



Honor Chapman Memorial Lecture

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It is a great honour to have been asked to give the Honor Chapman Memorial Lecture this year.

Whilst I sadly didn't know Honor closely, it was the breadth of her global vision that was so significant to her understanding of London and which has influenced London planning so much to this day.

It's been a privilege to work at the City since 1989, first in my former role as Development Director and now as Chief Planning Officer and to have witnessed how much London has developed, changed and grown into a truly global city.

You are quite a difficult audience to talk to, as some of you have been instrumental in that change, some of you have played a very significant part in it, some of you have observed it, and for some of you it is a part of London's history.

The City is changing faster and faster in response, almost always, to technological innovation.

The subject of my talk is continuity and change from a planner's perspective and how planning has responded to and guided that change.

At a time when planning has been cited as an enemy of enterprise, I would like to persuade you that planning genuinely carried out in the public interest and in a spirit of partnership can facilitate growth and placemaking.

There is no doubt that it is easier to facilitate change within the City where governance is aligned to that objective, the returns on development make it attractive to investors (subject to the ups and downs of economic cycles), and there is growing occupational demand.

The House of Lords Select Committee have recently reported on 'Building Better Places, a National Call for



Action'. Their overarching findings were that quality of place and development were key to success and that national government needs to trust and empower local government to deliver alongside its public and private partners.

Darwin identified as success, an ability to adapt and change, and the City has demonstrated that quality and continues to do so.

The City has been evolving for over 2000 years and it is impossible to separate that evolution from the city that we have today.

The City, defined by its city walls and port, was for a long time London and now the Square Mile is the commercial and financial heart of a world financial centre. Its success is utterly interdependent with that of the rest of the Central Activity Zone, and London as a whole, making the shortage of housing and improved public transport such key issues for the success of the City.

This year is the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London which devastated so much of the City. Much has

been written about the rejection of Sir Christopher Wren's master plan for the rebuilding of the City, but Wren did leave the City with the crowning glory of St Paul's Cathedral and its many Wren churches. The then City fathers and the property owners resisted such change, leaving the City with a historic street pattern with unusual alignments and property plots which still frame much of what we do to this day.

The Victorians planned and provided the City with some bold interventions and a network of railways and bridges that, since added to, make it one of the most accessible places by public transport in the world.

Roll forward to the 20th Century and to the devastation brought about by World War II bombing. In the post-war period the City mended and reconstructed that of its heritage which it valued and rebuilt to a post-war plan on a grand scale, including high-level walkways separated from major roads and piazzas, some of which were built and some of which were not. Whilst much of the post-war reconstruction might now be regarded as good reason never to give such power to 'planners' again, some of it was visionary such as the Golden Lane and Barbican Estates.



Some of these projects were unexceptional due to the limited palette of materials and the speed of construction necessary, and it is the redevelopment of these which has enabled the City to again reinvent itself and to create a further canvas.

So what have been the triggers for some of those changes over the last 30 years?

