

Case Name: York Guildhall, Municipal Offices and Guildhall Annex, and Mansion House, Coney Street, York

Case Number: 1432222

Background

An application has been received, under our Enhanced Advisory Services, requesting that the List entries for the Guildhall, Municipal Offices, and Mansion House be amended to bring them up to present standards and to determine the status of curtilage buildings to assist with future management and redevelopment proposals for the Guildhall and Municipal Offices.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	HE Recommendation
1	1257969	Mansion House, railings and gas lamps attached to front	Listing	Amend List
2	1257929	Guildhall and Chamber Range, Atkinson block, former cells and meeting room, Common Hall Lane and boundary wall containing entrance to lane	Listing	Amend List
3	1257939	Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and Guildhall Annex	Listing	Amend List
4	1433732	Meeting Room and former Cells on south side of Guildhall	Listing	Add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
06 January 2016	Full inspection

Context

The applicant has requested that the List entries for the Guildhall, Municipal Offices, and Mansion House are updated and the special interest of curtilage buildings is clarified. The City of York Council vacated the majority of the Guildhall complex in 2013 (the Council Chamber is still used) and it is presently in pre-planning discussions to agree new uses. These discussions need to be based on a sound assessment of significance.

The Guildhall, Common Hall Lane, Council Hall (the Atkinson Block) and wall containing an entrance to the lane, Coney Street, were listed at Grade I on 14 June 1954, and the address was amended on 14 March 1997. The Mansion House, Coney Street, was also listed Grade I on 14 June 1954. The Municipal Offices, Coney Street, were listed at Grade II on 24 June 1983, and the address was amended on 14 March 1997.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

The applicant and owner, who are also the local authority, the Historic Environment Record (HER), Historic England's Inspector of Historic Building and Historic England's Inspector of Monuments were invited to comment on the factual details of the case as part of the consultation process. The applicant also forwarded the consultation report on to other interested parties involved with consideration of the future management of the Guildhall and Municipal Offices. The applicant provided further research on the history of the Guildhall Annex undertaken by Richard Griffiths Architects. This has been incorporated into the History section for the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber, and Guildhall Annex. No other responses were received.

DISCUSSION

The criteria for listing a building are its special architectural or historic interest in a national context (Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, March 2010). Buildings on the statutory List are graded to reflect their relative architectural and historic interest. The Guildhall and the Mansion House were both listed at Grade I in 1954, meaning that they are of 'exceptional interest'. The Municipal Offices were listed at Grade II in 1983, meaning that the building is 'of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve it'. Since the buildings were listed the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (2013) enabled changes to the Planning Act 1990 which allow for even greater precision in identifying what is listed. Provision (5A) allows us to say definitively whether attached or curtilage structures are protected, and also whether features within the footprint of a listed building lack special interest and thus do not warrant protection. With this in mind the List entries are being reassessed to see whether they should be amended to provide clarity on matters of their future management and to bring the List entries up to present standards.

The three List entries are discussed individually below:

THE GUILDHALL

The pre-existing Guildhall entry mentions the C15 Guildhall and chamber range, the Atkinson Block, Common Hall Lane, and the boundary wall between the Guildhall and Lendal Cellars Public House (Grade II), which also contains the entrance doorway to Common Hall Lane. The former cells and meeting room on the south side of the Guildhall are presently treated as curtilage buildings.

Guildhalls are mentioned in Historic England's Law and Government Buildings Listing Selection Guide (April 2011). Specific considerations for this building type include date, architectural quality and decorative treatment, planning, setting and civic groups, and civic identity.

The Grade I listing is undoubtedly warranted. The Guildhall resonates with the civic history of York through the ages. Built in 1449-1459 it stood on an already important religious and civic site, replacing an earlier Guildhall. The building was funded jointly by The Mayor and Commonality of York and the Guild of St Christopher. When built, the Guildhall was a manifestation of both the wealth and social standing of the Guild of St Christopher and the centre of York's political and administrative focus. It was used by the city to hold the Court of Assizes and Court of Nisi Prius (a trial court for hearing civil cases before a judge and jury), and the Inner Chamber was used for meetings of the Council of the North and the City Council. While the religious connotation ceased following the dissolution of the guilds in 1549, there is a strong sense of civic identity continuing through the centuries. This unbroken history of the building as a seat of power since it was built in C15 was tacitly acknowledged on the world stage when the Guildhall suffered a devastating attack in the Second World War as a target of the German Baedeker raids. Dramatic photographs of the time show the building ablaze against the night sky. A mere two months later historic photographs show the opening of the Assizes in the Guildhall, defiantly proceeding regardless of the roofless state of the building, thus continuing to fulfil its purpose unabated. The subsequent restoration of the building reinvigorated the community's commitment to the Guildhall, and served to underline its symbolic importance to the city. Though court proceedings are no longer carried out within the Guildhall, it retains its civic identity through its close association with the interconnecting Municipal Offices which contain York's Council Chamber.

The Guildhall and its chamber range are architecturally of particular importance as a C15 civic building. Unlike other guildhalls in York it was built of stone, denoting its primary status. The craftsmanship of the building was guaranteed by using the most skilled masons, the city mason, Robert Couper, and the master mason of York Minster, John Barton, whose names are recorded in association with its building at a time when craftsmen often remained nameless. The hall took the form typical of a medieval hall, with a screens passage and dais, an arrangement still readable in the fabric. The chamber range fronted directly onto the river, being built on top of the river wall and incorporating the Watergate of the reconstructed Common Hall Lane, a pre-existing medieval route down to the river. Also built of ashlar, it respects the hall behind and provides a dignified façade appropriate to its civic status. This part of the building is also of interest due to its remaining largely intact. The Guildhall itself, as mentioned above, was badly damaged in a Baedeker raid in 1942. While this led to the inevitable loss of original fabric, the historically accurate restoration of the building after the event, using remaining fragments and documentary evidence, is in itself of architectural interest in its approach to reconstruction of an historic building in this period.

The interior of the Guildhall demonstrates the mid-C20 approach to its restoration, which was to largely accurately reconstruct original features to a high standard. The octagonal timber columns of oak from the Lowther Estate, the panelled and bossed roof, and the re-carved window tracery date from the 1958-1960 restoration. The present day was acknowledged in the west window which was embellished with a well-designed modern stained glass window by HW Harvey depicting incidents of York's history. Original masonry and door apertures do, however, survive, and it is possible to read the layout of the original building. The Inner Chamber of the chamber range escaped the war damage. Its interior clearly denotes its high status and demonstrates its continued use since it was built in the C15. It retains original masonry, C15 blocked windows and staircases built into the walls, and a panelled ceiling with moulded beams and bosses, and high-quality fixtures and fittings relating to a 1679 refurbishment including oak panelling and fireplace overmantel, with an early-C19 marble surround.

