

Annex 3: Continuing the Conversation – Outcomes of the Festival of York
Central Consultation

York Central Masterplan

Continuing the Conversation

DRAFT, REV D

**Outcomes from Stage 3
Festival of York Central**

May 2018

Allies and Morrison

This draft report summarises the outcomes from the stage 3 consultation carried out on the planning application for York Central. This report is a draft work-in-progress document and will ultimately be replaced by a more comprehensive Statement of Community Involvement.

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Project overview	1
1.2	Purpose of the report and status	2
1.3	Structure of the document	3
2.	SETTING THE SCENE	4
2.1	Planning application engagement strategy	5
2.2	Overview of engagement undertaken	6
2.3	Promotion	7
2.4	Progressing the project	8
3.	SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK AND RESPONSES	10
3.1	Summary of topics	11
3.2	Vision and objectives	12
3.3	Movement	16
3.4	Landscape and environment	21
3.5	Design and heritage	26
3.6	Land uses	28
3.7	Other topics	33
4.	ACTION PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS	36
4.1	Action Plan	37
4.2	Recommendations for the next stage	47

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

Introduction

York Central is one of the largest brownfield regeneration sites in England with some parts of the railway-locked area restricted to rail uses for more than 150 years. The site offers the opportunity to create a series of new city centre residential and business neighbourhoods including a high-quality commercial quarter with improved access to the city's railway station. York Central has an important role to play in delivering a significant proportion of the overall growth of the city as set out in the emerging Local Plan. The site has been designated as a UK Government 'Housing Zone' and has also been awarded 'Enterprise Zone' status which offers commercial occupiers significant incentives.

York Central's Enterprise Zone designation will allow for retention of 100% of business rates uplift to 2042, providing a potential funding mechanism for critical infrastructure. Early occupiers will also be able to directly benefit from rate relief incentives up to 2027. The Housing Zone designation for York Central has helped York Central Partnership to access funds to help to accelerate the delivery of homes.

York Central Partnership (YCP)

York Central is being brought forward through partnership working between Homes England, Network Rail, the City of York Council and the National Railway Museum (the Museum). Bringing together funding streams to support the delivery of infrastructure and land assembly, the partners are working collaboratively to support the development of York Central.

Summary of the scheme

For the purposes of the stage 3 exhibition, the emerging masterplan proposed the following key elements:

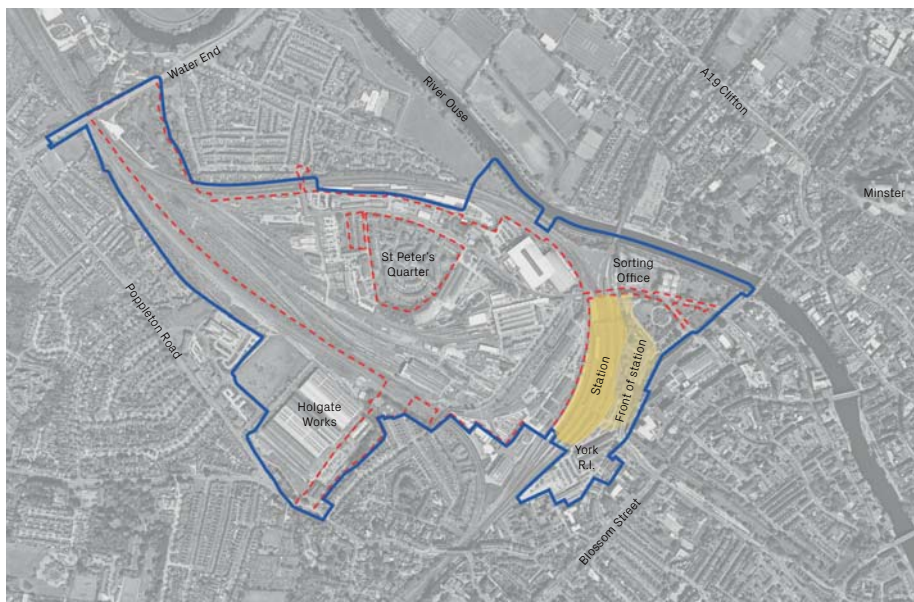
- **Up to 2,500 new homes** including 20% affordable provision and a range of housing which caters for people at all stages of life.
 - **Up to 100,000 square metres** of commercial floorspace including significant provision of new offices for the city as well as smaller, flexible workspaces for smaller businesses and other uses including hotels, a number of shops, bars and cafés to cater for the new and existing residents and workers, with spaces for creative activities.
 - **A new western entrance to the station and concourse** to provide access to and development of the York Central site and to support the future expansion of rail services through the station.
 - **The expansion of the National Railway Museum** to deliver an exciting and ambitious masterplan to tell the epic stories of the impact of railways on the world and their role in shaping the future.
 - **A major new park and new public square** which will be high quality open spaces for the use by residents, workers, visitors and the wider York community.
 - **The potential for new community and educational facilities** across the site for the benefit of existing and future residents.
- A new western access road into the site supported by a series of improved pedestrian and cycle connections to surrounding communities and the city centre prioritising sustainable means of travel.
 - **Positive statements of the historic identity** of the site itself, and the wider townscape setting and character of York.

