

TfL and its partners commence further feasibility work on extending DLR into Thamesmead to support new homes and growth

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Transport for London (TfL) has begun further feasibility work on a proposed extension of the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to Beckton Riverside and Thamesmead, following the confirmation of the new Thamesmead and Abbey Wood Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF).

The feasibility work will be carried out by TfL and a joint commission between Arup and Atkins for design, engineering and environmental assessment and with Aecom for socio-economic support. It will be fully funded by external partners through a £1m joint funding agreement between the London Borough of Newham, the Royal Borough of Greenwich and developers Thamesmead Waterfront (a joint venture partnership between Peabody and Lendlease), Aberdeen Standard Investments and St William (a joint venture between Berkeley Group and National Grid).

It will allow TfL and partners to further develop the proposed DLR extension from Gallions Reach in

Newham to Beckton Riverside, and then across the river to Thamesmead. Providing new public transport options would support the delivery of more than 25,000 new homes along the route as well as improve connectivity across the river. The scheme was included in TfL's submission to the recent Government Comprehensive Spending Review as one which could support new housing and jobs where they are needed most to regenerate both London and the wider UK economy.

This next stage of technical work will allow further development of the route and the potential locations of stations to be considered. Support work on other transport options within the OAPF will also be carried out including options for a rapid bus corridor and new walking and cycling links.

Further assessments on both the potential environmental impacts and transport benefits of these schemes will ensure that the best options to support growth in the area are taken forward once appropriate funding has been identified and secured.

The decision to progress this work comes as the Mayor of London formally signed the creation of the new Thamesmead and Abbey Wood Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF). From December 2019 to 11 March 2020, a public consultation on the draft framework was undertaken, which sets out a vision to deliver more than 15,000 new homes and around 8,000 jobs in the area south of the river.

The framework also supports growth aspirations north of the river at Beckton Riverside, where there is further potential for new homes and jobs in the coming years. Feedback from the public consultation showed there was strong support for a DLR extension to Thamesmead.

Deputy Mayor for Transport, Heidi Alexander, said: "I am delighted that boroughs and developers have committed to work with the Mayor to progress work on public transport options to support growth, including the Thamesmead DLR extension and bus transport corridor projects.

"These schemes are critical for realising our aspirations for unlocking new housing and jobs on both sides of the river in east London and ultimately creating successful places to live and work. By taking a collaborative approach we will maximise the likelihood of making them a reality."

Director of City Planning at TfL, Alex Williams, said: "We know that public transport is key to helping unlock development in new areas. By progressing work on the potential extension of the DLR to Thamesmead now we can ensure any future scheme is best placed to support the homes and jobs that London needs once funding is secured."

Newham Council's cabinet member for environment, highways and sustainable transport, Councillor James Asser, said: "A new extension to the DLR could provide real opportunities for development and investment in homes and jobs in the south of the borough, in an area of London's docklands which has huge amounts of potential.

"Opening up links into south east London would also provide new opportunities for residents both sides of the river for work, travel and education. Newham is committed to extending public transport in the borough which will bring benefits to our residents and also help us meet our targets to improve air quality and tackle congestion."

Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Councillor Danny Thorpe, said: “We’ve been making the case for improved public transport for residents in the east of our borough for many years and we’re happy that TfL and the Mayor of London are taking this seriously. With thousands more homes planned for Thamesmead, the DLR extension in particular is an option we really want to see made a reality.

“It’s been more than 50 years since the first homes in Thamesmead were built, and thousands more will be built over the coming years. We’re serious about improving air quality and tackling the climate emergency so enabling new and existing residents to walk, cycle and use public transport is crucial.”

Lendlease’s Chief Executive Officer in Europe, Neil Martin, speaking on behalf of Thamesmead Waterfront, said: “Improving the public transport connections into Thamesmead is a vital part of the long-term regeneration of an area with enormous economic potential. Thousands of new jobs and homes can be created there, but key to achieving that potential is improving Thamesmead’s transport links for everyone who lives there already, and for everyone who might wish to live or work there in the future.”

Managing Director of St William Homes LLP, Alison Dowsett, said: “St William supports a DLR extension to Thamesmead via a new station at Beckton Riverside and the additional homes, jobs and opportunities that this will help to unlock in Newham. We are fully committed to work alongside other key stakeholders to progress work on the extension of the DLR.

