

City of York

**LDF**

Local  
Development  
Framework

**DRAFT**  
**City Centre**  
**Area Action Plan**  
**Issues and Options report**

July 2008

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

**我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)**

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** (01904) 551550**



## York City Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options

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## 1 Why the City Centre is important

1.1 The city centre of York reflects a long and compelling heritage. It is instantly and internationally recognisable. The street pattern, buildings and spaces reflect this history and new development faces challenges to fit sensitively within this.

1.2 As well as being the cultural hub the city centre is also the economic and social heart of York. It showcases York to the world and is therefore crucial to the continued success of the city.

1.3 The city centre is home to many people and the place we go to work, shop, relax and socialise. We feel there are three key themes that encapsulate why the city centre is so important. These are Economic Vitality; Historic Environment and Community Life. These Key Themes are explored in greater detail in the main part of the document; a brief introduction as to why we feel they make the city centre so important is set out below.

### Historic Environment

1.4 York is renowned throughout the world as a special historic place with many layers of history. The city centre contains over 750 listed buildings which reveal a mixture of styles. Together with lesser recognised buildings and spaces, they create a consistent sense of scale and quality. The city centre is home to York Minster, the largest gothic cathedral in northern Europe, and also has one of the richest archaeological sites in the world – covering most of the central area. The historic environment of York provides the city with a thriving tourism industry and is a source of civic pride.



### Economic Vitality

1.5 A successful York economy depends on a successful city centre. There are more than 30,000 jobs located in or immediately adjacent to the area which is also the focus of a tourism industry which attracts over 4 million visitors a year and acts as a gateway to other parts of the region. It has a thriving and varied retail sector with a particular emphasis on independent shops. It is an important business location with over half of York's office floor space, benefits from the presence of two universities and is the transport hub for the city and wider region.



### Community Life

1.6 York city centre is the main source of community and leisure facilities for the city and makes a difference to the quality of life of people who live and work in York. The city centre is home to theatres, art galleries, museums, restaurants, cafes and bars. More than anywhere else it is where the legacy of the past and previous generations can best be seen and experienced. It is also home to over 6,000 people and an important social and religious centre for people living in the city. Above all it is the place people congregate to work, shop and socialise.





## 2 The Vision for the City Centre

2.1 To start discussion about what we want for York city centre we have set out long term visions for Economic Vitality, Historic Environment, and Community Life, i.e. twenty years from adopting the plan.

2.2 A summary of what we believe is desirable and achievable for the city centre is set out below. These **3 key themes** are the subject of a more detailed discussion throughout the main part of this report. The key themes are set out in the same way, colour coded as in the tables here. They all include a spatial portrait, which looks at the background conditions and influences, followed by issues facing the city centre and suggested options which we think will address these in the next 20 years.

2.3 Following the key themes we have also identified 5 proposed '**Opportunity Areas**' which explore, in greater detail, the issues and the potential to address these within these areas in a summary background and table of issues.

2.4 The 3 key visions for discussion are as follows :-

### **Vision for Economic Vitality**

In 2029 York city centre:

- will be people's first choice shopping destination with a major addition to York's shopping offer at Castle Piccadilly;
- will have strong links with York Northwest's retail and office offer and the National Rail Museum;
- will be more attractive to inward investors and businesses;
- will have a refreshed tourism offer;
- will be more attractive to students and academics which will help the universities maintain their competitiveness and maximise the benefits the universities bring to the city;
- will have a range of quality office accommodation that meets market needs;
- will have a more diverse and inclusive evening experience including a thriving early evening economy; and
- will be more readily accessible by public transport, by foot and by cycle with reduced congestion.

### **Vision for Historic Environment**

In 2029 York city centre:

- will have retained its unique and special character and have in place a robust framework for ensuring the highest quality of design;
- will have a high quality public realm with the infrastructure, flexibility and access to enable a wide range of activities and events to promote a world class setting for York's heritage;
- will have world class interpretation of its unique history and archaeology;
- will have a larger pedestrian zone for people to be able to move around more easily;
- will have a higher quality environment with more green spaces and trees;
- will have a dedicated outdoor performance area;
- will have a thriving and prosperous historic market place; the river areas will be thriving with leisure, commercial and tourist activity.

### **Vision for Community Life**

In 2029 York city centre:

- will have a wide range of homes to suit particular needs of older people, young people, single people and families including affordable homes;
- will be more accessible to old people, young people and families;
- will promote more opportunities to lead healthier lifestyles;
- will have more opportunities and places to express and sample culture from across the world;
- will provide community facilities that meet the needs of everyone; and
- will play a major role in meeting the social and community needs of all sections of York.