Mentioned in the pre-existing List entry are Common Hall Lane and the boundary wall between the Guildhall and the former Augustinian Friary. Both are historically important in demonstrating the pre-existing urban layout of the city. The boundary wall contains medieval masonry, and also the restored entrance to Common Hall Lane. The significance of the lane, which led down to the river and the presumed location of the Roman bridge over the Ouse, was acknowledged in its reconstruction under the C15 Guildhall.

On the south side of the Guildhall is the Atkinson Block built in 1808-10 to designs by Peter Atkinson the Younger, who also designed York's Ouse Bridge of 1810-20, listed at Grade II. The Atkinson Block is mentioned in the pre-existing List entry for the Guildhall as the "Council Hall of 1808-10". Of principal interest is the primary river façade of this building, which is built in limestone ashlar. Peter Atkinson demonstrates a sympathetic understanding of the medieval building it abuts to produce a subtle and thoughtful design. In particular he designed this façade of his extension to echo the Perpendicular detailing of the C15 chamber range and so support rather than detract from the earlier building. This resulted in a façade of continuity and harmony. Built on top of the river wall, the elevation visually rises directly out of the water and is reflected in it, magnifying its impact when seen across the river.

Historically the Atkinson Block is of interest as it demonstrated an expansion of the civic duties of the Guildhall, replacing the council meeting room in the Tollbooth on the Ouse Bridge, which was demolished to be replaced by Peter Atkinson's new Ouse Bridge. As with the Guildhall, the Atkinson Block was damaged in the Baedeker raid and formed part of the same careful restoration. Here it concentrated on the primary exterior façade, with the rear wall and interior of the building less accurate reconstructions, though following the same plan. The fixtures and fittings date from the reconstruction with the exception of the original doorway with traceried reveals and soffit at the foot of the stairs and the adjacent small doorway to the cellar steps. Despite this, it is considered that the building's contribution to the river façade is such that it should be retained on the same List entry as the Guildhall. It is recommended that the Guildhall and Chamber Range, Atkinson Block, Common Hall Lane and boundary wall containing the entrance to the lane should remain listed at Grade I within a single List entry.

The Guildhall also has two curtilage buildings which are not expressly mentioned in the current List entry, namely the former cells, and the small meeting room built in the early C20 on the south side of the Guildhall and attached to the rear of the Atkinson Block. It is acknowledged that the interior of both buildings, which abut, have been altered with walls removed. However, the buildings' exteriors are largely intact and their supporting role to the complex is apparent both in their appearance and function. The small meeting room is in the more prominent location, standing close to the south elevation of the Guildhall and visible from the yard in front of the latter. Although the architect is unknown, it has been carefully and sympathetically designed to fulfil its subordinate role to the medieval Guildhall both in its scale and design, with the visible front and east side elevations similarly built of limestone ashlar. The front elevation has a central gable and the appearance

is of a small school or meeting room, which it was, providing extra meeting space for the civic duties undertaken at the Guildhall. Meanwhile, the cells are clearly identifiable from the barred windows and flat roof. The presence of cells underlines the Guildhall's long continuing role as home of the Court of Assizes, one of the reasons it was originally built in C15. It is recommended that these two buildings are listed at Grade II in a separate List entry.

In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are with regard to the internal fixtures and fittings of the Atkinson Block other than the tracery-detailed door and doorway at the foot of the staircase and the small doorway leading to the cellar steps, which are the only remaining original features in the reconstructed interior after Second World War damage. We also consider that the interiors of the meeting room and the cells, which have been altered by the removal of cross walls and insertion of later fixtures and fittings should be excluded as they are not of special interest. We also consider that the later, glazed, lean-to canopy and small, flat-roofed store in front of the former cells are not of special interest. This is clear in the proposed List entries.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled and therefore it is recommended to keep the Guildhall and chamber range, the Atkinson Block, and Common Hall Lane and boundary wall containing entrance to the lane at Grade I and amend the List Entry to meet present standards. It is recommended that the meeting room and former cells on the south side of the Guildhall are listed at Grade II.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The 1449-59 Guildhall and chamber range, the 1808-10 Atkinson Block, and medieval Common Hall Lane and boundary wall of various dates from medieval times, containing an entrance to the lane, are to remain listed at Grade I for the following principal reasons:

- * Historic interest: the Guildhall was built in 1449-59 by Robert Couper, City mason, and John Barton, master mason of York Minster, funded jointly by The Mayor and Commonality of York and the Guild of St Christopher as a manifestation of both the wealth and social standing of the Guild and the centre of York's political and administrative focus;
- * Civic identity: built on an already important religious and civic site, the medieval Guildhall resonates with the civic history of York continuing as its seat of power since that time, an identity it continues to hold through its close association with the adjoining late-C19 Council Chamber and the C18 Mansion House, residence of the Lord Mayor of York;
- * Architectural interest: the medieval Guildhall is built of stone unlike other guildhalls in York, denoting its primary status, and takes the form typical of a medieval hall, an arrangement still readable in the fabric, with an intact contemporary inner range of chambers fronting the river, next to the early-C19 restored Atkinson Block containing additional council rooms and designed with a similar appearance;
- * Urban layout: the northern boundary wall marked the boundary between the Guildhall and the adjoining Augustinian Friary, while the site contains Common Hall Lane, a pre-existing lane which led down to the river and presumed location of the Roman bridge over the Ouse, and was reconstructed to run beneath the Guildhall to a Watergate;
- * World events: the Guildhall suffered a devastating attack in the Second World War as a target of the German Baedeker raids, the city's defiance publicly demonstrated by the proceeding of the Assizes Court two months later within the roofless building; its subsequent historically accurate restoration served to underline the medieval building's symbolic importance to the city;
- * Aesthetic value: the primary outward-looking elevation of this constricted site is the river façade comprising the C15, Perpendicular-style chamber range with Guildhall behind, flanked by the similarly-detailed, early-C19 Atkinson block to the right and the 1889-91 Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the early-C20 Guildhall Annex with corner tower to the left, all carefully designed to play a supporting role to the medieval building and together presenting an impressive composition in limestone ashlar, the material used for many of the city's most important historic buildings and structures such as York Minster, the city walls and numerous urban churches.