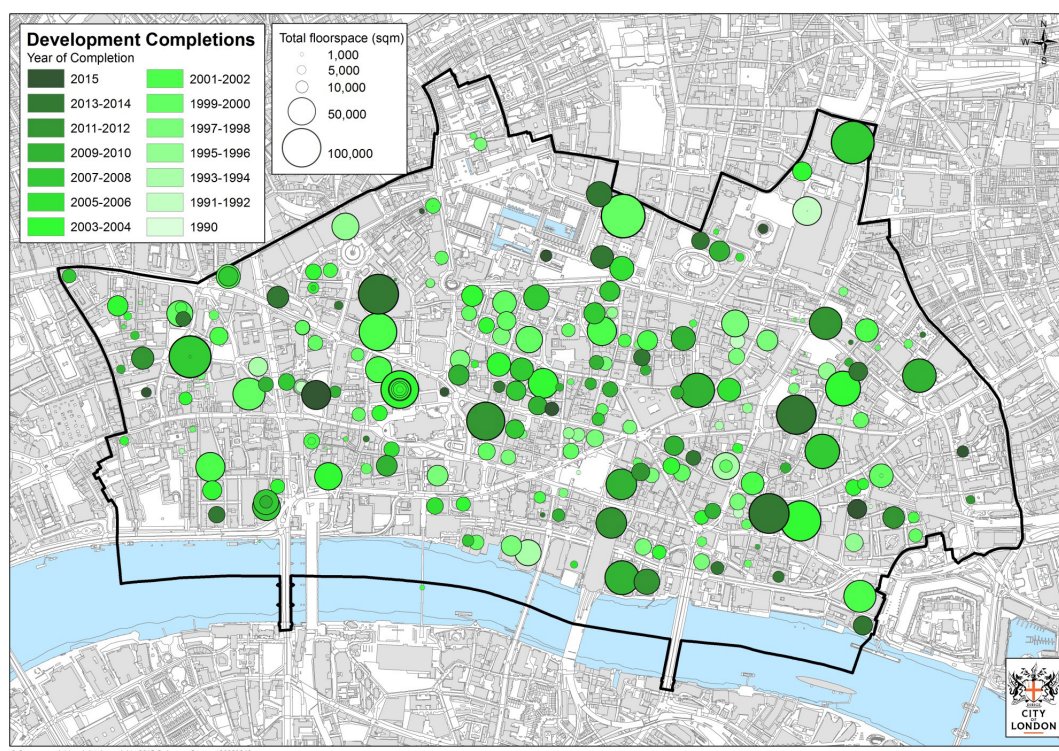
1. The demise of the newspaper printing industry
2. Big Bang (Goldman Sachs occupation of Peterborough Court, once the Daily Telegraph)
3. The requirement for large dealing floors
4. The expansion of the legal sector
5. The development of new areas such as Broadgate and Fleet Place
6. The emergence of new types of occupiers.

A staggering fact is that 80% of the office stock in the City has been redeveloped or extensively refurbished since 1985.

There are now:

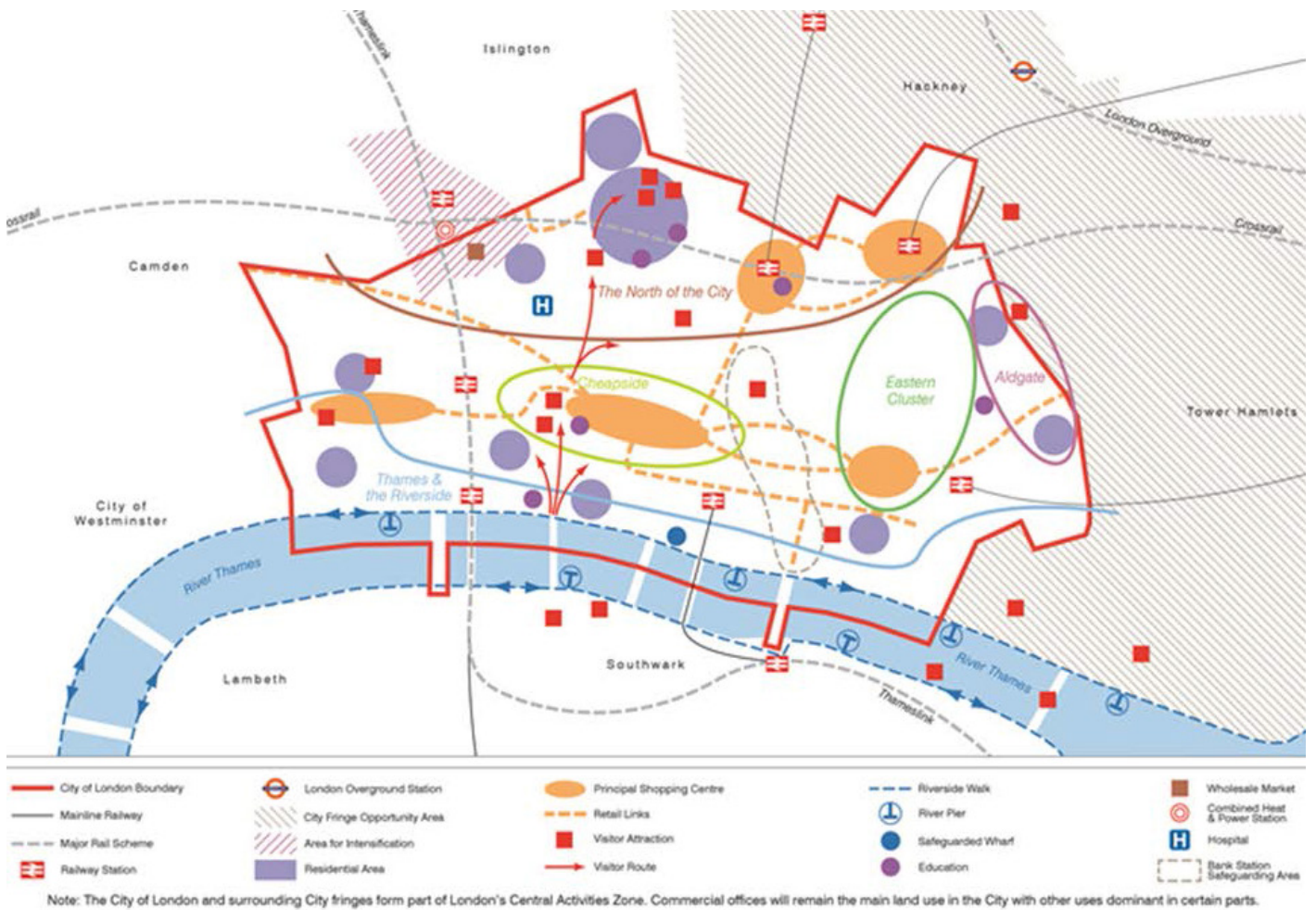
- 420,000 people who work in the City
- 8,000 people working in serviced offices in the City
- 8,000 people who make it their home
- And 4,000 hotel bedrooms either built or in the pipeline.

