

Committees: Street Walkways Sub-Committee Planning and Transportation Committee	Dates: April 2016 April 2016	Item No.
Subject: Eastern City Cluster Area Enhancement Strategy – Proposed update of Strategy		Public
Report of: The Director of the Built Environment		For Decision

Summary

This report proposes a review and update of the enhancement strategy for the Eastern City Cluster Area.

The Eastern Cluster contains the greatest density of businesses and jobs in the Square Mile and has fewer constraints on the development of tall buildings than other parts of the City. Therefore, it has the potential to accommodate more development and a larger workforce.

The review of the Strategy aims to align the document with the policy framework provided by the City's Local Plan. The Local Plan identifies 5 Key City Places as areas of significant change; the Eastern Cluster is identified as one of them (policy CS7). The review of the strategy will reflect and address the evolving change and pressuring needs in the area. The revised strategy will also support the objectives of key corporate strategies, including the Air Quality Strategy, the Cultural Strategy and the Visitor Strategy.

The area has changed significantly since the enhancement strategy was last updated in 2007. Several new developments are planned or underway, including numerous towers such as 22 Bishopsgate and 52-54 Lime Street (The Scalpel) As a result of this and the anticipated completion of Crossrail, the area is expected to see a significant increase in pedestrian numbers and cyclists.

The existing strategy was centred on improvements in the St Helen's Square area (Leadenhall Street/Undershaft). There is now a requirement to produce a more comprehensive strategy to cover the wider area, including the key east-west streets of Bevis Marks, Houndsditch and Leadenhall Street and encompassing the whole of the cluster identified in the 2015 Local Plan. This revised document will also consider issues and pressures for change in the context of the Future City, including security, the environment, road safety, pedestrian connectivity, arts & culture and well-being.

The objective of the strategy is to ensure that the streets and public realm can accommodate future growth and provide an attractive and well-functioning urban environment that is fitting for its high profile status. If an appropriate strategy is not in place, there is a risk that the streets will not adequately cope with the projected increase in pedestrians and the resulting environment will be below expected standards.

Recommendation: It is recommended that:

The review and update of the area strategy is authorised at an estimated cost of £160,000, funded from the Pinnacle Section 106 Agreement (£100,000), and Transport for London LIP (Local Implementation Plan) funding for 2016/17 (60,000).

Main Report

Background

1. In 2005 the City of London commissioned a public realm study to explore the issues and opportunities that arise when integrating large scale office developments into the fabric of the City's spaces and streets. This was approved by the Planning & Transportation Committee. A further report named 'St Helen's Square and Vicinity: Enhancing the Public Realm' was produced utilising funding from the "Enhancement Works" contribution from the Pinnacle S106. This report detailed the specific opportunities and constraints for environmental enhancements within the boundary area of the Pinnacle S106 agreement, and was approved by the Streets & Walkways Committee in 2007.
2. In 2008 the City, as required under the terms of the Pinnacle Section 106 Agreement, brought together representatives from the local companies in the area, to form the *St Helen's & Vicinity Working Group* to guide public realm enhancements within the St Helen's Square vicinity. The working group oversaw the production of a public realm masterplan for the St Helens Square area and this was publicly consulted upon in 2010 and approved by Committees in 2011.
3. Since the approval of the document "St Helen's Square and Vicinity; Enhancing the Public Realm" in 2011 a number of tall buildings have been completed and new developments have received planning permission. Therefore, there is a need to produce a more comprehensive strategy which covers a wider area and responds to the changing needs of this area.
4. An update on current projects in the Eastern Cluster area is provided in Appendix B.

Strategic Implications

5. This section establishes the policy framework which provides the context for the review of the Eastern Cluster Area Enhancement Strategy and informs its content. The strategy will support the delivery of the following corporate objectives and policies:
 - Strategic objective 2 - Local Plan
To ensure that the challenges facing the five Key City Places are met, complementing the core business function of the City, contributing to its unique character and distinguishing it from other global financial districts.
 - Core Strategic Policy CS7: Eastern Cluster (Key City Places)
Sets out the planning policy approach to the Eastern Cluster, which contains the greatest density of businesses and jobs in the City and has fewer constraints on the development of tall buildings compared to other locations in the City of London.
 - Core Strategic Policy CS1: Offices
 - Core Strategic Policy CS2: Utilities Infrastructure
 - Core Strategic Policy CS3: Security and Safety
 - Core Strategic Policy CS10: Design
 - Core Strategic Policy CS11: Visitors, Arts and Culture

- Core Strategic Policy CS14: Tall Buildings
- Core Strategic Policy CS16: Public Transport, Streets and Walkways
- Core Strategic Policy CS19: Open Spaces and recreation

