

News Release

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VITAL NEW ROADS FOR DOCKLANDS GET GO-AHEAD FROM CORPORATION
BOARD

The London Docklands Development Corporation, at its June Board meeting, resolved to make compulsory purchase orders on land required for highway schemes in its area.

Compulsory acquisition is necessary in order to ensure certainty of the ownership of the land required for the implementation of the linked, but independent, highway schemes needed to sustain the current pace of development and the total regeneration of Docklands.

The new schemes can be summarised as follows:-

- (i) Westferry Circus and roundabout
- (ii) Shed 35 Link
- (iii) Billingsgate/Prestons Road Link
- (iv) Heron Quays/Prestons Road Link
- (v) Prestons Road Widening
- (vi) Limehouse Link

- (vii) Poplar By Pass
- (viii) East India Dock Link
- (ix) Blackwall Tunnel Junction Improvements
- (x) Lower Lea Crossing
- (xi) Connaught Crossing
- (xii) Royal Albert Dock Spine Road

The present road system inherited by the Corporation is related to a completely outdated development pattern. Additionally, current traffic congestion on the A13 trunk road spills over into the area causing delay and inconvenience to both road users and local residents. The new concentration of commercial, industrial, retail, leisure and residential developments, especially in the Enterprise Zone, the Isle of Dogs and in the Royal Docks, generates the need for an entirely new internal strategic road network for Docklands to cater for the increased traffic that will be generated. The existing momentum of the regeneration process is unlikely to be maintained if an upgraded road infrastructure is not in place at the critical time. The readiness of the private sector to invest in the future of Docklands has to be matched by this level of public sector commitment. The potential cost benefit return is very high.

The new highway schemes will provide local purpose-built roads giving access both to individual major development sites and areas with smaller sites that collectively generate significant flows of traffic.

Also providing for the movement of traffic into the Docklands area on safe, purpose-built routes that accommodate the existing and projected main demands for vehicle movements, and

routes for new bus services serving new areas of development.

The proposed network consists of a series of highway lengths related to, and justified by, individual development areas. The roads will generally be of four lanes, with local widening at junctions and interchanges. It is intended that access to and from the roads will be as unimpeded as possible. Their primary purpose is to serve Docklands developments and to accommodate traffic whose journeys originate and/or terminate in Docklands.

Commenting on his Board's decision, Christopher Benson, Chairman, said:

"The Corporation has a statutory duty to achieve the regeneration of its area. It is doing this by encouraging the development of existing or new industry and commerce and by creating an attractive environment. These general powers are supplemented by a very wide power of compulsory purchase which we can exercise in order to acquire land for specific highway schemes. This has been done previously in the case of Eastern Gateway Access Road. In confirming the CPO in March this year the Secretary of State accepted the view of the Inspector that there was an urgent need to provide road infrastructure in order to unlock development potential."

Reg Ward, Chief Executive, added: "We have to provide new highway links and improved access to avoid increased congestion and delay on already overloaded roads servicing the area. The existing network simply does not begin to respond to the new situation created by the scale and pace of development. Recent studies have confirmed the need and justification for these

schemes and their implementation is regarded as essential. In many cases negotiations with local authorities and individual land owners are proceeding very satisfactorily. We should be able to acquire land and relocate businesses by mutual agreement in advance of the completion of compulsory purchase, in accordance with our normal procedures. Some of the land required is already in our ownership. The compulsory powers are needed to ensure that all the land needed for the new roads can be acquired at an early date."

ENDS

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