

Committee	Dated:
Planning & Transportation	14/07/2015
Subject: Future City – Outlook to 2025	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Information

Summary

The City of London Local Plan adopted in January 2015 sets out the City Corporation’s vision, strategy, objectives and policies for shaping the City of London up to 2026. It provides a spatial framework that brings together and coordinates a range of strategies prepared by the City Corporation, its partners and other agencies and authorities. However the world is changing quickly and therefore there is a need to reconsider how we intend to deliver the Local Plan’s approach and to take account of further drivers for change so that our plans remain relevant and effective.

This report provides an overview of how the City is evolving and how it might evolve during the next ten years. It considers the current and future drivers for change, sets out what is good about the City that needs to be maintained and improved, considers the scope for City Corporation intervention to facilitate beneficial change, summarises what we are already doing or need to do, considers how we will define the built environment and the resultant outcomes for 2025. This overview is intended to stimulate thinking that will be progressed further later in the year as part of the first steps in the review of the Local Plan.

The report will be complemented by a Powerpoint presentation that brings out the key points.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to note the contents of the report.

Main Report

Background

1. This report provides an overview of how the City is evolving and how it might evolve during the next ten years. It considers the drivers for change, what is good about the City, what needs improving, what we are doing, and the likely outcomes by 2025.

Drivers for change

2. There are many economic, social, environmental and technological drivers for change that need to be recognised and addressed to bring about beneficial change in the City:-
 - **Strong growth projected** for London in economic and population terms, e.g. London Plan and City Local Plan strategies and targets.
 - Demand for **more commercial floorspace** in accessible locations, e.g. City.
 - Demand for **sound investment property** for UK and overseas investors in uncertain times.
 - Demand for **more housing stock and related social infrastructure** in or near London.
 - Demand for **safer, better streets, public realm and environmental improvements** combined with congestion management.
 - Demand for **more inclusive and accessible City** in terms of buildings, uses and the public realm as part of an inclusive environment that enables disabled people to participate fully in society.
 - Need to **mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change** in the City.
 - Need to adapt to the **changing character of the financial and business services cluster**.
 - Growth of other sectors and **broadening appeal of the City** as a business, retail and leisure location.
 - **IT innovation** causes changes in working practices and through improved data monitoring provides scope for smarter urban management.
 - **Changing workstyle and workplace** expectations demand new types of quality buildings, land use mixes and public realm.

What is good and needs to be maintained or improved?

3. The City's many strengths need to be maintained and improved for the City to thrive in an era of increased competition:-
 - City is a **successful cluster of financial and business services**; need to retain this core activity by addressing its needs including providing suitable office stock and complementary other uses and environment.
 - City is a **very accessible location** that has access to a large skilled labour market but this needs improvement, e.g. Crossrail, Thameslink, Bank station upgrade, cycling provision, better public realm for walking. Further investment will be needed as new development comes on stream in the City.
 - City's generally **good utilities infrastructure** needs upgrading to meet future needs, e.g., electricity supply and resilience, IT wireless and wired networks, gas, water and drainage.
 - City's **sustainable environment credentials** need enhancing through delivery of new high quality sustainable buildings complemented by streets fit for purpose and good public realm enhancement projects. Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change requires local actions. Air quality is a growing issue that needs local and strategic measures. Open spaces, trees and churchyards play a significant role in the sustainability of the dense urban environment.

- City's **attractive culture and heritage** forms a unique asset that helps define the City as a distinctive central location that is more than a place of work.
- City's **varied and high quality historic environment** of listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments helps define the City as a high quality location for business and leisure; management of heritage assets can include successful new uses that add diversity and character to the City's building stock that meet a range of occupier needs.
- **Accessible and inclusive buildings** with vibrant public uses at ground and suitable upper levels including roofs, as part of an inclusive environment for all including people with physical, mobility, sensory, cognitive and learning impairments.
- City Corporation has a reputation for providing **high quality services and public realm** for City stakeholders, for London and the Nation, e.g. attractive, safe, clean streets and spaces and excellent services.
- **City's reputation, location and prospects attract private investment and developer commitment** to renew the building stock and its environs.

