



## Report – Planning and Transportation Committee

### Aldgate and Tower Area Strategy

*To be presented on Thursday, 6th December 2012*

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons  
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

#### **SUMMARY**

This report seeks approval of the draft Aldgate and Tower Area Strategy developed to provide a more detailed framework for transport and environmental improvements in order to meet the Core Strategy Policy, CS8 within the City's Local Development Framework.

The Area Strategy, informed by the City's policies, an urban analysis, intensive workshops with 430 stakeholders and a further public consultation during December 2011 and January 2012 aims to create a greater sense of community, and in particular, provide the following -

- reduced dangers and a safer environment;
- better quality public spaces, creating spaces to gather;
- improved air quality, particularly around Sir John Cass School, whilst still recognising the area's strategic transport role;
- reduced effects from noise;
- better linkages in the area; and
- improved biodiversity.

Officers have identified six areas through which the Core Strategy vision can be realised which would provide opportunities for achievable change through a series of transportation and environmental enhancement projects. These projects are identified and prioritised in the Area Strategy and the indicative total cost of these projects is £14.35 million.

A copy of the draft Aldgate and Tower Area Strategy is available on request from the Town Clerk's department and in the Members' Reading Room.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the draft Aldgate and Tower Area Strategy be approved.

## **MAIN REPORT**

### **Background**

1. The Department of the Built Environment has developed a process of agreeing Area Strategies to provide a detailed framework for transport and environmental improvements within key geographical areas of the City in order to meet Core Strategy Policy.
2. In April 2012, the Planning and Transportation Committee received an update report which detailed the reasons for the development of the Aldgate and Tower Area Strategy. It summarised the evidence of need, ratified through the Public Consultation response to the draft Area Strategy.

### **The Strategy**

3. The strategy is based upon six Key Areas of Opportunity which are set out below -

#### Key Area of Opportunity – Aldgate Gyratory

4. This highest priority project which would be key to encouraging economic regeneration, is to remove the gyratory and replace it with two-way working on St Botolph Street and Aldgate High Street, creating a public space between the Sir John Cass Primary School and the St Botolph without Aldgate Church.
5. The proposals for the Aldgate Gyratory Key Area would provide an opportunity to enhance function and add a pleasant open space in which to spend time.

#### Key Area of Opportunity – Vine Street and Crescent - Green Pedestrian Link

6. Hammett Street, Crescent, Vine Street and America Square together provide an opportunity to change the appearance of the area from being dominated by traffic to becoming a greened pedestrian link with new green public spaces in the Crescent and Square.
7. The proposals provide an opportunity to enhance Conservation Areas and the green spaces will provide opportunity for sustainable drainage features, play, public art, improvements in air quality and bio-diversity. These measures will improve the environment for workers, residents, and visitors.

#### Key Area of Opportunity – Little Somerset Street

8. Little Somerset Street is a well-used pedestrian route connecting Aldgate underground and bus stations with Mansell Street and into the adjacent London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH). There is an opportunity to widen the footways and introduce green walls or trees. The environment can be enhanced without impacting on function through the use of softer landscaping which would improve air quality, bio-diversity and absorb some noise. Elements of play may well be able to be incorporated in an improved high quality streetscape.

## Key Area of Opportunity – Minorities

9. To further encourage outdoor dining and support small businesses, there is an opportunity to further widen footways along Minorities while maintaining its traffic function. Planting can be provided with some careful thought given constraints in regards to depth of cover over the underground and care to minimise footway obstructions. There could be a more pleasant link provided along Minorities from the Key Area of Opportunity proposed for Vine Street and Crescent, to the potential public open space described in the Key Area of Opportunity for the Aldgate gyratory.

## Key Area of Opportunity - Crutched Friars and Jewry Street

10. Currently, the carriageway is wider than necessary for traffic, thus providing an opportunity to make this link more attractive for pedestrians travelling through the area by including wider footways, consideration of inset loading and waiting bays and trees planted along the street.

## Key Area of Opportunity – Braham Street Public Open Space

11. The last area of opportunity identified falls just outside of the City of London, within LBTH. Braham Street is designated as part of the Transport for London (TfL) Route Network (TLRN) and was developed into a green space in 2009. There is an opportunity to explore adding recreation facilities into this expansive space. As part of this Area Strategy, City officers will conduct further discussion with TfL and LBTH to explore the potential of taking such an initiative forward.
12. Residents from the Mansell Street Estate specifically asked for an allotment space to be provided for them during the intensive workshop consultation. This desire could be met, at least in part, through a stepped garden at this location.

## Proposals

13. The potential schemes are prioritised as high, medium and low. An indicative cost and potential funding sources are noted alongside the proposed schemes with indicative expenditures of some £14.35 million. The pivotal proposal in the Area Strategy is the conversion of the Aldgate gyratory and creation of the new public square (in the region of £7.0 million) to encourage economic regeneration in the area. It has been given the highest priority.
14. It is expected that the implementation of the proposals will be externally funded from various financial sources, such as S.106 contributions, the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), GLA Group funding streams (including TfL), funding from Tower Hamlets, and other external funding bodies. It is expected that implementation of the high priority schemes will generate further development in the area and hence further contributions.

## Corporate & Strategic Implications – Supplementary Planning Document

15. The Area Strategy document has been written to explain how the vision set out in the City's Core Strategy Policy CS8 can be delivered, at an outline level, in terms of transportation and public realm improvement work. Future need was considered; guided by the City's Core Policy, the London Plan and the Central London Sub-Regional Transport Strategy. Urban analysis provided a context

for understanding the needs expressed by stakeholders during extensive consultation so that City officers could begin to illustrate indicatively changes that could be delivered in terms of transport and public realm enhancements.

### **Conclusion**

16. The Aldgate and Tower Area Strategy proposals address the LDF Core Strategy Policy CS8 to remove the gyratory, create a public space, and improve links through the area. It also addresses the London Plan's requirement for economic regeneration and improvement in the community infrastructure.

17. It is recommended that Members adopt the Aldgate and Tower Area Strategy.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 24<sup>th</sup> day of July 2012.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

**MARTIN CHARLES FARR**  
Chairman