The London Borough of Tower Hamlets Compulsory Purchase Order 2025 (APP/PCU/CPOP/E5900/3365599)

Summary Proof of Evidence of John Booker

dated **17 November 2025**

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	RED LOFT'S EXPERIENCE ON REGENERATION SCHEMES	1
3	THE SCHEME	1
4	VIABILITY ASSESSMENTS - OVERVIEW	1
5	THE SCHEME'S VIABILITY PERFORMANCE	2
6	DELIVERABILITY	2
7	RESPONSE TO OBJECTORS	3
8	CONCLUSION	3

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 I, John Booker, BA(hons) MPLAN, am the Head of Land and Consultancy for Red Loft LLP (**Red Loft**). In my role I assess scheme viability and deliverability, working for councils, registered providers of affordable housing and private developers across London and the southeast of England. I have extensive experience in estate regeneration and have worked in this industry for approximately 17 years.

1.2 This summary proof of evidence is made in support of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (Harriott, Apsley and Pattison Houses) Compulsory Purchase Order 2025 (the **Order**) **[CD 1.1]**. The Order is required to facilitate the regeneration of the estate which contains Harriott House, Apsley House and Pattison House (the **HAP Houses**) and the Redcoat Community Centre and Mosque (the **Estate**). The proposed redevelopment of the Estate comprising a residential-led mixed-use development, with the delivery of more than 400 new homes and a new community centre on Council-owned land currently occupied by existing housing blocks and two community buildings is referred to in this proof of evidence as the **Scheme**.

1.3 For the Scheme, Red Loft acts as a development consultant, reporting to the Council to promote the deliverability and viability of the Scheme. I have been working on the Scheme as part of my role at Red Loft since July 2021.

2 RED LOFT'S EXPERIENCE ON REGENERATION SCHEMES

2.1 In Section 4 of my Proof, I outline Red Loft's experience as a Development Consultancy team, delivering end-to-end development consultancy services. For the Scheme, Red Loft prepared the FVA **[CD 4.6]** and led negotiations with THV to determine the Scheme's planning gain package, run appraisals on behalf of the Council to identify financial performance of the Scheme from the Council's perspective, support Greater London Authority grant applications, advised upon the Scheme's delivery route, supported the tending process and continue to support the selection and contract negotiation with the delivery partner.

2.2 I provide examples of Red Loft's wealth of experience of advising upon and project managing estate regeneration schemes within the Borough and elsewhere in the capital.

3 THE SCHEME

In Section 5 of my Proof, I describe the Scheme through the amount of units being provided and re-provided, as well as a breakdown of the tenures of the units according to their distribution throughout the phases and a full tenure breakdown according to habitable room and bedroom mix.

4 VIABILITY ASSESSMENTS - OVERVIEW

4.1 In Section 6 of my Proof, I provide an overview of how viability assessments are undertaken in the context of a planning application and how such assessments are based upon and constrained by the National Planning Policy Framework (the **NPPF**) **[CD 3.1]**, National Planning Practice Guidance (the **NPPG**) and Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors **(RICS**) standards. I explain:

4.1.1 the purpose of an FVA in planning terms to determine the ‘planning gain’ on a site;

4.1.2 the approach and methodology for determining scheme viability for planning purposes is set out in RICS Professional Standard ‘Assessing viability in planning under the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (for England)’ (April 2023) **[CD 3.10]**;

4.1.3 the NPPF's position on viability assessments being that they should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and be made publicly available; and

4.1.4 the government’s recommended approach to viability assessment for planning as set out in the NPPG.

4.2 Importantly in this section, I explain how it is not uncommon for development projects to be considered 'unviable' in planning terms, but for such schemes to still be deliverable and financially viable to the developer. I provide examples which Red Loft has worked upon which were identified as unviable in planning terms but have been or are being delivered and provide reasons as to why this may be the case.

5 THE SCHEME'S VIABILITY PERFORMANCE

5.1 In Section 7 of my Proof, I set out the viability position as established within the FVA process by Red Loft **[CD 4.6]**, by the local planning authority's independent viability team Tower Hamlets Viability (**THV**), and the difference between the results of these assessments. My evidence is supported by figures of the benchmark land value, target profit, development profit and surplus/deficit. I also set out how the Scheme’s financial performance is improved compared to the position noted with the FVA.

5.2 I outline the factors which combined present the Scheme to the Council and their selected delivery partner in much improved financial terms, compared to the results presented within the FVA for planning purposes.

5.3 Overall, my evidence explains how the actual viability performance of the Scheme, as projected to be experienced by the Council, will be better than the results identified within the FVA.

6 DELIVERABILITY

6.1 In Section 8 of my Proof, I consider the delivery model implemented by Council, the deliverability of the model and present the consideration of alternative models, and why I consider that the Scheme is deliverable notwithstanding the results of the planning FVA**.**

6.2 I set out the delivery options considered for the Scheme and the selection process for the Development Partner, noting that the Scheme presents an attractive investment opportunity to a development partner, as evidenced by the competitive bidding process of 3 major development partners during the tendering of the Scheme’s development agreement offer.

6.3 I conclude in this Section that, with the allocation of adequate funds by the Council, and notwithstanding the results of the FVA submitted in support of the planning application, in

my professional opinion the scheme is deliverable and viable to the Council and it's selected delivery partner.

7 RESPONSE TO OBJECTORS

7.1 In Section 9 of my Proof, I respond to CPO objections which raise viability related issues, being:

7.1.1 Objector 1: Ground 1 and Ground 3 **[CD 8.2]**; and

7.1.2 Objector 2a and 2b: Ground 6 **[CD 8.3 and 8.4]**.

7.2 I conclude that the Scheme is deliverable and viable for the Council and their selected delivery partner, for the reasons set out in the Proof.

8 CONCLUSION

In my professional opinion, with the allocation of adequate funds by the Council, as detailed and evidenced in the Proof of Evidence of Monju Ali **[CD 10.1]**, and as a result of the selected Development Agreement model form, which promotes scheme viability and deliverability, (notwithstanding the results of the FVA submitted in support of the planning application), the Scheme is deliverable and viable for the Council and their selected delivery partner.