

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2840

### Whitgift Centre planning performance agreement

### Programme: Making Best Use of Land

#### Executive summary:

In June 2019, the Mayor agreed a standing delegation to the Assistant Director of Planning to enter into bespoke planning performance agreements (PPAs) for complex planning schemes, with a value of up to £250,000, on a cost-recovery basis from the developer. This was to cover GLA officer and (if required) consultant costs. The delegation was to be exercised through an ADD decision form for each PPA.

A PPA for £61,000 has been agreed with the developer of the Whitgift Centre.

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Planning & Regeneration approves:

- the Planning Performance Agreement in respect of the Whitgift Centre scheme
- receiving £61,000 on a cost-recovery basis from Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (as the applicant).

#### 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:** Lucinda Turner

**Position:** AD, Planning & Regeneration

**Signature:**



**Date:** 27 May 2026

## **PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1. Planning performance agreements (PPAs) were formally introduced into the planning system on 6 April 2008. They are principally aimed at major planning applications that need substantial amounts of officer time and negotiation, throughout the life of the scheme. They allow officers to improve the quality of schemes that are eventually submitted as planning applications, and determined. They also allow the GLA to charge for officer time taken up by the larger-scale strategic schemes.
- 1.2. Mayoral Decision 2475 (dated 11 June 2019) gave delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Planning to enter into PPAs with a value of up to £250,000.

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1. The principal objective is to maintain an effective, high-quality strategic planning service, at a time of pressure on resources and growing external and corporate demands. This will be done by ensuring there are sufficient resources to deal with pre-application advice and applications – including call-ins by the Mayor. The expected outcomes are:
  - the GLA can continue to deal with increasing workloads (particularly around the pre-application service) by having sufficient resources in place
  - the GLA planning function can keep up with high and rising levels of demand for advice, whilst delivering an efficient and fit-for-purpose strategic planning function for the Mayor.
- 2.2. In this case, the PPA will fund a series of pre-application meetings with the applicant (and attended by Newham council officers) to discuss changes to the consented application (including variations to the section 106 legal agreement). A series of meetings will be necessary to ensure that the proposals continue to align with the Mayor's objectives, and are deliverable.

#### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in making these decisions "due regard" must be had to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation (and marriage or civil partnership status, for the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination only).
- 3.2. In this instance, the proposals have been considered and are not expected to have any impacts on those with protected characteristics as distinct from anyone else.

#### **4. Other considerations**

*Links to other Mayoral strategies and priorities*

- 4.1. Pre-application advice is fundamental to the implementation of the Mayor's London Plan. This seeks to ensure that the city meets the challenges of economic and population growth with much-needed housing and commercial floorspace (along with other social and transport infrastructure). The Mayor's comments and decisions on referable planning applications are a key implementation tool of the

London Plan. The pre-application service helps to ensure subsequent applications deliver London Plan objectives.

4.2. In this respect, the advice offered to the developer at the pre-application stage as part of this PPA falls within the Making Best Use of Land delivery programme. The GLA's Development Management team will, in this case:

- seek to apply the London Plan and relevant planning frameworks to the development
- promote flexibility in advance of the new London Plan where possible.

The aim is to bring forward delivery of several homes on this site, in accordance with the Making Best Use of Land delivery plan.

#### *Risk-management issues*

4.3. Income will need to be monitored regularly. This will ensure the costs of providing the service are covered and the income is spent within the Regulations associated with the Local Government Act 2003.

#### *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. As outlined within the Local Government Act, income derived from charging fees cannot exceed the costs of providing the service; but allows the budget to be balanced over a period. Consequently (and in line with previous financial years) any surplus income received, beyond expenditure from pre-application charges and PPAs, will be placed in the GLA's pre-application and smoothing reserves at the end of the financial year. This is in line with section 93 of the Local Government Act, which allows the GLA to establish a reserve to ensure all income generated is used on the service.

## **6. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

7.1 The project will be delivered according to the following timetable:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
PPA completed	May 2026
Meetings to discuss development of a viable redevelopment scheme	May to December 2026

### **Appendices and supporting papers:**

Draft Whitgift Centre PPA

**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 programme does this fall within: Making Best Use of Land. (The GLA's Development Management function will seek to flexibly and positively apply the London Plan and planning framework as part of this PPA, to promote early delivery of several homes on this site, in accordance with the Making Best Use of Land delivery plan.)

**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:**

John Finlayson 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 May 2026

✓

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:**

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

**Date:** 26 May 2026

**Signature:**

