

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD 2837

DLR Thamesmead Extension: Social Infrastructure Study Budget Request

Programme: Building More Homes and Making Best Use of Land

Executive summary:

In the 2025 Autumn Budget, the UK government confirmed support for the Docklands Light Railway extension to Thamesmead. The extension is expected to unlock delivery of 25,000 to 30,000 homes across Beckton Riverside (in the London Borough of Newham) and Thamesmead Waterfront (in the Royal Borough of Greenwich). The significant projected increase in population will necessitate a corresponding expansion of social and community infrastructure capacity. Further work is therefore required to refine existing assumptions on social infrastructure provision and associated funding requirements.

In December 2025, Mayoral Decision 3424 approved the GLA receiving funding, from Homes England, to undertake a social infrastructure study. This had to be spent by 31 March 2026, as per the funding requirements. Officers commissioned a consultant to carry out the study, following a procurement exercise.

Given the scale and complexity of the work, the commission is taking place over two financial years; funding is required for the consultancy work in 2026-27. This decision therefore seeks approval to spend £20,000, from the Housing and Land operational revenue budget, on completing the commission.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Investment and Operations approves expenditure of £20,000 for the procurement of consultancy services to complete a study into the social infrastructure requirements associated with housing enabled by the Docklands Light Railway extension between Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead.

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: James Hewlett

Position: Head of Investment

Date: 27 April 2026

Signature:



PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. In the 2025 Autumn Budget, the UK government confirmed support for the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) extension to Thamesmead (the DLR extension). This is expected to unlock delivery of 25,000 to 30,000 homes across Beckton Riverside (in the London Borough of Newham) and Thamesmead Waterfront (in the Royal Borough of Greenwich).
- 1.2. The DLR extension aligns strongly with the Mayor's Delivery Plans for Building More Homes (Mayoral Decision (MD) 3378) and Making Best Use of Land (MD3434). It will deliver a significant number of new homes; and support the efficient use of brownfield land. The development of Beckton and Thamesmead is explicitly included in the Delivery Plan for Making Best Use of Land, under the Enabling a Step Change in Delivery workstrand.
- 1.3. The GLA's Decision Making Framework allows Assistant Directors to approve non-routine spend up to £75,000.
- 1.4. The projected population increase at Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead Waterfront is significant. As such, a corresponding expansion of social and community infrastructure capacity is needed.
- 1.5. The London Plan's definition of social infrastructure includes facilities relating to:
 - health provision
 - education
 - community
 - play
 - youth
 - early years
 - recreation
 - sports
 - faith
 - criminal justice
 - emergency response.
- 1.6. Funding for the DLR extension is expected to come from a combination of sources – including incremental borough Community Infrastructure Levy charges; business rates; and developer-negotiated Section 106 contributions. It is likely that social infrastructure will also draw on these sources. Therefore, work is required to keep refining and validating assumptions around social infrastructure provision, and associated funding requirements.
- 1.7. MD3424 approved the GLA receiving funding from Homes England; and spending it on procuring a provider of deliverability work on transport-led residential development, associated with the DLR extension. A requirement of the funding was that it be spent by 31 March 2026.

- 1.8. Following budget approval, officers ran a procurement exercise with the support of TfL Procurement. This sought a consultant to deliver a social infrastructure study for each location. Work progressed on the study during 2025-26; however, given the scale and complexity of the work, the commission is taking place over two financial years. This means funding is needed for the work taking place in 2026-27; and further budget approval is therefore required. The work must be completed by the end of June 2026. This is to align with the DLR extension delivery timetable for submission of the Transport and Works Acts Order, and in line with Government's expectations for the project.
- 1.9. This decision form therefore requests that the Assistant Director of Investment and Operations approves spending £20,000 from the Housing and Land operational revenue budget. This approval would enable the commission to proceed without delay. Funding is to be drawn down only if there is no alternative; or if more appropriate funding sources do not become available. Should alternative external funding sources become available, officers will notify the Assistant Director of Investment and Operations at the earliest opportunity, so that the approved budget can be released for other priorities.
- 1.10. Previous spend on this commission was incurred in 2025-26. This was funded by Homes England, and accounted under Regeneration and Growth Strategies unit in Good Growth.
- 1.11. Once spend has been approved, the work scheduled for 2026-27 will be triggered within the consultant contract. The study is due to be completed in June 2026.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. This commission will support the delivery of the DLR extension. It will do so by validating and refining the existing assumptions on the funding and delivery approach for the associated social infrastructure.
- 2.2. The DLR extension will unlock housing delivery at Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead Waterfront – making best use of two of London's largest remaining brownfield sites. The new extension will enable up to 30,000 homes; and create 10,000 jobs. The population increase means more social infrastructure is needed. This commission will support the continued development of a robust and well-considered social infrastructure approach at both sites. This will underpin the creation of a strong, sustainable and inclusive community.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act), 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 and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
 - 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.
- 3.3. The commission will help facilitate housing delivery in London. This decision is therefore expected to have a positive impact on persons with a protected characteristic under the Act. This is because increasing the supply of housing in London will help to address problems such as overcrowding and