1.2 Purpose of the report and status

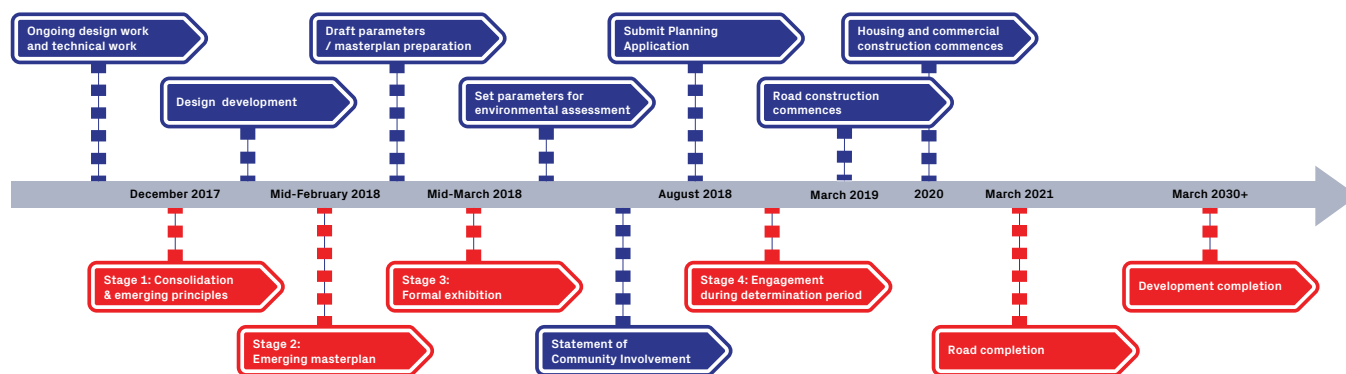
“Continuing the conversation” is an informal report which summarises the feedback arising from the stage 3 consultation exercise, the Festival of York Central. It provides a summary of feedback received from the various consultation workstreams and identifies the proposed responses, outcomes and recommended actions moving forwards.

The report should be used as a tool to inform discussion, contributing to a shared understanding of the direction of travel as YCP moves from consultation on the emerging masterplan to the submission of a planning application in August 2018.

It is important to note that the process of preparing the masterplan and planning application is ongoing. In that context, the report should be understood as a stepping stone towards the preparation of the full Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which will ultimately supersede this report.