The Eastern City Cluster Area

6. The Eastern Cluster contains the greatest density of businesses and jobs in the Square Mile, principally offices in banking and insurance use, but also an increasing amount of retail uses and other land uses including open spaces. The Local Plan provides for further office and employment growth in the Eastern Cluster up to 2026, in part due to the fact that this area has fewer constraints on the development of tall buildings. The City is expected to see continued growth in the medium to longer term with the working population anticipated to increase from 373,000 in 2011 to 428,000 by 2026.
7. Additional numbers of people will also be brought into the area through the anticipated completion of Crossrail in 2018. The challenge is to accommodate the many demands generated by growth while creating a safe, efficient, uncongested and attractive public realm. This presents a challenge given the limited amount of public space in the Eastern City Cluster area.

Proposed Review and Update of the Strategy

8. The Eastern Cluster is a high-profile business area with world class architecture in one of the leading global financial centres. The aim for the public realm strategy in this area is to assess the current allocation of limited street capacity in order to respond to future development growth and mitigate the cumulative impacts of the developments. This will deliver a high quality and coherent public realm realising Corporate strategic aims and helping achieve the vision for the Future City.
9. There is a need to revise the boundary of the Eastern Cluster area strategy. Previously, it was centred on St Helens Square and only went as far south as Leadenhall Street. It is now proposed to amend the boundary to accord with the area identified in the City's Local Plan (see Appendix A).
10. There are a number of issues and drivers for change associated with the Eastern Cluster which need to be addressed in order to provide a framework for the future and ensure that the streets and spaces are fit for purpose. These will form the basis of the objectives for the strategy review:
 - **Growth and the Economy:** Accommodating present and future increases in office floor space and the corresponding increase in the number of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles in the area as well as the impacts of Crossrail and the ongoing transformation of the Aldgate Area (which lies just outside of the Eastern Cluster). A full list and plan of current and proposed developments in and immediately adjacent to the Eastern Cluster can be found in Appendix C.
 - **Environment & Public Realm:** Creating a well-functioning, accessible and high quality public realm that is fitting for the high status of the area. There is a need to ensure that the local environment is comfortable with increased greenery where possible. The strategy will also consider improvements to existing gardens and open spaces in the area which can provide quiet spaces for rest. Measures to mitigate climate change, implement sustainable urban drainage and address air quality will also be considered. Officers are undertaking a review of City-wide

highway lighting as well as a Wind/Daylight study of the Eastern Cluster which will be taken into account as the area strategy is developed.

Given the various competing demands on a limited amount of public space, it may be necessary to consider more radical and holistic solutions to ensure that the public realm meets the needs of all users of public space.

- **Liveability:** City of London policies such as the Cultural strategy and Visitors Strategy emphasise the need to create a liveable City with increased opportunities for culture and play. The Sculpture in the City Project has proved to be very successful in enhancing the area's reputation as a world class destination for businesses and visitors. Local stakeholders have highlighted how important it is for them to have an attractive public realm which promotes interaction between office workers and visitors.

The Eastern City Cluster also includes a small residential population and the Sir John Cass Primary School sits just outside of the area. The streets and spaces in the area need to meet the needs of residents as well as businesses, including consideration of road safety, noise, pollution mitigation measures and the impacts of the night-time economy.

- **Servicing, sustainable transport and road safety:** the growing number of high rise buildings will increase the demand for servicing vehicles in an already congested street environment. A servicing strategy is needed for this area in order to ensure that the streets can safely and efficiently cope with future demands. The vast majority of people visiting and moving through the area will be travelling on foot. There are also a growing number of cyclists in the City. The impact of increased servicing activity on air quality needs to be considered. This increasing pressure on the streets presents a significant challenge in order to safely accommodate all users. Consideration will be given to the re-apportioning of road space in order to better accommodate needs.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** to enable further development and ensure the area remains an attractive location for international investment, digital infrastructure needs to be enhanced. This infrastructure also sometimes needs to extend to the public realm, with minimal disruption to highways and businesses.
- **Security:** Effective security should be an integral part of the design process for new developments. With an increased number of high profile developments, security is paramount and will be one of the key consideration in the development of a revised strategy for this area. This area has been highlighted as a security concern by the Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure, which advised that individual building security measures would not be enough to protect an area so densely populated by infrastructure and people. It is considered that an area based approach to security issues may provide an appropriate response and this will be further developed within the planned new area strategy. A separate report on security in the area will be received by Members.
- **Heritage:** There are significant listed buildings and conservation areas within the strategy area. Proposals for public realm improvements will need to consider the impact on these heritage assets.

