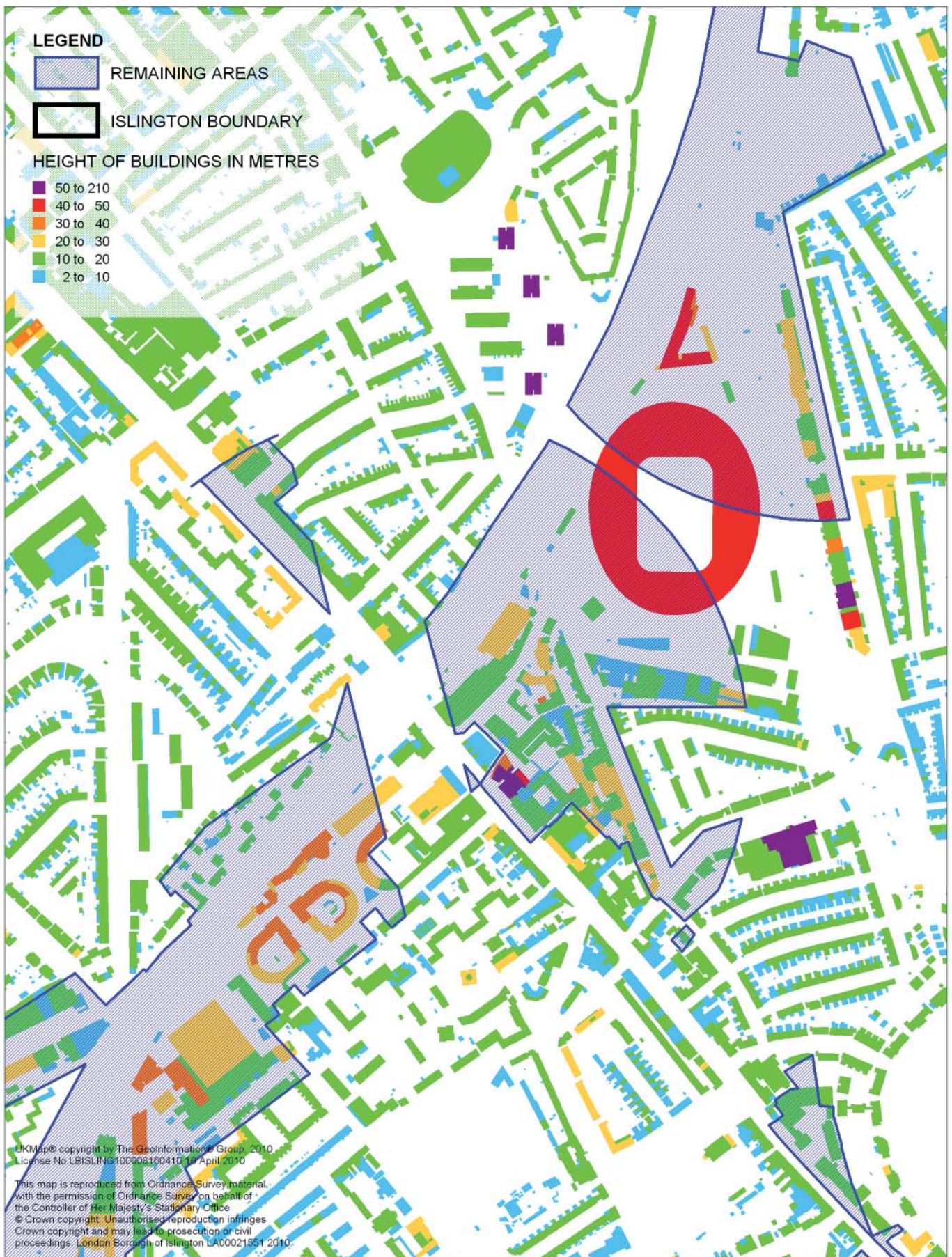






Photo 18
View southwest from Drayton Park to Arsenal's stadium



Photo 19
View of north end of Arsenal's stadium



Photo 20
View southwest from west side of stadium towards the LondonMet tower which is significantly taller than surrounding buildings.



Photo 21
View southwest from the stadium towards Holloway Road



Photo 22
View east from Holloway Road (junction with Hornsey Street) to Arsenal's stadium. The stadium is visible above the roofline but not overly dominant



Photo 23
View northeast along Hornsey Road to the stadium



Photo 24
View west from Hornsey Street showing recently completed residential and commercial buildings associated with the Arsenal development



Photo 25
View north on east side of Holloway Road in Nag's Head town centre. Showing Victorian shop units with residential use above.



Photo 26
View south along Holloway from underground station entrance. Showing that the LondonMet tower and surrounding building heights.