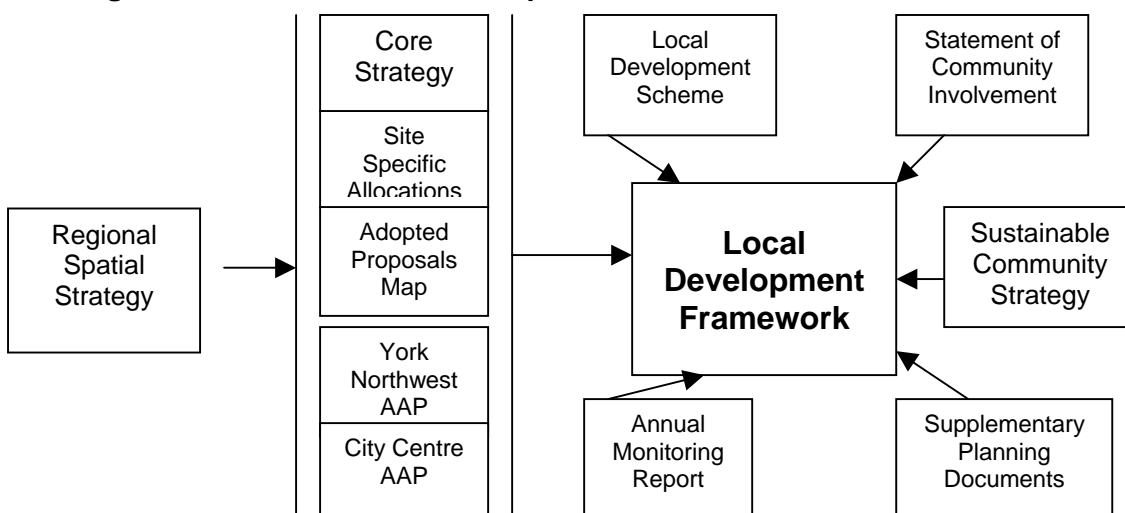
**Question 1: Please let us know what you think of these visions, if you have anything to add please include this in your response?**

## **3 Why we are producing a City Centre Area Action Plan ?**

3.1 The city centre of York is extremely important. It provides a wide range of roles to those living, working and visiting. All cities are faced with competing uses for land but, due to York's historic and compact nature, the co-ordinated planning of York city centre has particular challenges. Whilst trying to flourish and build upon its economic success, this Area Action Plan (AAP) for the city centre must protect and enhance its attractive historic environment and provide for its community. The city centre is far too important to York and the region for there not to be an overall planning framework.

3.2 We have already started work on a Core Strategy for York, the first document in the Local Development Framework, which will set out the overall vision and objectives for our local authority area, as well as core policies. The city centre of York is a special area, which faces particular pressures and needs more detailed guidance at an early stage and given that the Core Strategy has now gone through issues and options stage, it is appropriate to start considering what specific measures are needed in the city centre to deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy. Figure 1 below show how the documents in York's LDF relate to one another.

**Figure 1: The York Local Development Framework Context**



3.3 In this document we have identified which issues we think are critical to address now in taking the city centre forward over the next 20 years and have set out options on how these may be tackled. We have also selected certain areas within the city, which we consider are not fulfilling their potential but which do have the potential to help us deliver our aims. These are called 'Opportunity Areas' and are set out towards the back of the plan. Finally, we propose different city centre boundary options that could be used to define the area which the AAP relates to.

3.4 To develop this AAP we have had close regard to national planning policy and guidance, the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy, the Community Strategy and other Council Strategies particularly the Local Transport Plan, the LDF Core Strategy and the York Northwest Area Action Plan that has close associations with the city centre.

3.5 The City Centre Area Action Plan will assist in delivering the spatial elements of these documents and other strategies and initiatives produced by its partners to deliver the York we envisage in 2029.

3.6 A 'do nothing' approach or leaving the development of the city centre to the market are both considered unrealistic measures. Neither would lead to the quality and coordination of development that a proactive plan led framework for the city centre can provide. A planning strategy will provide a vision-led approach for achieving the highest quality of new development, transport and public realm improvements.

3.7 Once this document is adopted it will fulfil two key roles:-

- (1) become established as the first port of call in deciding planning applications for the city centre, and
- (2) be used as a framework for projects and funding bids in the city centre.

#### **Purpose of an Issues and Options Report**

3.8 This is the first stage of consultation for the AAP. At this stage we are looking to identify the key issues and options for the city centre and we want your input. To ensure that sustainable development principles are embedded within the AAP, a Sustainability Statement has been produced. It provides a brief overview of the sustainability matters raised and will inform the next stages of preparations of the AAP. The Sustainability Statement provides a reference for those wishing to comment on the issues and options by highlighting the implications for sustainable development of the proposed development options.

## **4 How to Get Involved**

4.1 We are inviting comments on this Issues and Options document and the Sustainability Statement. A response form is included at the back of this plan. You can fill this in and send it to us, copy it for other people, or download copies from the Council's website.

4.2 The process of producing the Area Action Plan (AAP) allows three consultation periods for public comment on our proposals. This is the first stage and it is important that people with an interest in the area or the proposed measures should let us have their views at this formative stage.

4.3 The comments that you make now will help inform the production of the draft Area Action Plan at the next (preferred options) stage.



