

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2774

Title: Monitoring of the Housing Infrastructure Fund Docklands Light Railway project

Executive Summary:

This decision form requests approval for £25,463 expenditure for consultancy services to support the monitoring of housing delivery on 14 sites in Newham and Tower Hamlets. In 2020 the GLA entered into a grant agreement with the Government and Transport for London for £280.7m to be invested into the Docklands Light Railway (DLR). By providing extra capacity on the DLR, this grant was expected to unlock approximately 12,000 homes across multiple sites over the next 20 years. A condition of the grant is that the GLA monitors the housing delivery on these sites, which are mostly in private ownership.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Investment and Operations approves the expenditure of £25,463 for consultancy services to monitor housing sites for the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Docklands Light Railway (DLR) project.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

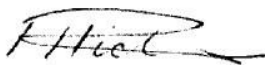
I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Rachael Hickman

Position: Assistant Director of Investment and Operations

Signature:



Date:

26/08/2025

PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. In December 2020, Mayoral Decision (MD) 2725 approved the GLA entering into a grant determination agreement (GDA) with the government and Transport for London (TfL), involving an investment of £280.7m from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). The HIF funding is paid to the GLA by the government, and transferred to TfL to invest into the Docklands Light Railway (DLR). TfL is directly responsible to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for delivering the agreed infrastructure outputs.
- 1.2. The purpose of the funding is to deliver various interventions that enhance capacity on the DLR and unlock significant housing development opportunities (potentially involving over 12,000 homes) in the London Boroughs of Newham and Tower Hamlets.
- 1.3. The GLA agreed an obligation with MHCLG to monitor the 14 sites in third-party ownership, that were expected to be brought forward for housing development, facilitated by the infrastructure investment. The GLA has a reasonable-endeavours commitment under the GDA to ensure that the housing is delivered. However, it does not have an obligation to spend money to acquire these sites; nor to provide additional funding to release any site-specific constraints.
- 1.4. The GLA's monitoring obligation was set out in MD2725. This MD also approved £60,000 of additional revenue funding spread across the 2020-21 to 2023-24, to help support the obligation on the GLA. The GLA is required by the GDA to monitor the housing sites until 2035, when all schemes are expected to have commenced on site.
- 1.5. In 2021 a consultant was appointed as part of a competitive process, led by TfL Procurement. The consultant has a contract with the GLA to provide monitoring support on the 14 sites until 31 August 2025. Consultancy support was required to provide the structure and resources needed to accurately monitor housing delivery. This decision form requests approval for £21,208 (retrospective authority for 2023-24 to 2024-25) and for £4,255 (quarters 1 and 2 of 2025-26). With the requested funding of £25,463, total expenditure on the project is £85,463.
- 1.6. Following the end of the consultant's contract in August 2025, the GLA will move to an in-house approach. Existing staff within the GLA Housing and Land Area teams will directly monitor sites.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. The requested funding allows the GLA to meet its commitment, under the GDA, to monitor the 14 third-party sites until the end of August 2025. The funding covers consultancy services to support the GLA in preparing updates of housing delivery on each site, in response to regular reporting requests from MHCLG.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Mayor and the GLA are subject to the public sector equality duty and must have due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
 - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 3.2. The “protected characteristics” are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership status. The duty involves having appropriate regard to these matters as they apply in the circumstances, including having regard to the need to: remove or minimise any disadvantage suffered by those who share or is connected to a protected; take steps to meet the different needs of such people; encourage them to participate in public life or in any other activity where their participation is disproportionately low. This can involve treating people with a protected characteristic more favourably than those without one.
- 3.3. The housing shortage in London disproportionately negatively affects people with certain protected characteristics. Newham and Tower Hamlets hold the highest and the fourth-highest rates of overcrowding in London respectively.¹ 22 per cent of households living in Newham, and 16 per cent of households in Tower Hamlets, experience overcrowding. For Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African households, this rises to 41 per cent in Newham; and 19 per cent in Tower Hamlets. For Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh households, the rate is 40 per cent in Newham; and 31 per cent in Tower Hamlets.² Increasing the supply of affordable housing (by funding infrastructure to unlock additional housing supply) will help to achieve positive impacts for people in these groups.

4. Other considerations

Risks

- 4.1. As a condition of funding, the GLA must monitor and progress the delivery of the 14 sites in third-party ownership. However, there are some sites where processes to secure the necessary planning approvals have not yet begun. These may not come forward for some time. While this poses a risk to the wider project, there is no financial risk to the GLA. This is because the GDA does not include any default clauses for non-delivery of the homes – provided that the GLA uses reasonable endeavours to procure delivery of the housing outputs, and meets its monitoring obligations.
- 4.2. Following the end of the consultant’s contract in August 2025, the GLA will move to an in-house approach. Existing staff within the GLA Housing and Land Area teams will directly monitor sites. There is a risk that staff will lack the capacity to undertake the same kind of monitoring that the consultant has been delivering. The GLA plans to streamline its reporting to ensure that it can deliver in response to regular requests from MHCLG.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.3. The need to deliver new homes, to identify and bring forward more land for housing, and to deliver improved public transport, is recognised in the London Plan, the Mayor’s Housing Strategy and the Mayor’s Transport Strategy. The London Plan also emphasises the need to bring forward new housing in sustainable locations, prioritising sites that are well connected by transport.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.4. There are no conflicts of interest to note for any of those involved in the drafting or clearance of the decision.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. The decision is seeking retrospective approval for expenditure of £25,463 for consultant’s services to monitor housing delivery. Consultant’s cost of £21,208 was incurred in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The remaining £4,255 will be incurred by the end of August 2025. This expenditure is funded from Housing & Land operational budget.

¹ Tower Hamlets, [Borough Profile 2024](#), May 2024

² Tower Hamlets, [Borough Profile 2024](#), May 2024; and LSE, [Mitigating the Impacts of Overcrowding in the London Borough of Newham](#), February 2025

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Consultancy contract start date	2021
Consultancy contract end date	31 August 2025
GLA monitoring obligation end date	2035

Appendices and supporting papers:

None.

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will be published either within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Ashleigh Tilley has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 18 August 2025.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:



Date:

19/08/2025