The early-C20 meeting room and former cells on the south side of the Guildhall are recommended for listing at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Architectural interest and function: the architecture of the buildings clearly shows their supporting roles to the judicial and administrative functions of the Guildhall by providing additional cells for the Court of

Assizes held in the Guildhall since C15 and an additional meeting room underlining the long-standing and on-going significance of the site as York's seat of local Government;

* Group value: the two buildings have group value with the closely adjacent medieval Guildhall due to their proximity and sympathetic style in terms of scale, materials, and appearance.

THE MUNICIPAL OFFICES AND COUNCIL CHAMBER, AND GUILDHALL ANNEX

These two buildings are presently listed at Grade II. The Municipal Offices and Council Chamber were built in 1889-91 to designs by E G Mawbey and Alfred Creer, and the Guildhall Annex was built for the Post Office in the early C20.

The crowning glory of the Municipal Offices is the Council Chamber on the west side of the building, overlooking the river. Still in use as the council chamber, it retains its late-C19 fitting out and decoration in a romantic Gothic style by the reputable firm of Kendal, Milne and Co. The style chosen was deliberately in keeping with the original style of the medieval Guildhall complex to which it is attached. The skilled craftsmanship of the embellished timber depressed barrel-vaulted roof, traceried panelling, chimneypiece, architraves and doors, and fixed furniture is particularly high resulting in a notable civic ensemble. The same attention to detail is shown to all aspects, with the tiled slips to the fireplace depicting scenes of medieval York; a particularly pleasing detail. The layout of the room also echoes the hierarchy of a medieval hall, with the Lord Mayor's chair raised on a dais beneath a cantilevered canopy at the 'high' end, and the public benches at the 'low' end. In the middle are the fixed chair benches with traceried panelled backs and desks of the Councillors, those opposite the Lord Mayor's chair curved round in an aesthetically pleasing semi-circle. As an example of a late-C19 council chamber, it is considered that this impressive chamber is of more than special interest, clearly referencing its close physical and functional proximity to the medieval Guildhall and thus visually demonstrating the continuous thread of York's civic identity on this site.

The interior of the rest of the building remains largely intact both in layout and good-quality fixtures and fittings, which include fitted panelled coat stands in the Council Chamber anteroom, a grand stone staircase with an arcaded screen in the entrance hall, mosaic floors to the public spaces, original panelled and part-glazed doors, architraves, marble fireplaces to the offices, and glazed tiles to the extensive basement. As such it plays a supporting role to the Council Chamber, while also showing the rise in the administrative duties of councils towards the end of the C19.

In contrast, the interior of the Guildhall Annex, built for the Post Office in the early C20, was always utilitarian having been built as a sorting office and base for its workers and equipment. Additionally there have been subsequent alterations to the internal layout and the installation of modern suspended ceilings and strip lights from when it was converted to office space for the Council. This means that there is little in the way of original fixtures and fittings remaining.

The Municipal Offices and the Guildhall complex are not readily visible from the city centre, standing to the rear of the Mansion House, rather than fronting the street. Externally, the primary elevations of the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the Guildhall Annex are the river façades, which have been designed to sit sympathetically alongside the adjoining medieval chamber range to the Guildhall and the early-C19 Atkinson Block. By this date the railway had arrived in York. The route from the railway station just outside the city walls to the city centre led over the nearby Lendal Bridge, built in 1861-3 by Thomas Page (Grade II). One of the primary views from the bridge was of the river façade of the Guildhall complex. Like the earlier buildings, the Municipal Offices and the Guildhall Annex use limestone ashlar for this façade. This is in contrast to the cream and red brick used for the inner, less visible facades. The massing and rhythm of the new building facades also respect that of the earlier buildings to create continuity of vision rather than of new build; the new Council Chamber denoted by impressive double-height Perpendicular windows with hood moulds reminiscent of a medieval hall. The Guildhall Annex, whilst acknowledging the spirit of the earlier buildings, is less rigorous in its historicist detailing, instead using a more stripped, Arts and Crafts idiom to its detailing, most notable in the design of the low, corner tower. Nevertheless, its design works very successfully both as a termination of the building and as a landmark, drawing attention to the rest. Its very use of high-quality ashlar stone for the riverside block of what is otherwise a plain, functional building serves to underline the importance placed upon this river façade. This both reiterates the individual significance of the medieval Guildhall and chamber range and in a wider context provides a visual link with the city walls, the towering York Minster, and the towers and spires of numerous urban churches, the use of limestone marking out the most important historic buildings and structures in the city. The combined phases of the elevation also rise directly out of the river, reflecting in the water and dramatizing the aesthetic impact of the complex.

In contrast to the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex the long sorting office range is discreetly inset and lower in height. The north, outer elevation is built of red brick and, although visible from the bridge does not

stand out, its lower roofline making views across to the higher, red-brick gables of the General Post Office on Lendal possible.

It is considered that the special interest of the Council Chamber and the riverside façade is such in relationship to the adjoining Grade I medieval Guildhall and chamber range, and early-C19 Atkinson Block, that the building should be recommended for upgrading to Grade II*. The more than special interest lies primarily in these two elements. Consequently, despite the interior of the Guildhall Annex containing little of interest, the riverside block of this early-C20 building should be included in the Grade II* listing because of the contribution its exterior makes to the aesthetic impact of the riverside façade of the complex. In contrast the sorting office range to the rear is utilitarian. Although it has some historic interest in the development of the postal service in York, being described as 'one of the best equipped postal establishments in the kingdom' when built, it has no particular features externally and retains nothing internally to mark it out as of special interest in the national context. It is therefore recommended that this range is excluded from the listing. However, it is noted that it was designed to fit into its location discreetly, a task it successfully fulfils, while its form echoes a much earlier urban layout with linear plots running east-west towards the river. These qualities mean that it is nonetheless an asset to the conservation area, playing a supporting role to the listed buildings in its vicinity. In the north-west, inner corner of the sorting office and the east elevation of the Municipal Offices is a small WC outshot. It was built at the same time as the early-C20 sorting office and did not form part of the original design for the Municipal Offices. As such it is not considered of special interest. There is also a boundary wall on the east side of the Municipal Offices. It is utilitarian and appears to have been built at the same time as the building, not being shown on earlier historic mapping and using the same type of bricks as the east elevation. Therefore, the wall does not have the historic interest of the north boundary wall of the Guildhall, which contains medieval masonry and separated the Guildhall from the, no-longer extant, Augustinian Friary. It is considered that this plain, late-C19 boundary wall is not of special interest in the national context, but does contribute to the fabric of the conservation area.