But it is not to be forgotten that the City is also home to universities, schools, institutions, food markets, churches and livery halls and is often the focus of major events and ceremonial occasions.



To today

Planning is part of the Department of the Built Environment and together we generate and support that change. Our recently adopted Business Plan sets out the scope of our ambition.



Future City

Creating and facilitating the leading future world-class city

Strategic Aim - an inclusive future world-class sustainable city that offers:

1. A leading international financial and business centre
2. Diverse culture, amenities and leisure that make the City more than a business centre
3. Highly accessible central location with efficient travel on city streets upon arrival
4. Excellent utilities infrastructure including the latest IT for all
5. High-quality architecture and public realm that attracts and responds to new development, enhances the historic environment and is enjoyable to experience
6. Healthy, safe and resilient environment for workers, residents and visitors
7. Excellent integrated public services in the City and beyond for developers, businesses, residents and visitors.

This recognises that we are deeply aware of international competition and the footloose nature of major occupiers and of the talent they are trying to attract.

The City is actively looking at its cultural offer with the potential of the Museum of London moving to the Smithfield General Market, the proposed Centre for Music and other cultural offers.

Crossrail is a fundamental step change, bringing the potential for 40,000 more people to arrive in the City per hour. The City is working with Space Syntax is looking at pedestrian movements, and significant projects are being proposed at Bank Station and Bank Junction.

The City places the greatest of importance on the quality of its buildings and its spaces, particularly those that mark the skyline.

As we cannot cover everything, I would like to highlight **six themes which are key to the work we are doing today:**

- 1 The Eastern Cluster
- 2 SMEs and the Shoreditch Effect
- 3 The public realm, markets, sustainability and air quality
- 4 The City's Approach to Residential
- 5 The City's Historic Environment
- 6 Our Place in London

1 The Eastern Cluster



A number of post-war tall buildings were constructed across the City, some of which have since been removed because they were regarded as being in inappropriate locations such as Sudbury House (north of St Paul's) and Drapers' Gardens, and some of which have remained, such as the Barbican Towers and Tower 42.

The City's success has necessitated the delivery of more floorspace. It could be achieved both, by densification of

existing sites and/or by building taller.

