GREATER**LONDON**AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD282

Title: London Development Database upgrade (2015)

Executive Summary:

Approval is sought from the Assistant Director to spend up to £15,000 to make enhancements and add new data fields to the London Development Database (LDD) to ensure it keeps up to date with key issues in planning and remains fit for purpose.

A consultant will be appointed after a procurement exercise in line with the Authority's Contracts & Funding Code.

Decision:

The Assistant Director approves expenditure up to £15,000 from the Planning unit's 2014-15 London Plan budget to add the map and polygon tool as enhanced for the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to the London Development Database, to add new data fields as agreed with the LDD Management Group and to make other minor amendments to the system.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT:

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Stewart Murray

Position: Assistant Director Planning

Signature:

Date: 14 May 2015

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE
Decision required – supporting report

1.   Introduction and background

1.1. The London Development Database (LDD) stores information on planning permissions meeting criteria agreed with the 33 London boroughs. The data is provided by the boroughs and is used primarily to allow the Mayor to monitor the London Plan, but also provides valuable information on development activity in London that is used throughout the GLA family, within the London Boroughs and for research and analysis by a wide range of organisations and individuals with an interest in planning in London. The LDD is a web-based application that has been subject to incremental development to ensure that it remains relevant and capable of meeting the expectations of the many users of the data. The last set of enhancements was carried out in 2013.

1.2. Following discussion with various stakeholders, a number of changes have been suggested that will add value to the database and the data it can produce. These have been discussed by the LDD Management Group (comprised of representatives of the Mayor and various London boroughs) and presented to the full group of boroughs at the LDD annual seminar. The changes have been agreed as being relevant and also achievable in terms of any potential additional data collection requirements that the boroughs will face.

1.3. The key proposed changes are:
- Updating the LDD's version of the GLA's map and polygon drawing tool to include additional functionality added since it was originally developed for the LDD in 2011. Primary changes will be the ability to have multi-part polygons and allow site boundaries to be created by copying multiple polygons from the base map. These changes will both make the system easier to use for boroughs and increase the accuracy of site boundaries and site area calculations.
- The addition of new data fields to provide extra details to aid reporting. These include the number of Council Tax rateable units for living accommodation that does not fall within the C3 (residential) use class to allow the Mayor to accurately complete the annual housing flows return to Government. They will also allow the Mayor to report on specific uses that are required to support population growth but which can't be identified by the planning use class alone, namely schools, waste facilities and transport facilities.
- The storage of details of the 'initial' scheme where there is a succession of the planning permissions on a site, whether due to superseding of a live scheme or the renewal of an expired (lapsed) permission. This will allow the system to produce valuable information on development timescales and modifications to schemes over time that is not currently possible.
- Improvements to the way the system stores and handles audit information that will reduce the speed with which audit information builds up and the risk of lack of capacity in the audit tables causing the system to fail.

1.4. The GLA's technology group are currently engaged in a project to migrate the Database from Oracle to Postgres which needs to be completed before this necessary set of enhancements can begin. A Delegated Authority Record was completed for this project (see Appendix 1).

2.   Objectives and expected outcomes

2.1. The following outcomes are required:
  2.1.1.   Integration of the map and polygon tool as enhanced for the SHLAA into the LDD system.
  2.1.2.   Addition of the following data fields:

     a.   Floorspace for schools as a sub-category of D1

     b.   Floorspace for waste facilities as a sub-category of SG

     c.   Floorspace for transport facilities as a sub-category of SG

     d.   Number of council tax rateable units for non-self-contained accommodation (C1, C2 & SG). This must also be available on the update progress screen as it will most likely be filled in on completion

     e.   Specialist accommodation for older people (tick box by C2, SG and in the residential matrix)

  2.1.3. Other changes and enhancements:

     f.   Add the non-residential floorspace and bedroom values to the completions and superseding screens

     g.   Fix the bug whereby the parking screen does not appear when there is proposed open space

     h.   Add the edit, replicate and delete links to the open space matrix

     i.   Create data fields for existing consent details and mechanism to populate them with data

     j.   Improved indexing of system audit tables and new rules for the storage of audit data

3.   Equality comments

3.1. The ability to monitor specialist housing for older people will help us to understand whether London is meeting the housing needs of this group. Besides this there are no significant equalities issues related to this project.

4.   Other considerations

4.1. These changes will help the LDD to fulfil its role of monitoring the policies in the London Plan and producing the London-wide housing flows returns to Central Government. Failure to implement these changes will mean that the GLA is unable to make these statutory returns to Government in full and will be unable to monitor the benchmark for provision of housing for older people in Annex 5 of the London Plan 2015.

5.   Financial comments

5.1. Assistant Director's approval is being sought for expenditure up to £15,000 to add the map and polygon tool as enhanced for the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to the London Development Database, to add new data fields as agreed with the LDD Management Group and to make other minor amendments to the system (as detailed in section 1 and 2 above). Approval of the Assistant Director is also sought to identify and appoint a consultant to carry out the work.

5.2. This will be funded from the Planning unit's 2014-15 London Plan budget. As the costs relate to 2015-16 there will be a need to request a budget carry forward from 2014-15 to 2015-16, the approval for which is subject to the GLA's year-end process. It should be noted that if the budget carry forward is not approved then expenditure will need to be contained within London Plan 2015-16 budget.

5.3. As this work relates to a consultancy contract, officers have to ensure that the requirements of the Authority's Contracts & Funding Code are adhered to and that the requirements relating to consultancy services within the Authority's Financial Regulations and Expenses & Benefits

Framework are also adhered to.

5.4. All required budget adjustments will be completed.

5.5. Any changes to this proposal including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's Decision Making Process.

5.6. Technology Group and the Planning Unit within Development, Enterprise and Environment will be jointly responsible for managing this contract and work.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract [for externally delivered projects]	April / May 2015
Delivery Start Date [for project proposals]	May 2015
Final evaluation start and finish	Summer 2015
Delivery End Date [for project proposals]	Autumn 2015
Project Closure: [for project proposals]	Autumn 2015

Appendices and supporting papers:

Delegated Authority Record – London Development Database (LDD) Migration to Postgres

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

Note: This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval <u>or</u> on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:	Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)
Drafting officer: Jonathan Brooker has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.	✓

HEAD OF GOVERNANCE AND RESILIENCE:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature: *[signature]*   **Date:** *13·05·15*