In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are with regard to the utilitarian, early-C20 former sorting office range to the Guildhall Annex, and the interior of the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex, which lacks original fixtures and fittings of interest. In addition, the small WC outshot in the north-west inner corner of the sorting office and the east elevation of the Municipal Offices, the boundary wall on the east side of the Municipal Offices, the modern external fire-escape balcony and ladder on the east elevation of the Municipal Offices, the interior, modern stair-lift attached to the main staircase and the inserted timber and glazed door and screen to the first-floor spine corridor are considered not of special interest. This is clear in the proposed List entry.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for upgrading the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex are fulfilled and therefore it is recommended to upgrade to Grade II*.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The Municipal Offices and Council Chamber of 1889-91 by E G Mawbey and Alfred Creer, City Surveyors, and the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex built in the early C20 for the Post Office, are recommended for upgrading from Grade II to Grade II* for the following principal reasons:

- * Interior: the comprehensive fitting out and decoration of the Council Chamber in a romantic Gothic style by the reputable firm of Kendal, Milne and Co has resulted in a notable civic ensemble;
- * Craftsmanship: the many timber elements of the Council Chamber, including the embellished timber roof, traceried panelling, impressive chimneypiece, architraves and doors, and fixed furniture, demonstrate a high degree of skilled craftsmanship in their execution;
- * Civic identity: the Gothic styling and medieval layout of the Council Chamber clearly references the close physical and functional proximity of the medieval Guildhall and thus the continuous thread of York's civic identity on this site;
- * Architectural interest: the primary river facades of the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the Guildhall Annex are designed to sit sympathetically alongside the medieval chamber range of the Guildhall and early-C19 Atkinson Block, using similar limestone ashlar, with massing and rhythm respecting that of the earlier buildings and creating a continuity of vision; the new Council Chamber with its impressive double-height Perpendicular windows is reminiscent of a medieval hall;
- * Aesthetic value: the main outward-looking façade of this constricted site fronts the river, presenting an impressive composition rising directly out of the water, the quality of design and use of limestone ashlar for the entire composition reiterating both its individual importance and providing a visual link in a wider

context with the city walls, the towering York Minster, and towers and spires of numerous urban churches, together forming some of the city's most important historic buildings and structures;

* Group value: the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber have a close functional value as a civic group with the medieval Guildhall and chamber range and early-C19 Atkinson Block (Grade I), and the early-C18 Mansion House (Grade I) fronting Coney Street with a through-carriageway in its northern bay by which the former buildings are approached.

THE MANSION HOUSE

The Mansion House is a town house and this type of building is discussed in Historic England's Domestic 2: Town Houses Listing Selection Guide (October 2011). Town houses impressed through their opulence and scale and reflected social and economic hierarchies. Town houses of the grander style were designed as places of entertainment with large rooms for receptions and prominently designed staircases. Specific considerations include date, their architectural interest such as their design, decoration, plan form and construction. The status of these houses means that principal spaces are of particular interest, though service quarters may also be of interest.

The Mansion House is correctly graded at Grade I. It was built for the Lord Mayor of York in 1725-1733 and still fulfils the function as the Lord Mayor's residence. As such it predates any other surviving Mansion House in England. The symbolic significance of the house as home to the city's pre-eminent citizen is emphasised by its prominent inclusion of the City of York arms on the front pediment. It was built in close association with the medieval Guildhall, which stands immediately behind it and is reached by a through-carriageway in the northern bay of the house, the two having a close functional value as a civic group. The site it occupies replaced the chapel of the Guild of St Christopher; the Guild had jointly funded the Guildhall with the Mayor and Commonality of York and used the facilities until its dissolution. The composition of the front elevation, in a visually prominent location facing onto Coney Street, is an aspirational interpretation of London styles, most probably the Queen's Gallery at Somerset House, London emphasising the status of the building.

Internally, the plan form remains largely intact and highlights the specific function of the house, with a particularly large reception room, a suite of rooms for functional and staff requirements, such as a porter's room and a room used for robing, and extensive kitchens and cellars in the basement. The status of the building is again emphasised by the opulence of the interior, notably the huge, first-floor State Room, originally called the Great Room. This room was used for entertainment both locally and to host nationally and internationally important guests and it clearly demonstrates a particularly high level of craftsmanship. The stair hall containing the main staircase leading to the State Room is also particularly rich in its embellishment. Other fixtures and fittings, such as doors, architraves, and fireplaces (some later) are of a consistently high standard.

In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are with regard to the modern, projecting lift shaft and the small lean-to extension at the rear of the house, and the 1930s double-garage on the south side of the yard to the rear of the Mansion House, which are considered not of special interest. This is clear in the proposed List entry.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled and therefore it is recommended to keep the Mansion House at Grade I and amend the List entry to meet present standards.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The Mansion House, and railings and gas lamps attached to the front, of 1725-1733, should remain listed at Grade I for the following principal reasons:

* Historic interest: built as the residence of the Lord Mayor of York, a function it still fulfils, the Mansion House predates any other surviving Mansion House in England;

* Architectural interest: the prominently located front elevation demonstrates an aspirational interpretation of London styles, most likely the Queen's Gallery at Somerset House (London), emphasising the status of the building as home to the city's pre-eminent citizen;

* Plan form: the largely intact plan form highlights the specific function of the house with a particularly large and grand reception room, a suite of rooms for functional and staff requirements, such as a porter's room and a robing room, and extensive kitchens and cellars in the basement;

* Interior: the quality of craftsmanship throughout and the opulence of the interior, notably the first-floor State Room and embellished stair hall, emphasises its use both as residence to the Lord Mayor and in hosting both local events and national guests on behalf of the city;

* Group value: the Mansion House has a close functional value as part of a civic group with the medieval Guildhall and Municipal Offices containing the late-C19 Council Chamber, which both stand behind the Mansion House and are reached by a through-carriageway in its northern bay.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed. We have very carefully reassessed this important civic complex and, where possible, have used powers of exclusion in the Act to express where special interest does not lie. We have prepared modernised List entries in all cases to improve understanding and positive management of this complex, which includes the Guildhall and Mansion House; buildings of exceptional interest to the nation's story.