It was again the sad devastation caused by the 1992/1993 IRA bombs that ultimately led to the development of the Eastern Cluster. Despite what has been said over the years, its inception was neither planned nor coordinated but a pragmatic response to a set of circumstances. What is the case is that its emerging form has been planned.

The Grade II* listed Baltic Exchange with its magnificent hall was seriously damaged. Early attempts sought to rebuild it and to build around it.

Following this, a proposal designed by Foster emerged for the Millennium Tower, the tallest building in Europe at 386 metres - 80 metres taller than The Shard and featuring a viewing platform at 1,000 feet. This submitted scheme was ultimately withdrawn because of aviation concerns and this remains a determinant issue in building heights today.

This ultimately led to The Gherkin at 180 metres. I knew when writing the report recommending its approval that it was a seminal decision for the City. It was not only its first tall building for 20 years but set up a relationship with listed buildings that at the time was a unique approach. This was followed by the Heron Tower and now the cluster of much larger and taller towers recently approved.



The form of the Eastern Cluster

1. Strategic and LVMF views of St Paul's and the Tower of London
2. St Paul's Heights – a grid to protect views of St Paul's set up by the Surveyor of the Fabric of St Paul's in the 1930s in response to the threat to its setting from Faraday House and Unilever House
3. Critical views from places such as Fleet Street which defined the rake of The Cheesegrater
4. Monument views
5. Conservation Areas
6. Flight path safeguarding for Heathrow and City Airport.

50% - 60% of the City's new floorspace is anticipated to be accommodated in this area.

For buildings to have so marked an impact on the London skyline and its street environment it is essential that they are of the highest quality.

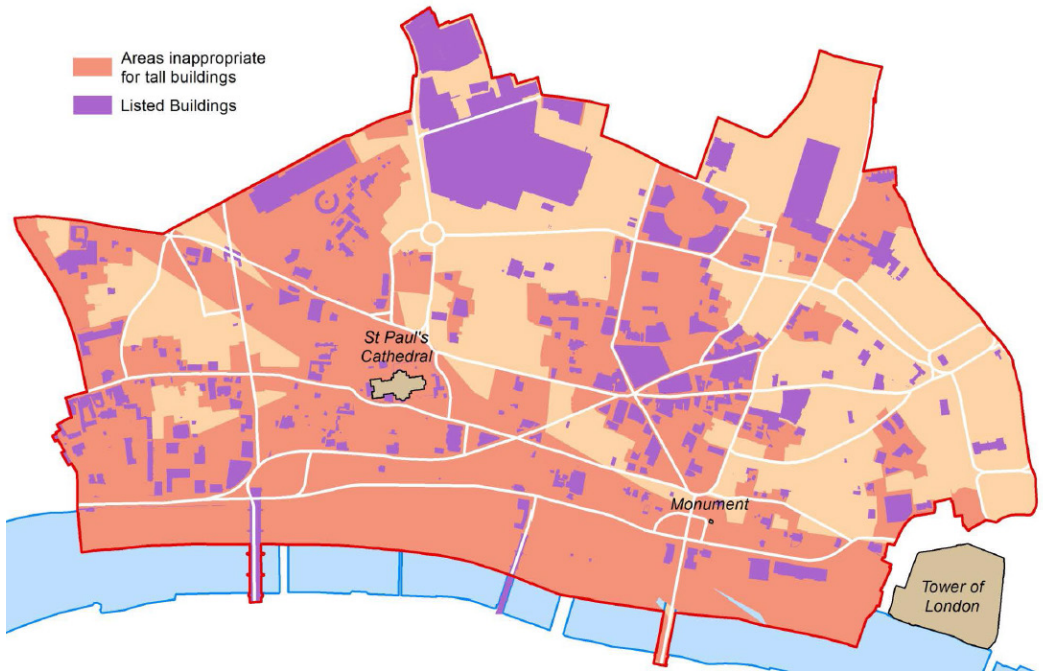
We are doing 3D modelling work on the visual form of the eastern cluster whilst recognising that the intensity of this development leads to other issues such as impact on micro climate, amenity space and pedestrian movement.