Emerging masterplan boundary (dashed red) and draft site allocation boundary (blue)



Timescales and overarching project timetable

1.3 Structure of the report

Following the introduction, the report is structured as follows:

- **Scene setting** (chapter 2): overview of the planning application engagement strategy, purpose of the stage 3 engagement process, summary of engagement undertaken, overview of current workstreams and a framework for categorising feedback and responses.
- **Summary of feedback and responses** (chapter 3): summary of topics and overview of feedback and responses associated with each including the vision, movement, landscape and environment, design and heritage and land uses.
- **Action plan and recommendations** (chapter 4): summary of key actions and recommendations for future engagement at stage 4 in advance of the submission of the planning applications.

2 Setting the scene

2.1 Planning application engagement strategy

Hearing the views of stakeholders and the community is really important to York Central Partnership (YCP). YCP is committed to an ongoing conversation about the emerging masterplan with local residents, workers and visitors. Our approach to engagement has been guided by key principles that you helped to shape and which are vital to achieve a successful scheme.

Principles for engagement

York Central has six key principles for engagement:

1. Establish trust in the process and the project.
2. Transparency as a default.
3. Sensitivity in building relationships and providing consistency.
4. Clarity on processes & stages of engagement, what is discussed, when and how it informs the design.
5. Clear communications which are accessible and appropriate.
6. Interesting formats to encourage people to participate.

Stages of engagement

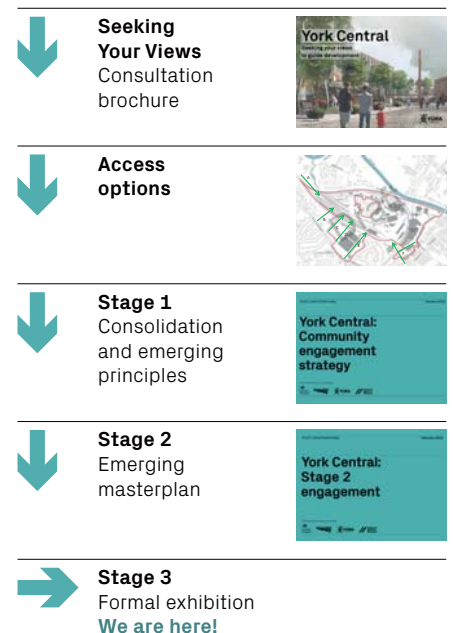
In 2016, we sought your views on the emerging proposals for York Central through a range of events and exhibitions. We received 1,224 consultation responses which were analysed and the key points were fed into the emerging master planning process. In 2017, we sought your views on different access options for the site. 644 people attended drop-in events and we received 619 responses. Since late 2017, we have been developing the emerging masterplan through our Stage 1 and Stage 2 engagement activities as follows:

- **Stage 1** - we met with local groups and organisations and held three public pop-up events to hear your thoughts on the emerging principles for the York Central masterplan.
- **Stage 2** - we held a series of workshops with members of the community to discuss key themes for the emerging York Central masterplan. The workshops allowed us to explore issues raised in Stage 1 in greater detail which has helped us to progress key elements of the masterplan.
- **Stage 3** (completed in May 2018) – a comprehensive process involving an exhibition and dedicated website, as well as a series of events and activities to promote deeper understanding and engagement.

Purpose of stage 3 engagement

Following a focused and intensive period of design work, technical studies and engagement with local people over the past six months, YCP identified five main objectives for the stage 3 engagement:

1. Provide a clear overview of how the emerging masterplan is evolving.
2. Hear your views on the overall approach, vision and key principles.
3. Understand your thoughts on more specific elements of the proposals including site access and open spaces.
4. Deepen the level of involvement and understanding of the site through conversation and dialogue to enable long term community involvement in the site as it evolves.
5. Enable a masterplan that better meets the needs of the York community.



Engagement timeline leading to the stage 3 activities

2.2 Overview of engagement undertaken

Exhibition

YCP sought views on the emerging masterplan proposals as part of The Festival of York Central which formed Stage 3 of the engagement process.

The Festival launched on 19th March 2018 and the exhibition ran from 10am on Wednesday 21st March until 6pm on Friday 27th April 2018. The period for comments finished at midnight on 29th April 2018. The Festival was held at the National Railway Museum, which was open from 10am until 6pm, seven days a week with regular staffed sessions.