V. Fiorato, 1st March 2016

Case Name: York Guildhall, Municipal Offices and Guildhall Annex, and Mansion House, Coney Street, York

Case Number: 1432222

Background

An application has been received, under our Enhanced Advisory Services, requesting that the List entries for the Guildhall, Municipal Offices, and Mansion House be amended to bring them up to present standards and to determine the status of curtilage buildings to assist with future management and redevelopment proposals for the Guildhall and Municipal Offices.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	HE Recommendation
1	1257969	Mansion House, railings and gas lamps attached to front	Listing	Amend List
2	1257929	Guildhall and Chamber Range, Atkinson block, former cells and meeting room, Common Hall Lane and boundary wall containing entrance to lane	Listing	Amend List
3	1257939	Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and Guildhall Annex	Listing	Amend List
4	1433732	Meeting Room and former Cells on south side of Guildhall	Listing	Add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
06 January 2016	Full inspection

Context

The applicant has requested that the List entries for the Guildhall, Municipal Offices, and Mansion House are updated and the special interest of curtilage buildings is clarified. The City of York Council vacated the majority of the Guildhall complex in 2013 (the Council Chamber is still used) and it is presently in pre-planning discussions to agree new uses. These discussions need to be based on a sound assessment of significance.

The Guildhall, Common Hall Lane, Council Hall (the Atkinson Block) and wall containing an entrance to the lane, Coney Street, were listed at Grade I on 14 June 1954, and the address was amended on 14 March 1997. The Mansion House, Coney Street, was also listed Grade I on 14 June 1954. The Municipal Offices, Coney Street, were listed at Grade II on 24 June 1983, and the address was amended on 14 March 1997.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

The applicant and owner, who are also the local authority, the Historic Environment Record (HER), Historic England's Inspector of Historic Building and Historic England's Inspector of Monuments were invited to comment on the factual details of the case as part of the consultation process. The applicant also forwarded the consultation report on to other interested parties involved with consideration of the future management of the Guildhall and Municipal Offices. The applicant provided further research on the history of the Guildhall Annex undertaken by Richard Griffiths Architects. This has been incorporated into the History section for the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber, and Guildhall Annex. No other responses were received.

DISCUSSION

The criteria for listing a building are its special architectural or historic interest in a national context (Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, March 2010). Buildings on the statutory List are graded to reflect their relative architectural and historic interest. The Guildhall and the Mansion House were both listed at Grade I in 1954, meaning that they are of 'exceptional interest'. The Municipal Offices were listed at Grade II in 1983, meaning that the building is 'of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve it'. Since the buildings were listed the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (2013) enabled changes to the Planning Act 1990 which allow for even greater precision in identifying what is listed. Provision (5A) allows us to say definitively whether attached or curtilage structures are protected, and also whether features within the footprint of a listed building lack special interest and thus do not warrant protection. With this in mind the List entries are being reassessed to see whether they should be amended to provide clarity on matters of their future management and to bring the List entries up to present standards.

The three List entries are discussed individually below:

THE GUILDHALL

The pre-existing Guildhall entry mentions the C15 Guildhall and chamber range, the Atkinson Block, Common Hall Lane, and the boundary wall between the Guildhall and Lendal Cellars Public House (Grade II), which also contains the entrance doorway to Common Hall Lane. The former cells and meeting room on the south side of the Guildhall are presently treated as curtilage buildings.

Guildhalls are mentioned in Historic England's Law and Government Buildings Listing Selection Guide (April 2011). Specific considerations for this building type include date, architectural quality and decorative treatment, planning, setting and civic groups, and civic identity.

The Grade I listing is undoubtedly warranted. The Guildhall resonates with the civic history of York through the ages. Built in 1449-1459 it stood on an already important religious and civic site, replacing an earlier Guildhall. The building was funded jointly by The Mayor and Commonality of York and the Guild of St Christopher. When built, the Guildhall was a manifestation of both the wealth and social standing of the Guild of St Christopher and the centre of York's political and administrative focus. It was used by the city to hold the Court of Assizes and Court of Nisi Prius (a trial court for hearing civil cases before a judge and jury), and the Inner Chamber was used for meetings of the Council of the North and the City Council. While the religious connotation ceased following the dissolution of the guilds in 1549, there is a strong sense of civic identity continuing through the centuries. This unbroken history of the building as a seat of power since it was built in C15 was tacitly acknowledged on the world stage when the Guildhall suffered a devastating attack in the Second World War as a target of the German Baedeker raids. Dramatic photographs of the time show the building ablaze against the night sky. A mere two months later historic photographs show the opening of the Assizes in the Guildhall, defiantly proceeding regardless of the roofless state of the building, thus continuing to fulfil its purpose unabated. The subsequent restoration of the building reinvigorated the community's commitment to the Guildhall, and served to underline its symbolic importance to the city. Though court proceedings are no longer carried out within the Guildhall, it retains its civic identity through its close association with the interconnecting Municipal Offices which contain York's Council Chamber.

The Guildhall and its chamber range are architecturally of particular importance as a C15 civic building. Unlike other guildhalls in York it was built of stone, denoting its primary status. The craftsmanship of the building was guaranteed by using the most skilled masons, the city mason, Robert Couper, and the master mason of York Minster, John Barton, whose names are recorded in association with its building at a time when craftsmen often remained nameless. The hall took the form typical of a medieval hall, with a screens passage and dais, an arrangement still readable in the fabric. The chamber range fronted directly onto the river, being built on top of the river wall and incorporating the Watergate of the reconstructed Common Hall Lane, a pre-existing medieval route down to the river. Also built of ashlar, it respects the hall behind and provides a dignified façade appropriate to its civic status. This part of the building is also of interest due to its remaining largely intact. The Guildhall itself, as mentioned above, was badly damaged in a Baedeker raid in 1942. While this led to the inevitable loss of original fabric, the historically accurate restoration of the building after the event, using remaining fragments and documentary evidence, is in itself of architectural interest in its approach to reconstruction of an historic building in this period.

The interior of the Guildhall demonstrates the mid-C20 approach to its restoration, which was to largely accurately reconstruct original features to a high standard. The octagonal timber columns of oak from the Lowther Estate, the panelled and bossed roof, and the re-carved window tracery date from the 1958-1960 restoration. The present day was acknowledged in the west window which was embellished with a well-designed modern stained glass window by HW Harvey depicting incidents of York's history. Original masonry and door apertures do, however, survive, and it is possible to read the layout of the original building. The Inner Chamber of the chamber range escaped the war damage. Its interior clearly denotes its high status and demonstrates its continued use since it was built in the C15. It retains original masonry, C15 blocked windows and staircases built into the walls, and a panelled ceiling with moulded beams and bosses, and high-quality fixtures and fittings relating to a 1679 refurbishment including oak panelling and fireplace overmantel, with an early-C19 marble surround.

