

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA050522-0291

26 May 2022

Dear

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 5 May 2022. Your request has been dealt with under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004.

Our response to your request is as follows:

***1. Occasions where GLA Affordable Homes money has been allocated to Lambeth council (and/or Homes for Lambeth) for the Central Hill estate redevelopment? The dates of the application, the dates of the allocation of money (award of money), and the amount of money allocated?***

Project 1 - Central Hill Estate - Phase 1

- Lambeth Council and Homes for Lambeth submitted a bid for Central Hill phase 1 on the 13/04/2017 as part of the 2016-2021 affordable housing fund programme.
- The GLA rejected this project on 28/08/2020.

Project 2 - Central Hill Estate - Phase 2

- Lambeth Council and Homes for Lambeth submitted a bid for Central Hill phase 1 on the 13/04/2017 as part of the 2016-2021 affordable housing fund programme.
- The GLA rejected this project on 28/08/2020.

Project 3 - Central Hill Phase 1

- Lambeth Council and Homes for Lambeth submitted a bid for Central Hill phase 1 on the 30/04/2021 as part of the 2021-2026 affordable housing fund programme.
- The GLA approved the project on 14/10/2021.

The information you requested regarding the amount of money awarded to the Central Hill project and part 3 regarding the latest award of GLA Affordable Homes money to Lambeth council, is being withheld as it falls under the exception in Regulation (5)(e) (confidentiality of commercial or industrial information) of the EIR. This includes elements of the application such as the funding details, and the GLA's subsequent due diligence. The purpose of this exception is to protect any legitimate economic interests underlying commercial confidentiality.

This information is commercial in nature because it relates to the per-unit price of work that would be commissioned by Lambeth Council and Homes for Lambeth and will eventually be

used to procure contractors. The information is not trivial, nor in the public domain and was provided to the GLA on a confidential basis and therefore protected by the common law of confidence. Disclosure of this information would prejudice the ability of LB Lambeth to achieve best value for money with respect to the Homes for Londoners 2021-26 Affordable Homes Programme.

The information could be used by parties bidding for work to identify how much has been budgeted for work covered by the bid. A party may then be able to create a bid that is modified and not truly competitive. The confidentiality of this information is therefore required to protect the legitimate economic interests of Lambeth Council and Homes for Lambeth because disclosure could affect their bargaining position and ability to operate an effective procurement process.

In applying this exception, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information.

We acknowledge that there is a general public interest in transparency in relation to the manner in which the GLA and local authorities award, allocate and spend funds in relation to the programme. Disclosure of this information would help enable the residents of Lambeth to understand more fully the decision making and application processes behind the application by Lambeth Council and Homes for Lambeth.

The disclosure of this information would also inform discussion regarding the programme and its effectiveness within the London Borough of Lambeth. Providing detailed information held by public authorities is in keeping with the Government's transparency agenda and promotes accountability and greater public participation. Furthermore, the public interest is served by the GLA being transparent and open to scrutiny to increase diligence and working to protect the public purse.

However, on balance, we consider that it is not in the public interest for the GLA to release information that would prejudice the commercial interests of a third-party. This is particularly important where that third-party is required to achieve value-for-money on behalf of their communities in relation to the expenditure of funds from the public purse.

We consider that the best interests of the people and communities of London – are best served by ensuring that the council is able achieve value-for-money. The public interest would not be met if the GLA released information that could result in the expenditure of further public money. Disclosure by the GLA would be likely to have a detrimental effect on the procurement of services by Lambeth Council and Homes for Lambeth, potentially prejudicing their future negotiating capabilities.

***2. Occasions where GLA Affordable Homes money has been subsequently withdrawn from Lambeth by the GLA e.g. due to Lambeth not following GLA guidance on the ballot process. The date the money was retracted, the official reason given, and by whom, and the amount.***

There have been no instances where the Affordable Homes Funding awarded to Lambeth Council has been subsequently withdrawn by the GLA in regard to Central Hill – see response above for more detail.

***3. The latest award of GLA Affordable Homes money to Lambeth council (and/or Homes for Lambeth) for the Central Hill estate redevelopment. The date this was awarded the amount, the amount and if any exemptions to a resident ballot were applied for? If they were, what these exemptions were and if they were approved/accepted.***

This relates to project 3 above.

In relation to your question on whether any exemptions to a resident ballot were applied for, we can state that LB Lambeth have not applied for any exemptions to a residents' ballot being undertaken for the Central Hill Estate regeneration scheme. Please see the attached appendix 1 which shows a snapshot of LB Lambeth's funding bid for Central Hill that pertains to this point, for your information.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

#### **Information Governance Officer**

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at: [Freedom of information | London City Hall](#)

#### Appendix 1

Does the GLA's requirement to hold a resident ballot, as detailed in section 8 of the GLA's Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide, apply to this project?

Yes

How do you plan to proceed?

Hold a resident ballot in line with the GLA requirements

Explain your resident ballot proposals

Resident engagement and design activities required for ballot will be fully compliant with relevant GLA policies and clearly defined in briefing documents and procurement of required resources.

Does the project hold an exemption from the GLA's ballot requirement that remains valid?

No