The exhibition material invited specific feedback on the following:

- Emerging vision;
- Overall approach to the masterplan including movement and access, landscape and environment, design and heritage, land uses and;
- Specific options for (i) Marble Arch / Leeman Road connections and (ii) Southern connection.
- Aspirations for what York Central will be like as a place to live, work and spend time

Attendees were invited to look out for the speech bubble symbol ("Join the conversation") on boards through the exhibition; this identified topics and issues that we would like to hear your opinions on. Any wider thoughts and questions about other aspects of the exhibition were also welcomed.

288 people responded to the consultation questionnaire either online, or via the hard copy form. These respondents submitted 1,816 specific responses to the questions.

My York Central

During Stage 1, feedback encouraged YCP to review the My Castle Gateway project as a best-practice example of good engagement. The same team created My York Central (MYC). MYC commenced in the lead in to the launch of stage 3 and has been a key element in going beyond conventional community consultation. It has enabled all those interested to become part of a sustained long-term conversation where influence comes through sharing responsibility for the area and its future. Throughout the festival, MYC has made getting involved active, challenging and fun.

Over the six weeks of the Festival of York Central and York Central Exhibition at the National Railway Museum, MYC has explored the plans and possibilities for York Central. Each week MYC produced Open Briefing documents which summarised the key discussions, debates and feedback.

The four Open Briefing documents were then synthesised into a Vision for York Central, with a short summary Big Ideas document, and a set of Principles of how York Central can be developed in the future stages.

More than 3,000 post-it notes were completed during the course of the six week consultation.

Ways of providing feedback

There were three ways to provide feedback on the emerging masterplan:

- **Commonplace and website:** YCP used an online engagement platform to help gather thoughts on the proposals for York Central (www.yorkcentral.info). Participants were able to view the exhibition material in full and respond to questions.
- **Questionnaire (hard copy):** Hard copies of the Commonplace questionnaire were available to complete.
- **My York Central:** The MYC Vision document was drawn together from community engagement through the Festival of York Central, largely through:
 1. Feedback through Post-Its at the exhibition, photographed/uploaded/tagged on our Flickr site.
 2. Discussion at festival events, summarised through a series of blogs and informing a set of open briefing documents which were produced on the festival themes of open space, homes work and movement.
 3. Other input via various meetings and workshops with specific groups (for example elected members, local schools, pop-ups, York Youth Council).
 4. Contributions via conversations on the doorstep, via door-knocking carried out by local councillors and support teams.

2.3 Promotion

Advertising

An integrated communications strategy was devised to promote the Festival of York Central, with multiple channels identified to ensure all residents were made aware of the opportunities to engage with the masterplan.

Adverts were placed both off and online with the York Press and online campaigns were hosted on Minster FM and York Mumbler.

York Press has a readership of 75,232 and print adverts were placed with the title over the six-week period. The online campaign with the outlet generated 170,000 impressions, split across tenancy skins, targeted wallpaper, sponsored content and premium ad positioning.

York Mumbler, a local parenting forum, has 17,000 visitors per month and two bespoke blogs were created for the site to promote details of the festival to the network of parents. Banner advertising was also hosted on the website.

The Minster FM advertising included an interview with the lead spokesperson of the Partnership, which was aired to the station's listeners (it has 75,000 listeners per week) and the piece was promoted to its Facebook audience, generating 67,000 impressions. Further advertising was placed on the website, which generated 200,000 impressions.

Social media

Awareness about the festival events and masterplan consultation was raised on Facebook and Twitter via a series of promoted posts. The Facebook adverts reached 29,952 people and there were 822 link clicks on the content. Twitter generated 61,458 impressions and 228 link clicks.

Letter

A letter promoting the festival was produced by the partnership for local residents and businesses, encouraging them to visit the masterplan exhibition and join the conversation around the development. It contained background information about the site, dates and timings of the festival, as well as details of the various social channels and website addresses where further information could be found.