“St William is a joint venture between the Berkeley Group and National Grid and was formed to regenerate underutilised gasworks sites across London and the South East. Our goal is to reconnect these sites with the local community and transform them into places where people want to live, work and spend time.”

Senior Development Manager at Aberdeen Standard Investments, Brian Kelly, said: “The work being undertaken by TfL and all stakeholders is an important next step towards delivering the proposed extension to the DLR. This has the potential to deliver significant opportunities for the local community and the wider catchment.”

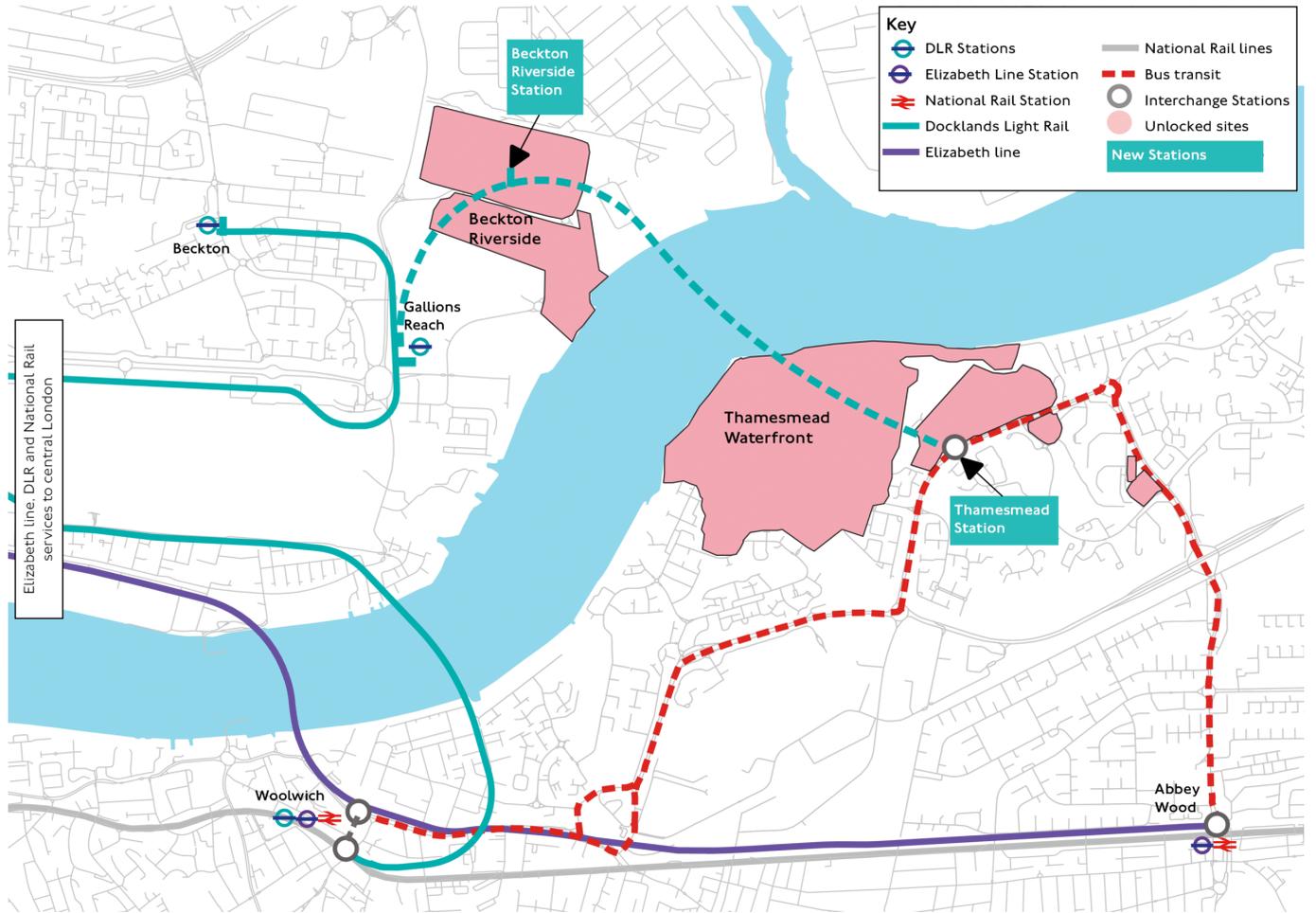


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