The City has been pro-active in requiring, through S106 agreements, the provision and maintenance of high-level viewing galleries and public spaces to which public access is required free of charge. This has and will open the City to those who do not work in the City, who do not feel a part of it and to visitors.

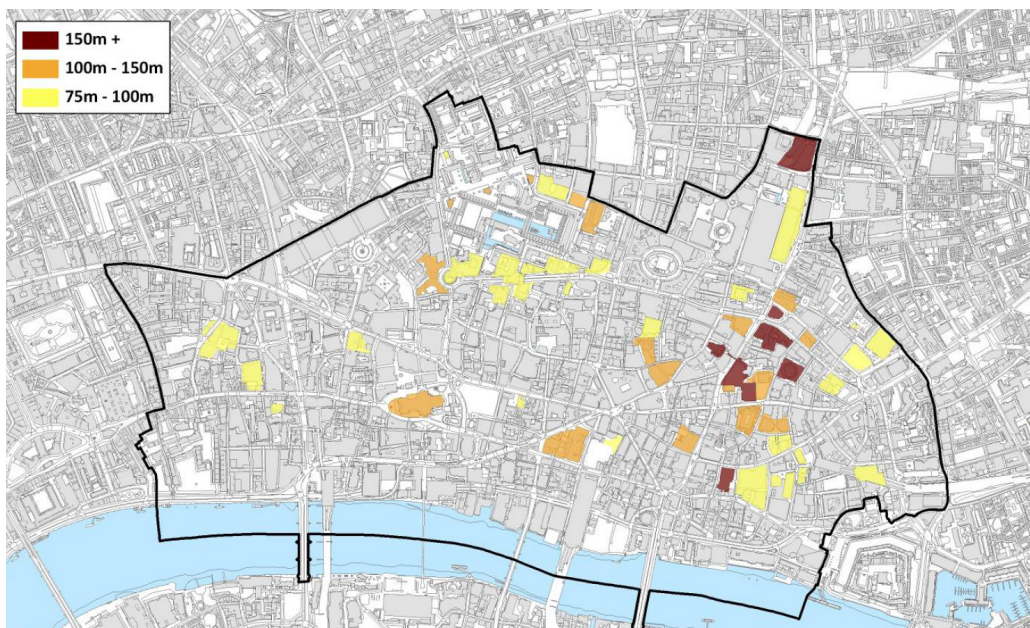
Seeking to secure freer access at ground level has had more limited success because of security concerns, but is something that we would like to encourage.



Eastern Cluster - Why it emerged



Eastern Cluster - Location of tall buildings



2 Public Realm



The scale of the buildings, their profile and the number of people working in them make it inevitable that the security measures required are intensive and we work closely with the Police and others. Much of this can be incorporated into the design of the buildings and the landscaping, but some of it will require wider vehicle management.

The City is beginning to develop an approach to consolidation and timed deliveries and a view that, although in separate ownership and public highway, the area should be managed as an estate partnership.

Over the last few years 30,000 off-street cycle parking spaces have been negotiated in new developments. When we were first negotiating significant cycle spaces and showers in schemes we were treated as barmy with cries of 'they will never be used', but now there are not enough and companies are demanding them with high quality entrances not shared with the servicing entrance.

3 SMEs and the Shoreditch Effect



At various stages there has been considerable pressure to provide modern Grade A space throughout the City. I had for a long time queried whether that was what was required for all our occupiers and particularly for smaller occupiers coming to the City. The City, along with the City Property Association, commissioned research launched this year at MIPIM on 'Clusters and Connectivity: The City as a place for SMEs.' Its findings were significant and built on last year's research on new ways of working.

Many people's perception is that the City is dominated by major companies and their significance to the City is recognised.

Of the 16,500 firms in the City, 98.6% have fewer than 250 employees and they employ over half of the workforce. Many SMEs actively prefer secondary space.

There has been a 45% growth in jobs in technology, media and telecoms since 2010 and there are 800–1,000 start-ups formed in the City each year.

They value a City location because of its ability to attract talent, its connectivity, its proximity to clients and, music to a planner's ears, the City's public realm, amenities and heritage.