The direct mailer was distributed via the March edition of Your Local Link Magazine, a local news magazine which is delivered to 90,250 addresses across York and the surrounding villages. Your Local Link is a City of York Council approved communications method and the letters were made clearly identifiable in York Central Partnership branded envelopes.

Coverage

There was widespread coverage of the festival in key local media, both on and offline, including BBC Look North (North East and Cumbria), BBC Radio York, York Press and Minster FM.

Press releases

Three separate press releases were issued to the local news outlets before and during the consultation exhibition.

My York Central

Community engagement group, My York Central, also promoted details of the events and masterplan exhibition on its own social media platforms, as well as through its website and blogs. The group also went door knocking in the local area to speak to local residents about the development and used community networks to further share details of the festival.

2.4 Progressing the project

Current workstreams

The summary of feedback is in the process of being considered and discussed with YCP and the master planning team. It has, and will continue to play an instrumental role in refining and informing the master plan and the various components of the planning application which are due to be submitted in August 2018.

In addition to the My York Central and wider stage 3 consultation feedback, YCP and the master planning team are considering the following:

1. Further design work;
2. Ongoing technical studies and assessments;
3. Ongoing discussions with statutory consultees as part of the pre-application process; and
4. Any subsequent targeted engagement as part of stage 4 of the planning application engagement process in advance of the submission of the application(s).

Framework for workstreams

The workstreams summarised in section 2.4 will assist YCP in progressing the following:

1. Refinement of the overarching vision and objectives for York Central.
2. Refinement and evolution of the indicative master plan and further illustrative studies and materials.
3. Preparation of a set of planning application material which will inform the basis of the consent. As set out in the exhibition this is likely to include a development schedule (the uses and amounts of development proposed), parameter plans (plans showing the limits of proposed development such as heights and layouts of plots) and design guidance (a guidance document against which future detail planning applications will be assessed).
4. Identification of other topics of discussion which are outside of the remit of YCP or the current planning application. These will be shared with other organisations (e.g. City of York Council) as appropriate.
5. Considering the ongoing approach to engagement beyond the immediate planning application.

These five categories have informed the structured approach to the summary of responses, outcomes and actions as set out in chapter 3.

Stage 4 engagement

As noted above, a key outcome of this report is to set the context for any future targeted engagement activity in advance of the submission of the planning application in August. Areas recommended for inclusion in this stage 4 process are highlighted in chapter 4.

Statement of Community Involvement

A comprehensive Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is under preparation in support of the planning application. Continuing the Conversation will ultimately help to inform the SCI. However, it should not be interpreted as a draft SCI at this point in the context of the various workstreams which are ongoing.

Our commitment to engagement

Establish trust in the process and the project.

Transparency as a default.

Sensitivity in building relationships and providing consistency.

Clarity on processes, stages, what is discussed and how it informs design.

Clear communications which are accessible and appropriate.

Interesting formats to encourage people to participate.

Hearing your views is really important to us. York Central Partnership is committed to an ongoing conversation about the emerging masterplan with local residents, workers and visitors.

Our approach to engagement has been guided by key principles that you helped to shape and which are vital to achieve a successful scheme.

In 2016, we sought your views on the emerging proposals for York Central through a range of events and exhibitions. We received 1,224 consultation responses which were analysed and the key points were fed into the emerging masterplan process. In 2017, we sought your views on different access options for the site. 644 people attended drop-in events and we received 619 responses. Since late 2017, we have been developing the emerging masterplan through our Stage 1 and Stage 2 engagement activities. Further information on the processes and outcomes of these stages is given on **Boards 7 and 8.**

Your views and feedback from these earlier rounds of consultation have informed the development of the emerging masterplan.

The engagement process

- ↓ **Seeking Your Views**
Consultation brochures
- ↓ **Access options**
- ↓ **Stage 1**
Consolidation and emerging principles
- ↓ **Stage 2**
Emerging masterplan
- **Stage 3**
Formal exhibition
We are here!

