

News Release

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27 June 1989

GOVERNMENT APPROVAL FOR LIMEHOUSE LINK

A major step towards construction of the 1.7 km Limehouse Link 'cut and cover' tunnel, scheduled to start in October this year, was taken today with confirmation of the London Docklands Development Corporation's (LDDC) LimehouseLink Compulsory Purchase Order.

Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for the Environment and Paul Channon, Secretary of State for Transport, jointly confirmed the Compulsory Purchase Order. In addition Mr Ridley granted the Corporation permission to demolish buildings in the Narrow Street Conservation area, to enable construction of the road, and Transport Secretary, Paul Channon confirmed the associated road closure order.

The decision has been welcomed by LDDC Chief Executive, Michael Honey, who said: "This is a vital achievement in implementing the Corporation's highways strategy. We continue to regard improved road access and improved public transport as our major task in Docklands and we are giving these the highest priority, with the full support of Government."

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Today's announcement follows the public inquiry, held between 18 October and 16 November 1988, into the LDDC's Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire land and to close sections of road, for construction and operation of the Limehouse Link, as well as four applications for conservation area consent.

The LDDC invited seven contractors/groups of contractors, from the United Kingdom and Europe to tender for the contract to build the 'cut and cover' tunnel linking Butcher Row and The Highway, in Limehouse, to the western side of the Isle of Dogs. Tenders from a shortlist of three are currently being evaluated. It is anticipated that the contract will be let in September, with construction scheduled to start in October this year, and completion expected in 1994.

Under the Accord, signed in June 1988, the Corporation and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets have agreed to work together to get the Corporation's new roads built as quickly as possible; to achieve a major programme of new housing and Council house refurbishment, for tenants affected by the road proposals and a significant £30 million package of community, education and training initiatives.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1 Because objections by the Inner London Education Authority are outstanding, the Compulsory Purchase Order will be subject to Special Parliamentary Procedure.

2 The Scheme

The Limehouse Link, a four lane 'cut and cover' tunnel, will link The Highway, at the junction of Butcher Row and Narrow Street, to Westferry Road on the Isle of Dogs. The road, constructed by 'cut and cover' technique, will pass under the north side of Limehouse Basin, turning south to pass underneath Limekiln Dock and Dundee Wharf, to join with Westferry Road at a major new signalled junction. A further 'cut and cover' section will connect the Limehouse Link to the proposed Poplar Link, at North Quay.

The Limehouse Link is one of a number of highway schemes being progressed by the LDDC to improve access to, from and within the redeveloped Docklands. Commercial, industrial, retail, leisure and residential developments in Wapping, Limehouse and the Isle of Dogs are already generating a considerable amount of traffic, placing a heavy demand on the existing road network including residential streets in Limehouse. Commercial links between the redeveloped Docklands and the City of London will also lead to significant volumes of traffic.

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The Limehouse Link will assist movement between these areas without producing further delays on the current highway network and, in particular, on Commercial Road. The scheme is not seen as a bypass to Commercial Road but as an essential road link within Docklands.

3 The Accord

Under the terms of the Accord the LDDC and Tower Hamlets Council have agreed that around 400 tenants directly affected by Corporation proposals for the Limehouse Link and Poplar Link roads, living in the following estates, will be permanently rehoused:

- 1 Burrell House
- 2 Any part of the Barley Mow Estate that would be structurally at risk during construction of the roads, or when the roads are built.
- 3 St Vincents Estate, south of Limehouse Causeway, excluding Saunders Close.
- 4 Parts of Pennyfields, Ming Street, and Dingle Gardens - tenants closest to the new roads.
- 5 Parts of Pennyfields, Ming Street, and Dingle Gardens - tenants closest to the new roads.
- 6 Dolphin House.

Tenants will be offered at least two choices of new replacement housing, either a flat, maisonette or a house, depending on their particular needs. The new replacement housing will be managed by a Housing Association.

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However, if tenants wish to stay with the Council, then they will be given the choice of moving into a renovated Council property, and the Council will receive £96,000 from the Corporation for each household deciding to do this.

The Council and the Corporation have also agreed that:

All buildings on the Barley Mow Estate will be renovated, except any that would be structurally at risk during construction of the roads.

Parts of Pennyfields, Ming Street and Dingle Gardens furthest away from the line of the new roads, will be renovated, if noise protection measures would meet statutory standards.

The Corporation will make available up to £30,000 per unit to cover the cost of renovating the buildings internally and externally.

LDDC Major Road Schemes

Limehouse to Leamouth