Mentioned in the pre-existing List entry are Common Hall Lane and the boundary wall between the Guildhall and the former Augustinian Friary. Both are historically important in demonstrating the pre-existing urban layout of the city. The boundary wall contains medieval masonry, and also the restored entrance to Common Hall Lane. The significance of the lane, which led down to the river and the presumed location of the Roman bridge over the Ouse, was acknowledged in its reconstruction under the C15 Guildhall.

On the south side of the Guildhall is the Atkinson Block built in 1808-10 to designs by Peter Atkinson the Younger, who also designed York's Ouse Bridge of 1810-20, listed at Grade II. The Atkinson Block is mentioned in the pre-existing List entry for the Guildhall as the "Council Hall of 1808-10". Of principal interest is the primary river façade of this building, which is built in limestone ashlar. Peter Atkinson demonstrates a sympathetic understanding of the medieval building it abuts to produce a subtle and thoughtful design. In particular he designed this façade of his extension to echo the Perpendicular detailing of the C15 chamber range and so support rather than detract from the earlier building. This resulted in a façade of continuity and harmony. Built on top of the river wall, the elevation visually rises directly out of the water and is reflected in it, magnifying its impact when seen across the river.

Historically the Atkinson Block is of interest as it demonstrated an expansion of the civic duties of the Guildhall, replacing the council meeting room in the Tollbooth on the Ouse Bridge, which was demolished to be replaced by Peter Atkinson's new Ouse Bridge. As with the Guildhall, the Atkinson Block was damaged in the Baedeker raid and formed part of the same careful restoration. Here it concentrated on the primary exterior façade, with the rear wall and interior of the building less accurate reconstructions, though following the same plan. The fixtures and fittings date from the reconstruction with the exception of the original doorway with traceried reveals and soffit at the foot of the stairs and the adjacent small doorway to the cellar steps. Despite this, it is considered that the building's contribution to the river façade is such that it should be retained on the same List entry as the Guildhall. It is recommended that the Guildhall and Chamber Range, Atkinson Block, Common Hall Lane and boundary wall containing the entrance to the lane should remain listed at Grade I within a single List entry.

The Guildhall also has two curtilage buildings which are not expressly mentioned in the current List entry, namely the former cells, and the small meeting room built in the early C20 on the south side of the Guildhall and attached to the rear of the Atkinson Block. It is acknowledged that the interior of both buildings, which abut, have been altered with walls removed. However, the buildings' exteriors are largely intact and their supporting role to the complex is apparent both in their appearance and function. The small meeting room is in the more prominent location, standing close to the south elevation of the Guildhall and visible from the yard in front of the latter. Although the architect is unknown, it has been carefully and sympathetically designed to fulfil its subordinate role to the medieval Guildhall both in its scale and design, with the visible front and east side elevations similarly built of limestone ashlar. The front elevation has a central gable and the appearance

is of a small school or meeting room, which it was, providing extra meeting space for the civic duties undertaken at the Guildhall. Meanwhile, the cells are clearly identifiable from the barred windows and flat roof. The presence of cells underlines the Guildhall's long continuing role as home of the Court of Assizes, one of the reasons it was originally built in C15. It is recommended that these two buildings are listed at Grade II in a separate List entry.

In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are with regard to the internal fixtures and fittings of the Atkinson Block other than the tracery-detailed door and doorway at the foot of the staircase and the small doorway leading to the cellar steps, which are the only remaining original features in the reconstructed interior after Second World War damage. We also consider that the interiors of the meeting room and the cells, which have been altered by the removal of cross walls and insertion of later fixtures and fittings should be excluded as they are not of special interest. We also consider that the later, glazed, lean-to canopy and small, flat-roofed store in front of the former cells are not of special interest. This is clear in the proposed List entries.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled and therefore it is recommended to keep the Guildhall and chamber range, the Atkinson Block, and Common Hall Lane and boundary wall containing entrance to the lane at Grade I and amend the List Entry to meet present standards. It is recommended that the meeting room and former cells on the south side of the Guildhall are listed at Grade II.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The 1449-59 Guildhall and chamber range, the 1808-10 Atkinson Block, and medieval Common Hall Lane and boundary wall of various dates from medieval times, containing an entrance to the lane, are to remain listed at Grade I for the following principal reasons:

* Historic interest: the Guildhall was built in 1449-59 by Robert Couper, City mason, and John Barton, master mason of York Minster, funded jointly by The Mayor and Commonality of York and the Guild of St Christopher as a manifestation of both the wealth and social standing of the Guild and the centre of York's political and administrative focus;

* Civic identity: built on an already important religious and civic site, the medieval Guildhall resonates with the civic history of York continuing as its seat of power since that time, an identity it continues to hold through its close association with the adjoining late-C19 Council Chamber and the C18 Mansion House, residence of the Lord Mayor of York;

* Architectural interest: the medieval Guildhall is built of stone unlike other guildhalls in York, denoting its primary status, and takes the form typical of a medieval hall, an arrangement still readable in the fabric, with an intact contemporary inner range of chambers fronting the river, next to the early-C19 restored Atkinson Block containing additional council rooms and designed with a similar appearance;

* Urban layout: the northern boundary wall marked the boundary between the Guildhall and the adjoining Augustinian Friary, while the site contains Common Hall Lane, a pre-existing lane which led down to the river and presumed location of the Roman bridge over the Ouse, and was reconstructed to run beneath the Guildhall to a Watergate;

* World events: the Guildhall suffered a devastating attack in the Second World War as a target of the German Baedeker raids, the city's defiance publicly demonstrated by the proceeding of the Assizes Court two months later within the roofless building; its subsequent historically accurate restoration served to underline the medieval building's symbolic importance to the city;

* Aesthetic value: the primary outward-looking elevation of this constricted site is the river façade comprising the C15, Perpendicular-style chamber range with Guildhall behind, flanked by the similarly-detailed, early-C19 Atkinson block to the right and the 1889-91 Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the early-C20 Guildhall Annex with corner tower to the left, all carefully designed to play a supporting role to the medieval building and together presenting an impressive composition in limestone ashlar, the material used for many of the city's most important historic buildings and structures such as York Minster, the city walls and numerous urban churches.