Views, comments & conversations

We are seeking your views on the emerging masterplan proposals as part of The Festival of York Central which forms Stage 3 of our engagement process.

The Festival of York Central – dates and information
The Festival launched on 18th March 2018 and the exhibition will run from 10am on Wednesday 21st March until 6pm on Friday 27th April 2018. The period for comments finishes at midnight on 29th April 2018.

The Festival is being held at the National Railway Museum, which is open from 10am until 6pm, seven days a week.

To find out more, including times when the exhibition is staffed, please visit our website (www.yorkcentral.info) and follow:
<https://twitter.com/YRCentral>
<https://www.facebook.com/YorkCentral1>

What should you comment on?
We want to hear your views on:
— Emerging vision (Board 9)
— Overall approach to the masterplan including movement and access (Boards 11 to 14), landscape and environment (Board 15), design and heritage (Board 16), land uses (Board 17) and
— Southern connection (Board 14)

We would like to hear your thoughts on specific options for:
— Marble Arch / Leeman Road connections (Board 13)
— Southern connection (Board 14)

We also want to know about your aspirations for what York Central will be like as...
— a place to live (Board 19)
— a place to work (Board 20)
— a place to spend time – The Great Park (Board 21) and The New Square (Board 22)

Look out for the speech bubble symbol (‘Join the conversation’) on other boards through the exhibition. This identifies topics and issues that we would like to hear your opinions on.

Any thoughts and questions about other aspects of the exhibition are welcome!

How to provide feedback?
There are three ways to provide feedback on the emerging masterplan:

1. **Commonplace and website**
We are using an online engagement platform to help gather your thoughts on the proposals for York Central. Please visit www.yorkcentral.info and follow the link to join the conversation!
2. **Questionnaire (hard copy)**
We have hard copies of the Commonplace questionnaire that we would like you to fill in. Please see the table opposite. Please note that the questions online and the paper questionnaire ask identical questions, so you do not need to complete both.
3. **My York Central**
During Stage 1, you asked us to look at the My Castle Gateway project as a best-practice example of good engagement. The same team has created My York Central (MYC). MYC goes beyond conventional community consultation by enabling all those interested to become part of a **sustained long-term conversation where influence comes through sharing responsibility for the area and its future.** Throughout the festival we are working to make getting involved active, challenging and fun. Visit the website for information on when and where these activities will take place and how to provide feedback.

For further information, please visit www.yorkcentral.info, [Twitter.com/YRCentral](https://twitter.com/YRCentral) or [Facebook.com/YorkCentral1](https://www.facebook.com/YorkCentral1)

Feedback from stage 1

During Stage 1, we met with local groups and organisations and held three public pop-up events to hear your thoughts on the emerging principles for the York Central masterplan.

Using the BRE (Building Research Establishment) Excellence Framework shaped conversations about how we could make York Central a sustainable place. The wheel defines eight themes which are shown below. The detailed feedback from Stage 1 will be reported in full in the Statement of Community Involvement (a formal document which will be submitted with the planning applications) and summarised by the themes of the BRE Excellence Framework.