However, the main concerns for the start-ups were:

1. The City remains cost competitive
2. That there was a growing shortage of space, particularly for small occupiers
3. That the digital infrastructure needed to improve
4. And the image of the City was too corporate.

They valued the public realm and amenities, and places to meet, particularly as they are less able to provide them internally than large occupiers.

Another issue that was raised was the predominance of chain retailers. The City as planning authority can only do so much on occupation but would very much encourage owners and occupiers to see what can be done to encourage independent retailers, markets and street food vendors to provide facilities enjoyed elsewhere in London.



4 The City's Approach to Residential

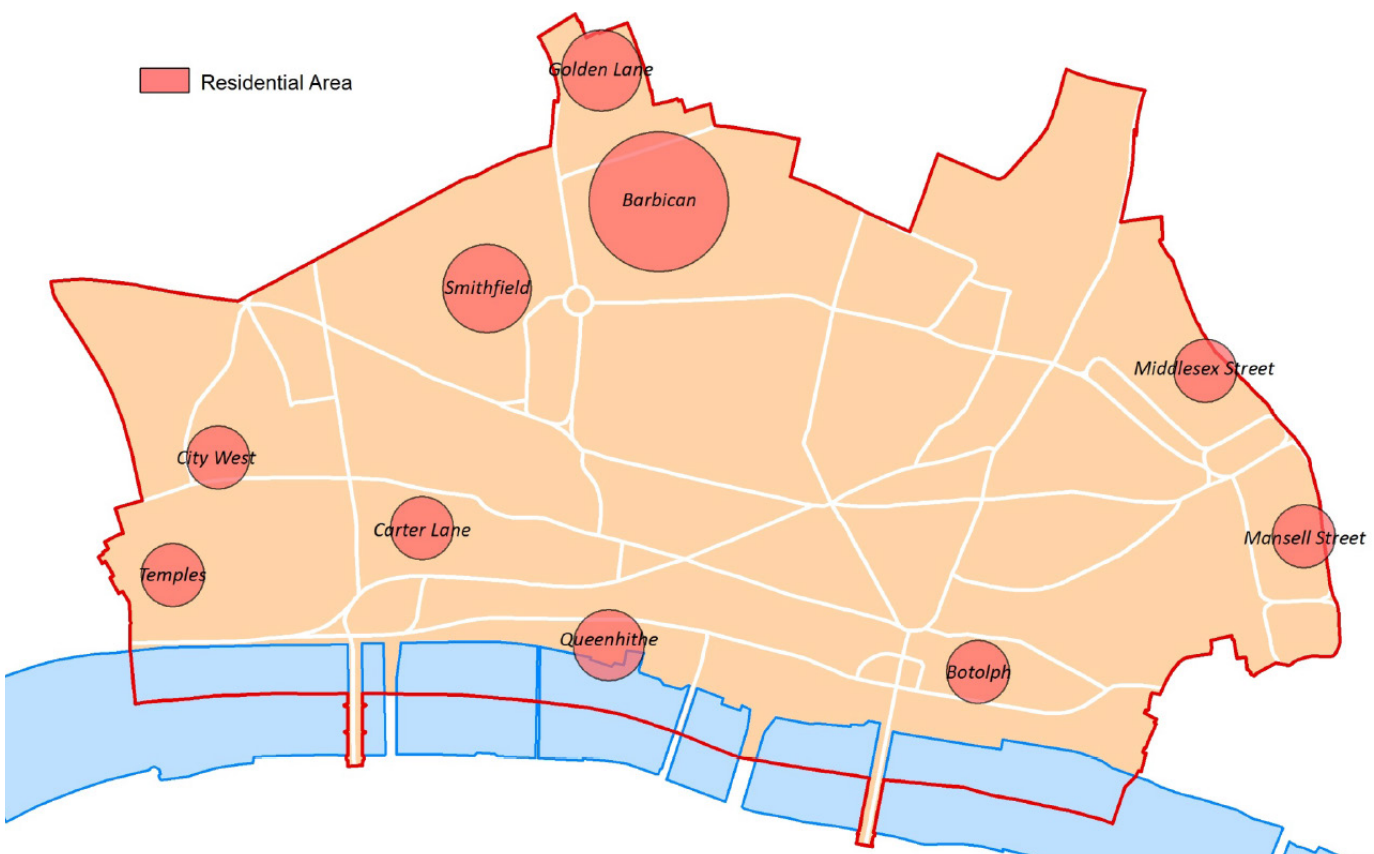
The City's policy on residential is to restrict new residential within the City in accordance with the City and London Plan and to safeguard the residents that we have which are located primarily in five areas.