The early-C20 meeting room and former cells on the south side of the Guildhall are recommended for listing at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

* Architectural interest and function: the architecture of the buildings clearly shows their supporting roles to the judicial and administrative functions of the Guildhall by providing additional cells for the Court of

Assizes held in the Guildhall since C15 and an additional meeting room underlining the long-standing and on-going significance of the site as York's seat of local Government;

* Group value: the two buildings have group value with the closely adjacent medieval Guildhall due to their proximity and sympathetic style in terms of scale, materials, and appearance.

THE MUNICIPAL OFFICES AND COUNCIL CHAMBER, AND GUILDHALL ANNEX

These two buildings are presently listed at Grade II. The Municipal Offices and Council Chamber were built in 1889-91 to designs by E G Mawbey and Alfred Creer, and the Guildhall Annex was built for the Post Office in the early C20.

The crowning glory of the Municipal Offices is the Council Chamber on the west side of the building, overlooking the river. Still in use as the council chamber, it retains its late-C19 fitting out and decoration in a romantic Gothic style by the reputable firm of Kendal, Milne and Co. The style chosen was deliberately in keeping with the original style of the medieval Guildhall complex to which it is attached. The skilled craftsmanship of the embellished timber depressed barrel-vaulted roof, traceried panelling, chimneypiece, architraves and doors, and fixed furniture is particularly high resulting in a notable civic ensemble. The same attention to detail is shown to all aspects, with the tiled slips to the fireplace depicting scenes of medieval York; a particularly pleasing detail. The layout of the room also echoes the hierarchy of a medieval hall, with the Lord Mayor's chair raised on a dais beneath a cantilevered canopy at the 'high' end, and the public benches at the 'low' end. In the middle are the fixed chair benches with traceried panelled backs and desks of the Councillors, those opposite the Lord Mayor's chair curved round in an aesthetically pleasing semi-circle. As an example of a late-C19 council chamber, it is considered that this impressive chamber is of more than special interest, clearly referencing its close physical and functional proximity to the medieval Guildhall and thus visually demonstrating the continuous thread of York's civic identity on this site.

The interior of the rest of the building remains largely intact both in layout and good-quality fixtures and fittings, which include fitted panelled coat stands in the Council Chamber anteroom, a grand stone staircase with an arcaded screen in the entrance hall, mosaic floors to the public spaces, original panelled and part-glazed doors, architraves, marble fireplaces to the offices, and glazed tiles to the extensive basement. As such it plays a supporting role to the Council Chamber, while also showing the rise in the administrative duties of councils towards the end of the C19.

In contrast, the interior of the Guildhall Annex, built for the Post Office in the early C20, was always utilitarian having been built as a sorting office and base for its workers and equipment. Additionally there have been subsequent alterations to the internal layout and the installation of modern suspended ceilings and strip lights from when it was converted to office space for the Council. This means that there is little in the way of original fixtures and fittings remaining.

The Municipal Offices and the Guildhall complex are not readily visible from the city centre, standing to the rear of the Mansion House, rather than fronting the street. Externally, the primary elevations of the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the Guildhall Annex are the river façades, which have been designed to sit sympathetically alongside the adjoining medieval chamber range to the Guildhall and the early-C19 Atkinson Block. By this date the railway had arrived in York. The route from the railway station just outside the city walls to the city centre led over the nearby Lendal Bridge, built in 1861-3 by Thomas Page (Grade II). One of the primary views from the bridge was of the river façade of the Guildhall complex. Like the earlier buildings, the Municipal Offices and the Guildhall Annex use limestone ashlar for this façade. This is in contrast to the cream and red brick used for the inner, less visible facades. The massing and rhythm of the new building facades also respect that of the earlier buildings to create continuity of vision rather than of new build; the new Council Chamber denoted by impressive double-height Perpendicular windows with hood moulds reminiscent of a medieval hall. The Guildhall Annex, whilst acknowledging the spirit of the earlier buildings, is less rigorous in its historicist detailing, instead using a more stripped, Arts and Crafts idiom to its detailing, most notable in the design of the low, corner tower. Nevertheless, its design works very successfully both as a termination of the building and as a landmark, drawing attention to the rest. Its very use of high-quality ashlar stone for the riverside block of what is otherwise a plain, functional building serves to underline the importance placed upon this river façade. This both reiterates the individual significance of the medieval Guildhall and chamber range and in a wider context provides a visual link with the city walls, the towering York Minster, and the towers and spires of numerous urban churches, the use of limestone marking out the most important historic buildings and structures in the city. The combined phases of the elevation also rise directly out of the river, reflecting in the water and dramatizing the aesthetic impact of the complex.

In contrast to the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex the long sorting office range is discreetly inset and lower in height. The north, outer elevation is built of red brick and, although visible from the bridge does not

stand out, its lower roofline making views across to the higher, red-brick gables of the General Post Office on Lendal possible.

It is considered that the special interest of the Council Chamber and the riverside façade is such in relationship to the adjoining Grade I medieval Guildhall and chamber range, and early-C19 Atkinson Block, that the building should be recommended for upgrading to Grade II*. The more than special interest lies primarily in these two elements. Consequently, despite the interior of the Guildhall Annex containing little of interest, the riverside block of this early-C20 building should be included in the Grade II* listing because of the contribution its exterior makes to the aesthetic impact of the riverside façade of the complex. In contrast the sorting office range to the rear is utilitarian. Although it has some historic interest in the development of the postal service in York, being described as 'one of the best equipped postal establishments in the kingdom' when built, it has no particular features externally and retains nothing internally to mark it out as of special interest in the national context. It is therefore recommended that this range is excluded from the listing. However, it is noted that it was designed to fit into its location discreetly, a task it successfully fulfils, while its form echoes a much earlier urban layout with linear plots running east-west towards the river. These qualities mean that it is nonetheless an asset to the conservation area, playing a supporting role to the listed buildings in its vicinity. In the north-west, inner corner of the sorting office and the east elevation of the Municipal Offices is a small WC outshot. It was built at the same time as the early-C20 sorting office and did not form part of the original design for the Municipal Offices. As such it is not considered of special interest. There is also a boundary wall on the east side of the Municipal Offices. It is utilitarian and appears to have been built at the same time as the building, not being shown on earlier historic mapping and using the same type of bricks as the east elevation. Therefore, the wall does not have the historic interest of the north boundary wall of the Guildhall, which contains medieval masonry and separated the Guildhall from the, no-longer extant, Augustinian Friary. It is considered that this plain, late-C19 boundary wall is not of special interest in the national context, but does contribute to the fabric of the conservation area.

