

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Planning & Transportation	26/04/2016
<b>Subject:</b> Eastern Cluster 3-D Computer Modelling	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Carolyn Dwyer, Director of the Built Environment	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Paul Beckett, Department of the Built Environment	

### Summary

This report advises Members that the Dept of the Built Environment is currently undertaking three-dimensional (3D) computer modelling of the City's eastern cluster to understand better the effect of existing planning policies for that area and its relationship to its environs and other parts of the City.

The 3D computer modelling work is still in its early stages. The work is not intended to make new policy but provides insights upon the effect of current planning policy. This work will provide confidence that the cluster can evolve while taking full account of key protected views and the wider setting of the Tower of London World Heritage Site.

### Recommendation

Members are recommended to note that the City is undertaking 3D digital modelling of the eastern cluster, and that this is being complemented by other modelling relating to the challenges and opportunities arising from this tall building cluster. This work will ensure that the City's planning policies provide an appropriate context for and limits to change in the eastern cluster and in the wider setting of the Tower of London.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The Eastern Cluster of tall buildings is identified in the City's Local Plan 2015 as being a 'Key City Place' that will face particular challenges over the coming years. Local Plan core strategic policy CS7 states that this area can accommodate significant growth in office floorspace and employment, partly due to its suitability for delivering tall buildings on appropriate sites. However there is a need to ensure that the cluster takes full account of the character of the surroundings, enhances the skyline and provides high quality public realm at

ground and other levels. Appendix 1 shows the eastern cluster in diagram form as included in the City Local Plan.

## **Current Position**

2. The Eastern Cluster has for many years been identified as a potential tall building cluster as a result of 'sieve' mapping that showed this was the part of the City least affected by strategic and local view protection policies. The current 3D modelling work is intended to improve our understanding of the view-related constraints and opportunities relating to this area. It is not intended that this work will change existing policy but it will form part of the background evidence base for current policy and future policy review.
3. In 2014 the Eastern Cluster contained 10 tall buildings (exceeding 100m AOD above ordnance datum). In addition there were 6 tall buildings under construction or with planning permission and several developers are considering proposing further additions to the skyline of the cluster. The City Local Plan 2015 expects that there will be further tall buildings within the cluster and indicates that they may provide up to 50% of the additional office floorspace target for 2026 set out in the Local Plan. This will have a significant impact on the City skyline and will also lead to significant intensification of activity at ground level.
4. One concern that the modelling is helping address is the need for the tall building cluster to evolve in a way that fully addresses the wider setting of the Tower of London World Heritage Site. The modelling work is at an early stage but has already confirmed the limits of change in the cluster that impact on the wider setting for the Tower of London. This approach will provide some reassurance to Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) and others that the City's Local Plan policies will continue to provide an appropriate wider setting for the Tower consistent with the Tower's location adjacent to the City in an economically dynamic part of central London.
5. The modelling is work in progress and no decision has yet been taken on how the outputs will be used or presented. However if the work is to form part of a sound evidence base to support the existing Local Plan policies or changes to them then that evidence will be made public at some point as part of the normal plan preparation process.
6. The 3D modelling is being complemented by other modelling work that will address key transport and environmental issues. For example, pedestrian flow modelling is being undertaken to understand the pedestrian movement situation that might exist in 2026 in order to inform the need for further public realm and highway changes at ground level. Wind modelling analysis is being commissioned to ensure that the wind effects of the tall buildings cluster are understood and where necessary mitigated. The eastern cluster is also near to Bank junction and therefore traffic modelling being undertaken to inform the changes at Bank will also improve our understanding of how traffic movement might be managed better and more securely in and around the eastern cluster.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

7. The modelling work being undertaken on the eastern cluster will inform a range of plans, strategies and projects that relate to this key part of the future City. These will include the City Local Plan review, the revised Eastern Cluster Area Enhancement Strategy, highway and public realm change projects. Better information derived from digital modelling will enable the City Corporation to manage future change in the eastern cluster in a smarter way.
8. The City Corporation has recently been closely involved in the review of HRP's Tower of London World Heritage Site Management Plan. HRP's Management Plan will be reported to the committee once it has been adopted. It is considered that HRP's Management Plan and the City's Local Plan will provide a complementary policy context for change in the eastern cluster and the wider setting of the Tower of London World Heritage Site.

## **Conclusion**

9. This report advises Members that digital modelling technology is being used to model future change in the eastern cluster. The work is at an early stage and it will bring a better understanding of the effects of current planning policies on the eastern cluster and its relationship to its environs including the wider setting of the Tower of London. It will also provide a sound evidence base for Local Plan review.

### **Contact: Paul Beckett**

Policy and Performance Director

T: 0207 332 1970

E: [paul.beckett@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:paul.beckett@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

Appendix 1: City Local Plan Figure G – Eastern Cluster