Whilst such an approach appears to conflict with good planning and the concept of mixed uses, it is a legitimate approach for the City to take in the context of current environmental legislation:

1. Residential uses are competing often for the same spaces as are appropriate for SMEs
2. The City as a Square Mile is a finite resource as a financial and business centre. The Government's policy of allowing changes of use from offices to residential elsewhere in London through permitted development has fuelled the need for further offices in the CAZ

3. It is the most accessible place in the world and allows the growth and symbioses the City requires
4. It can lead to amenity issues arising from the 24-hour city:
 - Getting it fixed- generator servicing at weekends
 - Night time deliveries
 - Daylight and sunlight
5. It enables the City to provide a night-time economy.

The City is a very different place on a Saturday night and, whilst it raises policing issues, it is in many ways sound in broader London planning terms.



5 The Historic Environment



The historic environment of the City is core to its character and there has been much debate over the years as to whether it acts as a constraint, or whether it defines and makes the City different from many other financial centres, providing it with a USP and a greater divergence of character that many world cities would crave. There is something very special about Leadenhall Market, Smithfield, St Paul's, the Temples and the Barbican.

The City has more than 600 listed buildings, 84 of which are Grade I. It has 26 tightly drawn Conservation Areas and 49 scheduled ancient monuments making it a very exceptional place. These designations place statutory duties on the City in relation to them, and despite all the development that has occurred only 2 listed buildings have been demolished over the last 30 years and one of those was the Baltic Exchange as previously discussed, with the exception of the No 1 Poultry development.

For those who are critical of the City's approach to its historic environment, we work closely with owners to get the detailing right and some significant improvements have been made. We have restored the views of St Paul's from Ludgate Circus by putting Thameslink below ground and removing the bridge, and greatly improved its setting through the Paternoster Square development and

our significant landscaping improvements to the south involving the removal of the coach park.

Wren's Temple Bar has been returned to the City and new uses have been found for so many buildings including the use of banking halls for bars, the use of the Port of London Authority building as a hotel and Lutyens Poultry Building, by Soho House, the magnificent Royal Exchange, to which public access has been provided, and the creation of the Peace and Reconciliation Centre at St Ethelburga's Centre. There has been a huge redevelopment scheme providing a 21st century hospital at St Barts whilst safeguarding its 18th century Gibbs square, and the Temple of Mithras exhibition space is to be incorporated into Bloomberg providing a wonderful juxtaposition between the old and new ways of working.

We have secured disabled access to many of the City's historic buildings, including the discreet sesame stairs to St Mary le Bow and step-free access to Guildhall.

To ensure the relevance of the historic environment in the future requires a careful analysis of the asset, the value people attach to it and its potential for use. Greater technological change has led to the easier adaptability of these buildings due to the lesser limitations that they impose.

6 Our Place in London



The City is not an island; its ability to thrive and succeed as a world financial centre is utterly dependent on London's ability in its widest sense to provide the transport, the housing, the connectivity, the diversity of culture, the open spaces and other experiences citizens require.

It is this essential buzz that makes London such an attractive world city and such a draw. It is vital that the City is fully engaged with that debate and its wider role in Europe.

Conclusion

So back to our theme of continuity and change in the City; we are now recognised worldwide both for our historic and new buildings.

The UN Sustainable Development Goal 11 is to: 'Make cities and human settlements safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable', and whilst providing a framework for diverse cities across the world, its applicability to the City's future could not be greater.

Would those issues have been so central to the debate 25 years ago? No, they would not. Were they issues then? Yes, they were. Are they going to be critical to the success of the future City in 25 years? Yes, they are, and we look forward to working with all our partners to ensure the City continues to thrive.

