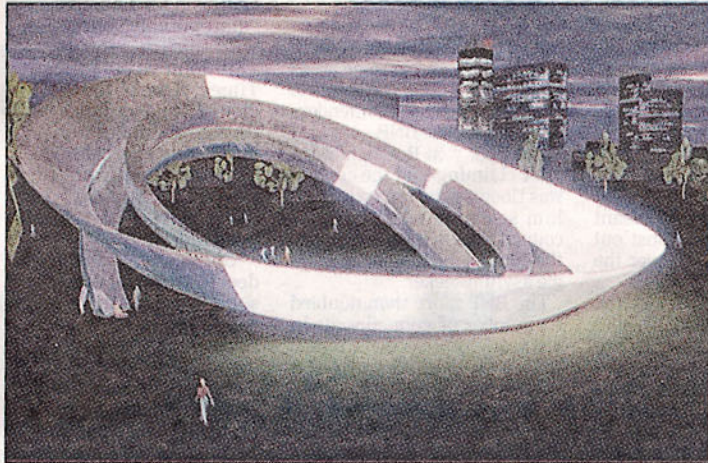


Glass lunar clock 'a Stonehenge for Thames Gateway'



Trick of light: Aluna would display the moon's phases and the tides

THIS is the "Stonehenge" that could become a major monument for the capital.

Aluna would be the world's first tidal-powered moon clock, says its designer, and "change the way we consider time and understand our planet".

Plans for the art installation, which is estimated to cost £5 million, are being presented to Thames Gateway chiefs and businesses today in a bid to secure £250,000 for feasibility studies.

The structure, at either Greenwich or the East India Docks, would be powered by turbines in the Thames which would also

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produce enough power for 200 homes nearby. The installation, 43 yards wide and three storeys high, would be three rings of recycled glass illuminated to reflect the moon's movement.

Designer Laura Williams said: "We hope to decide the site later this year, with construction beginning next year. We hope it will be a great beacon for the Olympics.

"The electricity generating aspect will also be a good test for the technology."

Aluna could be finished in 2011. It is backed by the deputy mayor Nicky Gavron and organisations including the Docklands Light Railway, the Science Museum and the Muslim Council of Great Britain.

Ms Gavron said: "Once you see the scale of the project it is obvious how powerful and iconic it will be. It has the potential to become symbolic of the regeneration planned for the lower Lea Valley."

Astronomers Sir Martin Rees and Sir Patrick Moore also back the project.

MP Ian Gibson, chairman of the Commons select committee on science and technology, said:

"Technology, innovation, inspirational science education and the public understanding of science are leading concerns of the day.

"Aluna is an eloquent expression of all of these and a stunning example of the science and art Britain should be championing."

John Worthington of the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation said: "It can be difficult to explain a lot of the ideas behind the Thames Gateway and we hope that ideas like this art installation will encourage people to think about it."

www.alunatime.org