11. It is proposed that a public consultation exercise is carried out as part of the strategy review, in order to assess the needs of the area. The strategy will then be developed and the document will be reported back to Committees, before being consulted upon more widely with the public and subsequently adopted as a revised enhancement strategy for the area. The estimated timeframe for the whole review, including public consultation is 12-18 months.

Financial implications

12. All of the current projects from the existing strategy are externally funded through Section 106 and Section 278 obligations. The Sculpture in the City project has been also funded by external partners and in-kind contributions. There is a need to assess the existing funds that are available in order to put together an appropriate funding strategy for projects that will emerge from the updated strategy.
13. The proposed Strategy review and update has an estimated cost of £160,000 (staff costs and fees). It is proposed to be funded from the Pinnacle Section 106 Agreement (£100,000), and the Transport for London LIP grant for 2016/17 (£60,000). Funding from the Pinnacle S106 is proposed to be utilised to cover professional and other fees and studies, as stated in the Enhancement Works contribution of the Pinnacle S106 agreement (Schedule 2(2.2)). The additional funding required for the strategy to cover the wider area (as identified in Appendix A) has been secured through the TfL Local Implementation Plan grant for 2016/17. These combined funding sources will enable the production of a comprehensive strategy for the area.

Table 1: Estimated cost of updating the Eastern City Cluster Strategy

Item	Estimated Cost (£'s)
Staff costs	80,000
Fees	80,000
TOTAL	160,000

Conclusion

A proposed update of the Eastern City Cluster Area Strategy will bring the document up-to date with current policy and ensure that the streets and spaces are able to respond to the changing needs of the area. The updated document will be reported back to committees, before being consulted upon with the public and subsequently adopted as a revised strategy for the area.

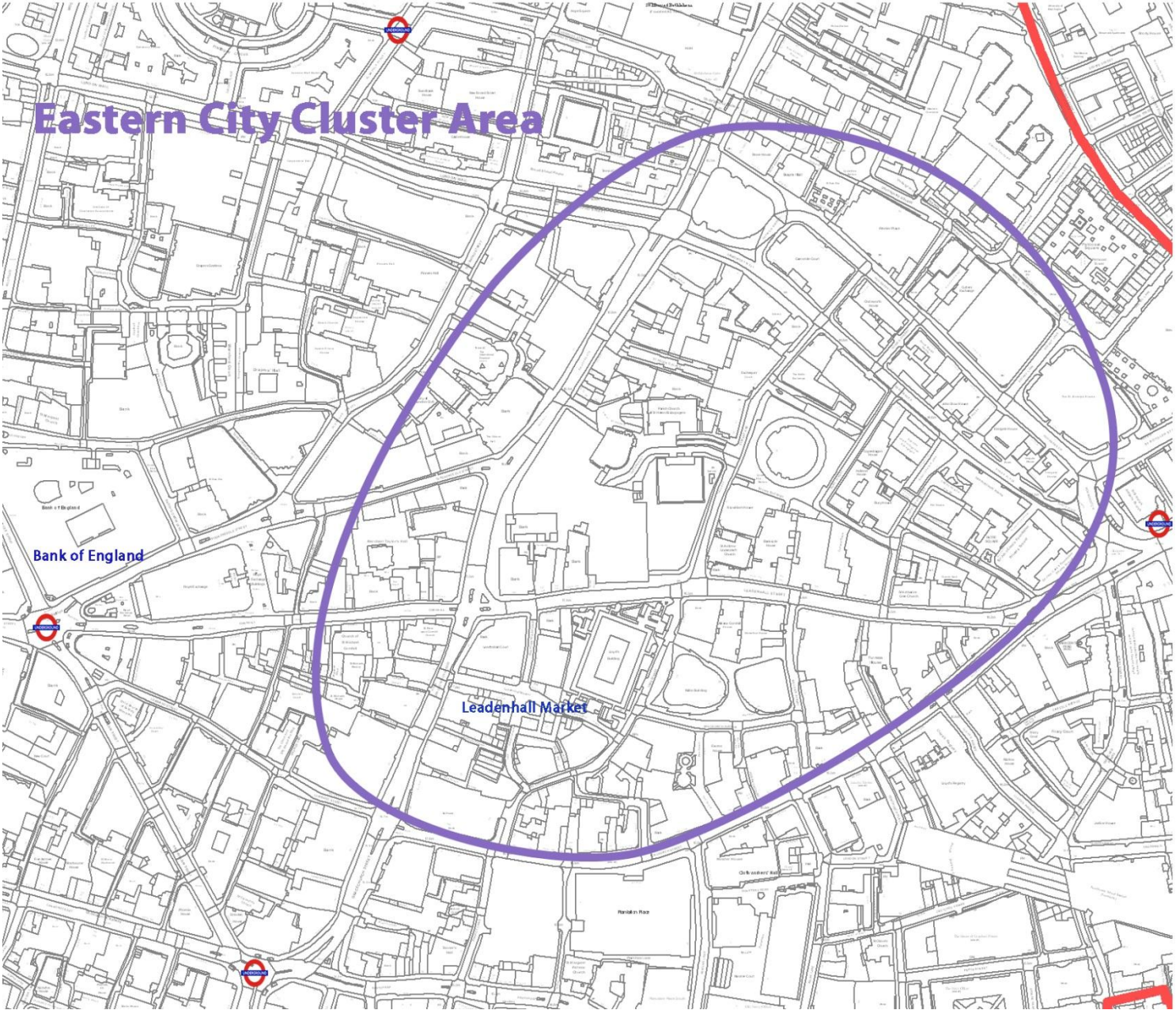
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Appendices:

- a. Plan of Strategy area
- b. Update on current projects in the area
- c. Plan of current and future developments

**Appendix A
Plan of proposed strategy area**



**Appendix B
Update on Projects in the Area**

Project	Update
Bury Court	This project involved the enhancement of the court behind the new development on 6 Bevis Marks. Vehicle access was removed from this area creating a new public space for people to enjoy. The scheme was externally funded by a Section 278 from 6 Bevis Marks development and was completed in 2014.
Mitre Square	This project involves the creation of a new public space, situated between the new development at One Creechurch Place and the existing Sir John Cass's Foundation School. Vehicle access will be largely removed, and an area of new green space will be supplemented with additional seating and improved lighting. Further improvements to the footways around the new development will also be implemented as part of the project. The scheme is fully funded by the developer of One Creechurch Place, and is due for completion in November 2016.
ECC phase 01 (undershaft an Great St Helens)	This approved scheme includes an enhanced public space in the Undershaft area, improving the churchyard of St Helen's Bishopsgate and enhancements to Great St Helens. The project is funded by the Section 106 and 278 from the Pinnacle. The implementation of this scheme has been delayed as a result of the need to enter into a Legal Agreement with the landowners in order to implement the scheme and this has proved to be difficult to achieve. The scheme will be reviewed as part of the proposed update of the area strategy.
St Helens Square	This approved project for the re-landscaping St Helens Square proposes a distinctive and fully accessible public space at the heart of the City. The scheme includes seating and a significant increase in greenery with the introduction of tree planting and planting beds. The design was developed under the guidance of the St Helen's Square Working Party, which was set up in 2011 and chaired by the then Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee. Planning permission for the scheme was granted in November 2013. The project is funded by the Section 106 from the 122 Leadenhall Building. Under the terms of the Section 106 agreement the sum of £2,439,150 is payable towards the implementation of the enhancement works. However, the arrangements have been complicated by the fact that the land is owned by a third party based internationally. Therefore, the legal agreement that is required between the developer and the land owners to enable the implementation of the scheme has proven difficult to complete, however the legal process is now been agreed by all parties and is very close to being finalised.
Leadenhall Street pedestrian crossing (ECC Phase 3)	This project aims to improve the pedestrian crossing at the junction of Leadenhall Street / St Mary Axe / Lime Street, and is an important "Road Danger Reduction" scheme. The existing pedestrian crossing at the junction with St Mary Axe is not fit for purpose as it does not support existing

	<p>pedestrian desire lines and footfall. The situation is anticipated to deteriorate further given the projected growth in the daytime population which will take place when all of the proposed Eastern City Cluster developments are built and occupied.</p> <p>The project is funded by the Section 106 from the 122 Leadenhall Building.</p> <p>The project is currently on-hold due to the construction impact of the 52-54 Lime Street (The Scalpel) development. Due to this delay, existing s106 funding has been reprioritised to the Aldgate project hence new funding will need to be identified and secured.</p> <p>The project is programmed for delivery in late 2017 subject to funding.</p>
<p>Sculpture in the City</p>	<p>This is a programme of temporary public art installations that is now entering its sixth consecutive year. It has been developed as part of a long-term vision to enhance the public realm, of the Eastern City Cluster and Fenchurch & Monument Area Enhancement Strategies. The project is funded primarily through financial and in-kind support from external partners (£240-280k) and an additional contribution from the City of London funded from the Section 106 from the Pinnacle development.</p>

Appendix C
Plan of current and future developments