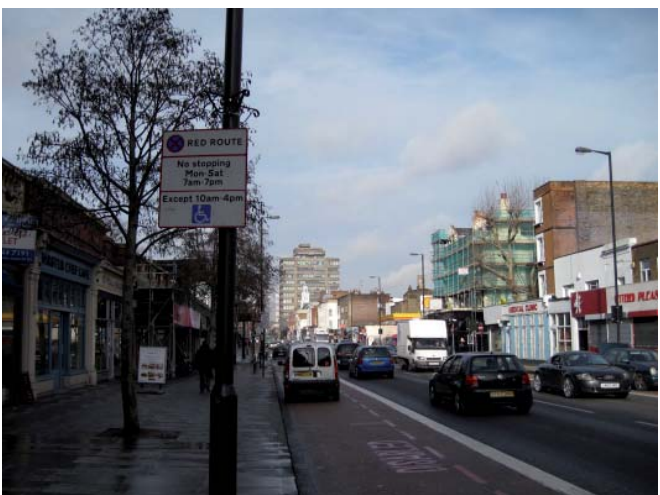


Photo 27
View north along Holloway Road with the LondonMet tower in the distance. Showing the predominant low level building height.

Angel Area

Land Uses Map18

Angel is the largest town centre in Islington accommodating retail, service and office uses, consolidated over whole street blocks around a central core. Outside the town centre and away from Upper Street the area is overwhelmingly residential land use. The town centre is a significant destination for locals and visitors and has a distinctive character.

Building Heights Map 19

The buildings are predominantly under 30m. The one exception to this is the buildings around Angel underground station, including the large office block directly to the north of the station. These buildings are large but not significantly tall as they are just over 30m in height (photo 37, page 45). Building heights reflect the width of the streets and reinforce public spaces successfully.

Most of Angel is covered by conservation areas (CA 18, and CA 33) which reflects the historic character of the area. This character derives from the 17th, 18th 19th and 20th centuries. The general grain is of individual buildings with traditionally narrow plot widths and a height of two, three or four storeys (photo 29, page 44). The resulting vertical emphasis is echoed by the original shopfront pilasters and consoles which divide properties. The variety of height and of design at roof and parapet level provides great visual interest. This is punctuated by several important local landmarks.

The council's Conservation Area Design Guidelines SPG identifies local landmarks which contribute to the character of the immediate area and to Islington as a whole. New development should not compete in terms of height or scale, or block views of local landmarks. The landmarks are:

- i) the Union Chapel Tower and Spire, Compton Terrace;
- ii) St Mary's Church and Spire, Upper Street;
- iii) the dome of the Angel Corner House, 1 Islington High Street;
- iv) the 'cinema' tower, 7 Islington High Street.

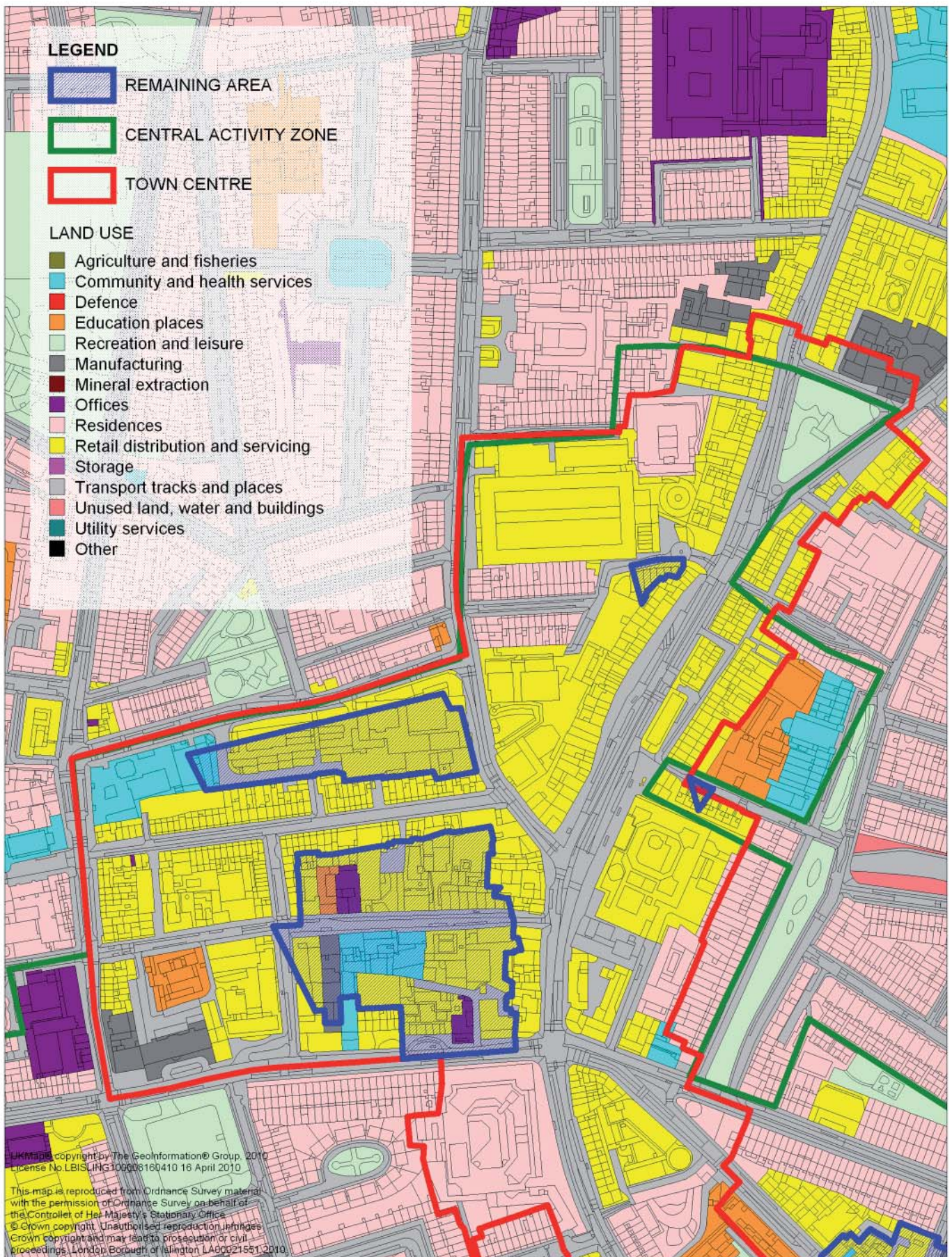
Street Network and Building Blocks Map 20