In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are with regard to the utilitarian, early-C20 former sorting office range to the Guildhall Annex, and the interior of the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex, which lacks original fixtures and fittings of interest. In addition, the small WC outshot in the north-west inner corner of the sorting office and the east elevation of the Municipal Offices, the boundary wall on the east side of the Municipal Offices, the modern external fire-escape balcony and ladder on the east elevation of the Municipal Offices, the interior, modern stair-lift attached to the main staircase and the inserted timber and glazed door and screen to the first-floor spine corridor are considered not of special interest. This is clear in the proposed List entry.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for upgrading the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex are fulfilled and therefore it is recommended to upgrade to Grade II*.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The Municipal Offices and Council Chamber of 1889-91 by E G Mawbey and Alfred Creer, City Surveyors, and the riverside block of the Guildhall Annex built in the early C20 for the Post Office, are recommended for upgrading from Grade II to Grade II* for the following principal reasons:

- * Interior: the comprehensive fitting out and decoration of the Council Chamber in a romantic Gothic style by the reputable firm of Kendal, Milne and Co has resulted in a notable civic ensemble;
- * Craftsmanship: the many timber elements of the Council Chamber, including the embellished timber roof, traceried panelling, impressive chimneypiece, architraves and doors, and fixed furniture, demonstrate a high degree of skilled craftsmanship in their execution;
- * Civic identity: the Gothic styling and medieval layout of the Council Chamber clearly references the close physical and functional proximity of the medieval Guildhall and thus the continuous thread of York's civic identity on this site;
- * Architectural interest: the primary river facades of the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber and the Guildhall Annex are designed to sit sympathetically alongside the medieval chamber range of the Guildhall and early-C19 Atkinson Block, using similar limestone ashlar, with massing and rhythm respecting that of the earlier buildings and creating a continuity of vision; the new Council Chamber with its impressive double-height Perpendicular windows is reminiscent of a medieval hall;
- * Aesthetic value: the main outward-looking façade of this constricted site fronts the river, presenting an impressive composition rising directly out of the water, the quality of design and use of limestone ashlar for the entire composition reiterating both its individual importance and providing a visual link in a wider

context with the city walls, the towering York Minster, and towers and spires of numerous urban churches, together forming some of the city's most important historic buildings and structures;

* Group value: the Municipal Offices and Council Chamber have a close functional value as a civic group with the medieval Guildhall and chamber range and early-C19 Atkinson Block (Grade I), and the early-C18 Mansion House (Grade I) fronting Coney Street with a through-carriageway in its northern bay by which the former buildings are approached.

THE MANSION HOUSE

The Mansion House is a town house and this type of building is discussed in Historic England's Domestic 2: Town Houses Listing Selection Guide (October 2011). Town houses impressed through their opulence and scale and reflected social and economic hierarchies. Town houses of the grander style were designed as places of entertainment with large rooms for receptions and prominently designed staircases. Specific considerations include date, their architectural interest such as their design, decoration, plan form and construction. The status of these houses means that principal spaces are of particular interest, though service quarters may also be of interest.

The Mansion House is correctly graded at Grade I. It was built for the Lord Mayor of York in 1725-1733 and still fulfils the function as the Lord Mayor's residence. As such it predates any other surviving Mansion House in England. The symbolic significance of the house as home to the city's pre-eminent citizen is emphasised by its prominent inclusion of the City of York arms on the front pediment. It was built in close association with the medieval Guildhall, which stands immediately behind it and is reached by a through-carriageway in the northern bay of the house, the two having a close functional value as a civic group. The site it occupies replaced the chapel of the Guild of St Christopher; the Guild had jointly funded the Guildhall with the Mayor and Commonality of York and used the facilities until its dissolution. The composition of the front elevation, in a visually prominent location facing onto Coney Street, is an aspirational interpretation of London styles, most probably the Queen's Gallery at Somerset House, London emphasising the status of the building.

Internally, the plan form remains largely intact and highlights the specific function of the house, with a particularly large reception room, a suite of rooms for functional and staff requirements, such as a porter's room and a room used for robing, and extensive kitchens and cellars in the basement. The status of the building is again emphasised by the opulence of the interior, notably the huge, first-floor State Room, originally called the Great Room. This room was used for entertainment both locally and to host nationally and internationally important guests and it clearly demonstrates a particularly high level of craftsmanship. The stair hall containing the main staircase leading to the State Room is also particularly rich in its embellishment. Other fixtures and fittings, such as doors, architraves, and fireplaces (some later) are of a consistently high standard.

In recommending the extent of designation, we have considered whether powers of exclusion under s.1 (5A) of the 1990 Act are appropriate, and consider that they are with regard to the modern, projecting lift shaft and the small lean-to extension at the rear of the house, and the 1930s double-garage on the south side of the yard to the rear of the Mansion House, which are considered not of special interest. This is clear in the proposed List entry.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled and therefore it is recommended to keep the Mansion House at Grade I and amend the List entry to meet present standards.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

The Mansion House, and railings and gas lamps attached to the front, of 1725-1733, should remain listed at Grade I for the following principal reasons:

* Historic interest: built as the residence of the Lord Mayor of York, a function it still fulfils, the Mansion House predates any other surviving Mansion House in England;

* Architectural interest: the prominently located front elevation demonstrates an aspirational interpretation of London styles, most likely the Queen's Gallery at Somerset House (London), emphasising the status of the building as home to the city's pre-eminent citizen;

* Plan form: the largely intact plan form highlights the specific function of the house with a particularly large and grand reception room, a suite of rooms for functional and staff requirements, such as a porter's room and a robing room, and extensive kitchens and cellars in the basement;

* Interior: the quality of craftsmanship throughout and the opulence of the interior, notably the first-floor State Room and embellished stair hall, emphasises its use both as residence to the Lord Mayor and in hosting both local events and national guests on behalf of the city;

* Group value: the Mansion House has a close functional value as part of a civic group with the medieval Guildhall and Municipal Offices containing the late-C19 Council Chamber, which both stand behind the Mansion House and are reached by a through-carriageway in its northern bay.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed. We have very carefully reassessed this important civic complex and, where possible, have used powers of exclusion in the Act to express where special interest does not lie. We have prepared modernised List entries in all cases to improve understanding and positive management of this complex, which includes the Guildhall and Mansion House; buildings of exceptional interest to the nation's story.

V. Fiorato, 1st March 2016