

The two candidates' priorities, on affordability and localism, "set the frame for a more challenging planning ride for towers." During his time, Mr Johnson has taken over the planning permission from councils, known as "calling in", for 16 large developments, including a big residential scheme at Southall gas works. He has approved all of them, despite council opposition in many cases.

One that he pushed through – against Islington and Camden councils' and many residents' wishes – was Mount Pleasant, a residential scheme near Kings Cross. The mayor branded the residents that opposed the £1bn scheme "bourgeois nimbys".



Mount Pleasant, the area of land owned by Royal Mail, which saw a fierce planning battle CREDIT: GETTY

Last year, a group led by Create Streets' Nicholas Boys-Smith, created an alternative plan, with mansion blocks rather than 15-floor towers, and more affordable housing. It was backed by both Mr Goldsmith and Mr Khan, who said: "This is a great example of how big developments should work – working with local communities to design real neighbourhoods that work for the existing community."