

## EXTENDING THE DLR TO BECKTON RIVERSIDE AND THAMESMEAD

### CONSULTATION RESPONSE

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### INTRODUCTION

BusinessLDN welcomes the opportunity to respond to TfL's public consultation on the proposal to extend the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead.

We are a business membership organisation with a mission to make London the best city in the world in which to do business, working with and for the whole UK. Our 170 members span a wide range of sectors and represent some of the capital's largest employers and investors.

Having responded to TfL's initial consultation in March 2024, we are pleased to see that the development of a detailed proposal is aligned with our preferred option of extending the DLR from Gallions Reach to Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead. We are satisfied that the optioneering process has considered the potential impact on the environment, users, businesses and wider communities and is a result of close collaboration between TfL and its partners, the Royal Borough of Greenwich and London Borough of Newham, and landowners Peabody, Lendlease, Aberdeen Investments and St William.

The recent Spending Review acknowledged "*the potential housing and economic growth that could be stimulated by extending the DLR*" but stopped short of giving the explicit commitment this shovel-ready project needs. We welcome investment in all regions but it is vital that London – as an engine of growth for the whole UK and a global city – also gets the backing required to deliver major projects that it needs.

We urge the Government to give the green light without delay. This scheme has overwhelming local support, could unlock 30,000 new homes, create 10,000 new jobs, and drive inclusive growth. It is projected to add £15bn to the UK economy. If London is to meet its target of 88,000 new homes a year, investment in strategic transport links like this is essential.

**In summary, we fully support the proposals.**

### DETAILED COMMENTS

1. The proposed DLR extension plans would significantly **improve both local and wider transport connectivity**, help support the construction of thousands of new homes, including affordable homes, which are needed both locally and across the capital. The proposed extension has the potential to deliver strong local and regional benefits and help drive economic growth.
2. The proposals will **improve transport links** in Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead, two areas that 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.

3. 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 congestion and playing a major part in reducing carbon emissions through modal shift.
4. Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead are both located 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 areas will enhance the existing community, creating new opportunities and providing new or improved social and physical infrastructure.
5. 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, while connecting communities to new opportunities. Enhancing the transport capacity in the area is expected to support the construction of up to 30,000 new homes, create up to 10,000 new jobs and **drive growth**.
6. **Substantial 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, boosting economic activity.
7. 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 boost productivity and economic growth. 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.
8. 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 will be needed to ensure seamless travel across the local area. We welcome the Government's decision to provide funding for such a bus transit scheme, using priority measures to provide frequent connections to the Elizabeth Line and DLR services.
9. It will be necessary to assess the likely **impact of the proposed plans on Gallions Reach station** – more specifically, the effects of the additional passenger demand generated by the extension and any station works needed to accommodate this capacity.
10. It will also be vital for TfL to continue to work closely with stakeholders and landowners to **minimise the impact of the project on existing businesses**.
11. 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 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 2024 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.

12. We recognise that there is potential for some environmental effects to arise throughout the construction and operation of the scheme – these need to be assessed in detail from the outset. Assuming that the scheme will be **subject to a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**, we are confident that these effects and potential mitigation measures will be properly and clearly set out by TfL.
13. 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 project is being **designed with future flexibility in mind**, allowing for further expansion (e.g. towards Bexley) or modification if needed in the future.
14. The recent Spending Review acknowledged “the potential housing and economic growth that could be stimulated by extending the DLR” but did not include explicit backing for this shovel-ready project beyond a vague promise to work with TfL to explore options further. 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**.
15. A [recent report](#) by BusinessLDN and WSP showed how **land value capture** – using the increase in land value that comes from better infrastructure to pay for the infrastructure itself – could make a significant contribution to funding key transport projects.

We remain committed to working closely with TfL as the scheme moves to the next stage of design and development of the project, including further public consultation ahead of the submission of the TWAO application to build and operate the proposed extension. Delivering the DLR extension would help keep London moving, boost growth and meet the Government’s ambitious housebuilding targets.

We call on the Government to approve and help fund the project now, ensuring its benefits for communities, businesses, and the environment are realised without delay.