

## EXTENDING THE DOCKLANDS LIGHT RAILWAY TO BECKTON RIVERSIDE AND THAMESMEAD

### CONSULTATION RESPONSE

**Response from:** BusinessLDN, One Oliver's Yard, 55-71 City Road, London EC1Y 1HQ

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### INTRODUCTION

We welcome the opportunity to respond to TfL's public consultation on the proposal to extend the Docklands Light Railway (DLR).

BusinessLDN is a business membership organisation with the mission to make London the best city in the world in which to do business, working with and for the whole UK. We represent 170 large leading businesses across London, spanning a wide range of economic sectors.

The proposed DLR extension plans would significantly improve local transport connectivity and wider connectivity in London and, similarly, help support the construction of thousands of new homes, including affordable homes, which are needed both locally and across the capital. Overall, the extension would deliver strong local and regional benefits and help drive economic growth.

We fully support the proposals.

### DETAILED COMMENTS

1. The proposed DLR extension will **improve transport links** in Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead, two areas which currently lack direct rail services. Enhancing connectivity, reducing travel times and making it easier for residents, workers and visitors to access these areas will provide additional transport capacity to the capital's network.
2. Improving public transport connections to East and Central London, both directly and by enabling easy interchange with the Jubilee and the Elizabeth lines, supports the **shift towards more sustainable transport**, reducing traffic levels and playing a part in reducing carbon emissions through modal shift.
3. Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead are two areas within the Thames Estuary Growth Corridor and will play an important role in helping London to **meet its housing needs** and supporting economic growth. Development in these two areas will enhance the existing community, creating new opportunities and providing new or improved social and physical infrastructure. Recent public transport extensions, such as the London Overground extension to Barking Riverside and the introduction of the Elizabeth line, have led to the creation of thousands of new homes and jobs, and connecting communities to new activities. Enhancing the transport capacity in the area is expected to support the construction of between 25,000 to 30,000 new homes.

4. **Significant economic benefits** will be brought to Thamesmead and surrounding regions, such as increased employment opportunities, support for local businesses, and the potential to attract new investments and development projects. The proposed extension will enhance connectivity in East London not just for individuals but also for businesses. By improving transport links between Thamesmead, the wider Docklands area and other parts of London, key business areas such as London City Airport, Stratford and Canary Wharf will become more accessible, opening up and boosting economic activity. Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead will become more attractive to investors and could lead to more startups and other businesses choosing to locate in these areas. Increased business activity would give a boost to productivity and economic growth of the affected areas and London more widely. By connecting individuals and businesses, communities on both sides of the river Thames will be better connected to new job opportunities, supporting up to 10,000 new jobs.
5. To capture the full potential of the proposed extension plans, it is important to ensure the effective **integration of the new DLR sections with existing transport networks**. A combination of sustainable and active travel options, including a new high-frequency bus transit scheme from Woolwich to Abbey Wood via Thamesmead, will be needed to ensure seamless travel across the local area. We welcome the Government's recent decision to provide funding for such a bus transit scheme, using priority measures to provide frequent connections to the Elizabeth Line and DLR services.
6. Should the proposed plans go ahead, these **should proceed in line with London's 2030 net-zero strategy** ensuring low associated operational and whole life-cycle carbon emissions. Consideration should also be given to the local ecosystem and to nature-based solutions and adaptation measures that could further enhance London's climate resilience to extreme weather scenarios. We were pleased to hear during our recent site visit at Thamesmead that landscape (and riverscape) planning and culture/community building are key elements of these early stages of design for the project.
7. As London grows and changes, with its population expected to exceed 10 million people by 2040, its transport infrastructure must be able to adapt. We are satisfied that the alternatives to the proposed plan of cross-river DLR extension are less effective in terms of overall cost-benefit assessment; it is also very positive that the project is being **designed with future flexibility in mind**, allowing for further expansion (e.g. towards Bexley) or modification if needed in the future.
8. The financial aspects of extending the DLR, including the exact total cost and how the project will be funded are not clear at this stage. A transport project like this is likely to draw on **funding from the private and public sector**, including TfL, local and regional sources and we would urge the government to contribute towards funding this project.