homelessness, which evidence indicates disproportionately affect specific groups, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups; and women.

- 3.4. The London Plan states that social infrastructure plays an important role in developing strong and inclusive communities. It can provide opportunities to bring different groups of people together, contributing to social integration and the desirability of a place. This commission will support the delivery of well-considered social infrastructure – ensuring that the needs of London’s diverse communities are met.
- 3.5. When procuring the chosen consultant, officers worked with TfL Procurement to ensure that the specification and the evaluation criteria considered diversity and inclusion.

4. Other considerations

Key risks

- 4.1. The table below outlines the key risk and mitigations for the expenditure

Risk	Risk rating	Mitigation
The study relies on timely engagement with borough partners. There is a risk that existing workloads and competing priorities may limit officer availability during the study period.	High	The consultant is drawing on existing information and policy documentation where possible; and focusing borough time on priority questions. When drafting the scope of work for the study, there was engagement with both boroughs.
Both boroughs are currently updating their Local Plans. There is a risk that the policy or delivery context may evolve during the study; this could affect assumptions around infrastructure requirements, timing or affordability.	Medium	Officers and the chosen consultant continue to engage with the boroughs, to ensure assumptions reflect any policy changes.
Housing delivery is at the early stages. Changes to its trajectories – including phasing, housing mix and the proportion of family-sized or affordable homes – could impact projected demand for social infrastructure.	Medium	The chosen consultant is ensuring the commission includes sensitivity analysis, to account for changes to baseline assumptions.

Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.2. The table below highlights the links to key Mayoral strategies and priorities:

Document	Strategic fit
Building More Homes Delivery Plan (MD3378)	Addressing structural barriers to increase housing delivery – by securing flexible funding to enable housing delivery work to unlock more homes of all tenures.
Making Best Use of Land Delivery Plan (MD3434)	Ensuring Londoners live in neighbourhoods that are well planned and designed.
London Housing Strategy	Identifying and bringing forward more land for housing.
London Plan	Ensuring new housing capacity is brought forward in the most sustainable locations, and at optimum densities.

Conflicts of interest

4.3. There are no conflicts of interest to note.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Assistant Director's approval is sought to spend £20,000 for the procurement of consultancy services to complete a study into the social infrastructure requirements associated with housing enabled by the DLR extension. This spend will be incurred in 2026-27; and funded from the Housing and Land 2026-27 Operational budget.
- 5.2. As mentioned in paragraph 1.9 (above), should alternative external funding sources become available, the Operational budget will be released for other priorities. Receipt of new funding should be approved via the GLA's decision-making process.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

- 6.1. Approval will trigger the work for 2026-27. The study is due to be completed in June 2026.
- 6.2. The table below shows the full schedule for this work:

Activity	Timeline
Procurement team to trigger second stage of work in consultant contract	April 2026
Consultant to continue to engage with boroughs and stakeholders on the study's assumptions	April – June 2026
Issue of final social infrastructure study	June 2026

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.

Strategic Programmes

Does this decision seek approval for activity falling within the remit of a programme delivery plan? YES

If YES, which programmes does this fall within: Building More Homes and Making Best Use of Land

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:

Alice Noonan 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 27 April 2026.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

Date 27 April 2026

Signature

Peter Sebastian