Angel is at the intersection of two principal roads, north-south (St John Street and Upper Street) and east west (City Road and Pentonville Road) with Liverpool Road branching off Upper Street near this intersection. These reinforce Islington High Street as the heart of the town centre. Although some of the block sizes near these roads are large the area is highly permeable and the clear route of the A1 and the historic landmarks enhance the legibility of the area (see photos page 44-45).

Discussion

The 'remaining area' (areas of search) in Angel is very small (photos 36-38, page 45) due to most of the area being within conservation areas. The only tall buildings are near the station and thus mark an important destination and transport node and reinforce the public space. The building plots in the focus area are small reflecting the historic development of the area. New tall buildings in this area would be detrimental to the historic townscape and detract from its unique character.

Angel Area Land Use



Angel Area Building Heights

Map 19







Photo 28

View south along Upper Street from Islington Green showing the general scale and form of the town centre



Photo 29

View of buildings on west side of Upper Street showing the narrow building plot widths



Photo 30

View south along Upper Street towards Islington High Street and Liverpool Road. The road width is widest at this point.



Photo 31

View north along Upper Street near Angel underground station entrance



Photo 32

View northeast of Liverpool Road from Upper Street. The area to the left of photo is the focus "remaining areas" identified in the report.



Photo 33

View west towards corner of Islington High Street and Pentonville Road from City Road



Photo 34

View north towards corner of Islington High Street and Pentonville Road from St John Street



Photo 35

View north along Upper Street from Islington High Street showing character of townscape



Photo 36

View west along White Lion Street from Islington High Street showing building scale and height in the "remaining area" of focus for tall buildings.



Photo 37

View south from Upper Street to existing tall building (offices).



Photo 38

View northwest along Liverpool Road from Islington High Street showing building scale and height in the "remaining area" of focus for tall buildings.

7. Conclusion

The phase one and two of the analysis for possible locations for tall buildings in Islington has established that there are no locations where new tall buildings should be supported, other than possibly in the south of the borough.

The report has established that the vast majority of Islington is clearly not suitable for tall buildings due to constraints of views, conservation areas and low and medium height residential areas. There are a few areas identified in the phase one analysis (referred to as remaining areas or areas of search) which potentially could be suitable for tall buildings and required more detailed analysis. These areas included: Archway, Finsbury Park, Lower Holloway Road around the Arsenal stadium, a small area in Angel town centre; and the south of Islington.

The detailed analysis for the south of Islington will be addressed through the Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan (AAP). This AAP will determine if there are any sites in the south of Islington that are suitable for accommodating tall buildings.

The analysis of the search areas involved assessing existing land uses, building heights, building blocks and street network to understand the character of the areas. The analysis revealed that none of the areas are suitable as locations to promote new tall buildings.