450 comments made

- **Governance**
 - Accountability & transparency is required.
 - Who's in control of what's built?
 - In-control governance process not clear.
 - Risk of under-exploited assets due to differing drivers of VCP partners.
 - Concern of how piecemeal development will be managed.
- **Transport & connectivity**
 - Concern about traffic, congestion and air pollution.
 - Mixed views on type of connection through Marble Arch.
 - Promote sustainable forms of transport – supports new cycle and pedestrian routes.
 - More reliable and frequent buses.
 - General support for low car use.
 - Explore parking strategy.
 - Supports better access to station on west-side.
 - Need an integrated and ambitious transport strategy. Bus station?
- **Services**
 - Development must be supported by services integrated with existing communities.
 - Schools, doctors and high quality shops to create communities.
 - Play and sports areas, variety of green spaces.
 - For young and old.
 - Children's groups.
 - Better toilet facilities.
 - Mental health services and for those with disabilities.
- **Equity**
 - Pay attention to detail to ensure accessibility e.g. handrails and seating.
 - Housing for locals including social, sheltered & housing for disabled.
 - Not too high-rise.
 - Consider views.
 - Too many homes?
- **Economy**
 - General support for a variety of commercial and office space.
 - Clarity on how many jobs and what kind.
 - Include smaller workspaces for creative industries/start-ups/SMEs, social enterprise.
 - Complement existing food & drink/retail offer, don't compete with the city centre.
- **Housing & built environment**
 - Support for high quality, sustainable, affordable homes.
 - Variety of home sizes.
 - Concern about too much student accommodation.
 - Incorporate historic buildings.
 - Concern about building heights impact.
 - Too many homes?
- **Social & cultural**
 - Explore role of Railway Institute as a cultural hub.
 - Support for the Museum expansion but important to look beyond the Museum for cultural provision on site.
 - Provide all weather social and play spaces.
- **Other**
 - Excited by the proposals.
 - Make use of brownfield land.
 - Would like to see more visuals.
 - Consider two-way relationship between York Central and York.
 - Hard to find information.
 - Integrate with broader proposals.
- **Environmental**
 - Incentivise environmentally friendly modes of travel.
 - Tackle air pollution.
 - Woodland site for play?
 - Provide for nature & wildlife.
 - Look at best practice.

Feedback from stage 2

During Stage 2, we held a series of workshops with members of the community to discuss key themes for the emerging York Central masterplan. The workshops allowed us to explore issues raised in Stage 1 in greater detail which has helped us to progress key elements of the emerging masterplan. The workshop themes and the outcomes of each are set out below.

Movement

Landscape

Design, heritage & uses

1. How will Marble Arch work – bus gates, taxis, dedicated cycle lanes?
2. Support for new access on the western side of the station – taxis and buses
3. Concern about impact of cars through Entrance Square.
4. Better public transport is a priority.
5. Should be integrated with the wider city transport strategy.
6. Safe and active connections to/from St. Peter's Quarter.
7. Priority for pedestrians and cyclists – segregated cycle way and pleasant, safe routes.
8. Support for improvements to southern pedestrian/cycle access to the site.
9. Attractive direct routes through park.
10. Leeman Park is well-used – improve lighting along river.
11. Important to consider those with disabilities within the strategy.
12. Reduce parking over time and commit to strong enforcement.

1. The Great Park – ideas included adventure play, outdoor gym, activities for teenagers, play areas for all ages and performance space such as open-air theatre.
2. Views to the Minster will be important in making it feel like York.
3. Consider position of road next to park.
4. Support for livable local streets and shaded spaces. Consider acoustic impact of railways on homes.
5. Entrance Square – dedicated cycle route and bus and taxi only.
6. Consider bridge across river.
7. Green roofs for buildings including the Museum.
8. Interpretation of railway heritage in the park.

1. Need to maximise the benefits of the Museum and find wider opportunities for culture.
2. Overall aspiration for more community facilities e.g. schools and GP surgeries etc for residents and local workers.
3. Support for as much affordable housing as possible.
4. Need to be careful to consider the impact of so many new homes and businesses.
5. Careful response needed to the character of the wider city.
6. Interest in modern, contemporary buildings.
7. Mixed debates on building heights – interest in streets with terraced houses particularly to the north of the Foundry. Potential for areas such as York Yard South (between the park and Freight Avoiding Line) to include apartments with greater height.
8. Think about the views and relationship with heritage assets including criteria for the retention of buildings.
9. Potential to include one or two visitor facilities with interactive exhibits about the heritage of the site e.g. within the Museum or as part of a retained historic building such as Alliance House.
10. Support for new restaurants, bars and small shops in the commercial area with striking views to the park and Minster.
11. Clear understanding of the different boundaries.