Scope for City Corporation intervention

4. The City Corporation can intervene in many ways to bring about beneficial change:-
 - **Promoting change** in the built environment and public realm at key City places such as Eastern cluster, Crossrail axis, Bank junction, Aldgate and Thames riverside.
 - **Unlocking the potential** of challenging parts of the City, e.g. riverside at Blackfriars. Scope for master-planning and other interventions.
 - **Providing and promoting good public utilities and services**, e.g. Superfast City Programme for IT upgrades, CPAT and Highways Section enabling actions for other utilities.
 - **Improved street management for better movement, safety and environment**, e.g. Road Danger Reduction Plan, GLA movement/dwell street classification and related smarter traffic management, freight consolidation initiatives and public realm changes.
 - **Promoting better City buildings** through proactive, flexible planning policy, other powers and ownership influence; encouraging greater permeability and public accessibility through sites at ground and suitable upper levels, and uses that support the business city.
 - **Promoting the cultural strengths and heritage offer of the City including the 'cultural hub'** near the Barbican and Smithfield.
 - **Providing and promoting complementary housing and social infrastructure** clustered in parts of the City and City fringes, e.g. affordable housing, academy schools to improve local labour supply, shared services, working in partnership with London boroughs.
 - **Exploiting advances in Information Technology**, increased remote monitoring and data sharing for smarter urban management of energy, movement and activities. Public sector can help manage and share anonymous data to bring efficiencies in the public interest.

What are we doing and what will we do?

5. The City Corporation is already doing a great deal using its planning and other powers and influence and can do more to bring about beneficial change:-

- **'Place-making'** through the delivery of high quality inclusive and publicly accessible buildings and areas in partnership with private developers, e.g. Eastern Cluster, Bloomberg/Bank junction, Broadgate, Aldgate.
- **Better management of streets:-** Road Danger Reduction Plan, 20 mph zone, street classification and adaptation according to priority for movement or place, controlled access to some areas for security and delivery management.
- **Public realm area enhancement strategies and related projects** to complement major public transport projects and to promote walking, cycling, agile working and outdoor leisure in suitable locations, e.g. Aldgate, Barbican area, Bank junction, open spaces.
- **Implementing other strategies to complement our planning policies**, e.g. riverside walk, area enhancement, open spaces, flood risk, waste, air quality, visitor and cultural strategies.
- **Developing an integrated wired and wireless telecommunication strategy** to ensure that businesses, residents and workers have the necessary infrastructure to support their technological needs.
- **Environmental improvements** through more sustainable buildings, open spaces, green roofs and walls for biodiversity, air quality and climate change mitigation, sustainable drainage; supporting the delivery of the Thames Tideway Tunnel.
- **Promoting conservation of monuments** in development schemes and **enhancing access to archaeological remains and monuments**. Promoting their interpretation through site hoardings, displays, public realm markers and website links.
- **Promoting the City** to the financial and business services cluster and to other sectors attracted by its improving accessibility, cost advantages, proximity to Tech City, more attractive mix of commercial uses, culture, heritage and public realm.
- **Positioning the City to meet the expectations of future workers** regarding workplaces, work patterns, agile working, leisure environment and sustainability credentials.
- **Working more closely with the Mayor, neighbouring boroughs, businesses and property owners** as in the Cheapside BID and the Aldgate partnership and gyratory removal.
- **Working in partnership with London boroughs to deliver new housing and educational facilities**, eg joint working with Islington.
- **Consulting** with developers, occupiers, workers, residents and visitors to ensure we understand their needs and can help deliver them.

The resultant built environment of the City will be:

- A place of high quality
- A place that is sustainable
- A place with a sense of place
- A place you can work flexibly

Outcomes for 2025?

6. Achievements will involve a mix of actions by the City Corporation and others in the public, private and voluntary sectors. The overall outcomes should be:

- **A world financial and business centre:** City retains its primary role as an international financial and business centre. Changing mix of office occupiers reflecting the City's broadening appeal as a business centre. Development industry provides flexible, adaptable and resilient stock that exploits IT and workforce trends for smarter working.
- **Key City Places evolving successfully:** Northern part of the City boosted by Crossrail and Tech City overflow; Aldgate, riverside, Bank Junction rejuvenations.
- **Attractive City culture and heritage:** 'Cultural hub' a successful addition to existing culture and heritage that makes the City a unique mixture of old and new.
- **Sustainable City environment:** better buildings which are publicly accessible, vibrant streets and spaces with a mix of retail and other publicly accessible uses. Changed use and character of City streets consistent with their importance for movement or place combined with better air quality, providing safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians. Advances in IT, increased remote monitoring and anonymous data sharing lead to smarter urban management of energy, movement and activities.
- **Thriving City communities:** Modest growth in City housing, continued joint working with London boroughs to deliver more housing and a mosaic of high quality social and community facilities, retail and other amenities in the City and nearby to give it a more rounded appeal to residents, workers and visitors.

Conclusion

- City is well-placed to benefit from the evolving policy, economic, workstyle and infrastructure context.
- City Corporation has a vision of how the City will grow while also becoming a more attractive, sustainable place for workers, visitors and residents.
- City will have leading edge IT infrastructure to enable existing and new infrastructure, buildings, occupiers, highways and the public realm to operate in smarter ways that contribute to a busier yet more sustainable City.

Contact:

Paul Beckett

Policy & Performance Director, Dept of the Built Environment

T: 020 7332 1970 E: paul.beckett@cityoflondon.gov.uk