4.4 Whilst the AAP asks a number of questions, which we are seeking your views on, they are merely intended to be a starting point for further thought and discussion. You should not feel that you must limit your comments to the scope of these questions. We would also like to hear whether there are alternative issues or options that we have missed.

4.5 Please write to us or send an e-mail with your responses to the questions posed in this plan to the following address:

City Development  
City of York Council  
9 St Leonard's Place  
York  
YO1 7ET  
Email: [citycentreaap@york.gov.uk](mailto:citycentreaap@york.gov.uk)  
Phone: 01904 551463 Fax: 01904 551392

All comments should be received at the address above by **5pm on Friday ????? 2008**.

4.6 Further copies of this document and the comments form are available at Council libraries, on line at [www.york.gov.uk](http://www.york.gov.uk) and from the Council offices at City Strategy, 9 St Leonard's Place or the Guildhall. Alternatively please contact the City Development Section directly who will be happy to provide copies of the documents or answer any questions.

4.7 We will also be holding a number of exhibitions to showcase this AAP. For further details check our website or contact us on the number above.

## 5 Next Steps

5.1 This consultation period ends on ?????? 2008 and then the Council will analyse the various responses received. The comments and ideas received will be fully considered and taken account of in the preparation of the next stage when the Council decides which are its preferred and deliverable options to be put forward for further consultation.

5.2 The Preferred Options consultation report is due to be published early in 2009. This document will explain the reasoning behind the selection of the preferred options and will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal.

5.3 After Preferred Options consultation, the Council will prepare the final draft of the Area Action Plan and submit it to the Secretary of State. The 'soundness' of this document will then be assessed by an independent inspector through a public examination and will be adopted if it is found to be 'sound'. This is likely to be early in 2010.

# Key Theme 1: Economic Vitality

## Introduction

6.1 Recent structural changes have moved the York economy away from the traditional manufacturing industries of rail and chocolate. The city's quality environment, successful transport strategies and top six university status have made it an attractive location for knowledge based industries. York has established itself as a leading centre of enterprise in science, technology and the creative industries and is one of only 6 National Science Cities.

6.2 York's historic city centre plays a critical role in the economic competitiveness and attractiveness of York. York itself is at the centre of a regional economic sub area<sup>1</sup> and an important economic area of the Leeds City Region. The Future York Group carried out an independent review of the York economy in 2007 and recommended further development of a knowledge-led economy helping the city to play a full role within the Leeds City Region. Two key recommendations from the review are to refresh the tourism offer of the city centre and to enhance its public realm.

6.3 An economically vibrant city centre is a key component in realising wider social and environmental objectives. This section of the AAP considers all aspects of the economy and contains options for improving the diversity and prosperity of the city centre.

## Spatial portrait

6.4 Overall the economy of York is performing well, both nationally and regionally, as measured against headline indicators of unemployment rates and average incomes. The Centre for Cities, Cities Outlook 2008 report identifies that, of the ten cities with the strongest earnings growth,

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<sup>1</sup> RSS York Sub-Area

York has a 5.5% annual growth rate, which is the second largest in the country.

## 6.5 Jobs

- A total 77% of York's working age population were employed between July 2006 and June 2007.
- The city centre and its immediate surroundings provide 33,215 jobs, which equates to approximately 30% of all jobs in the York Unitary Area.
- Major employers located within the city centre include the City of York Council which employs over 7,500 people, Norwich Union Life which employs around 3-5,000 staff on Rougier Street, British Telecom in Rougier Street and Network Rail, Northern Rail and Jarvis Facilities Ltd in the Tanner Row/Toft Green area each employ between 1-3,000 staff.
- The State of the Cities Report Database<sup>2</sup> shows the city centre split in the main employment sectors broken down into: retail – which employs over 7,000 people; arts, culture and entertainment - employing over 1,270 people; civic and public administration – employing 3,990; and commercial office jobs employing 4,540 people.

## 6.6 Science City York

- Since its inception in 1998 the Science City York initiative has had significant success in creating around 2,700 jobs and 60 new businesses.
- The initiative aims to create 15,000 new science and technology jobs by 2021.
- Maintenance of York's position as a market leader in the

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<sup>2</sup> State of the Cities Database Report on the Urban Competitiveness, Theme for York Town Centre (2004).

development of its knowledge and science base is a key aim of the Community Strategy.

- The city centre can provide significant opportunities for meeting Science City York needs.

#### 6.7 Offices

- There were over 4,500 commercial office employees working in the city centre in 2004.
- The York Employment Land Review (ELR) 2007 indicates that 50% of the 306,000 sq m of office floor space that was available in York in 2003, is located within the walled city.
- There is a variety of office accommodation in the city centre ranging from businesses occupying small premises to large purpose built office buildings.
- The ELR indicates that the office market in York currently supports demand for around 12,000 -15,000 sq m per year. Demand for office space is forecast to continue.
- The ELR concludes that occupiers often choose out of centre premises as a 'second choice' because of the level of availability of high quality city centre office accommodation.
- The York Northwest Area Action Plan includes options to create a new high quality Central Business District adjacent to the railway station.



**Toft Green Offices**

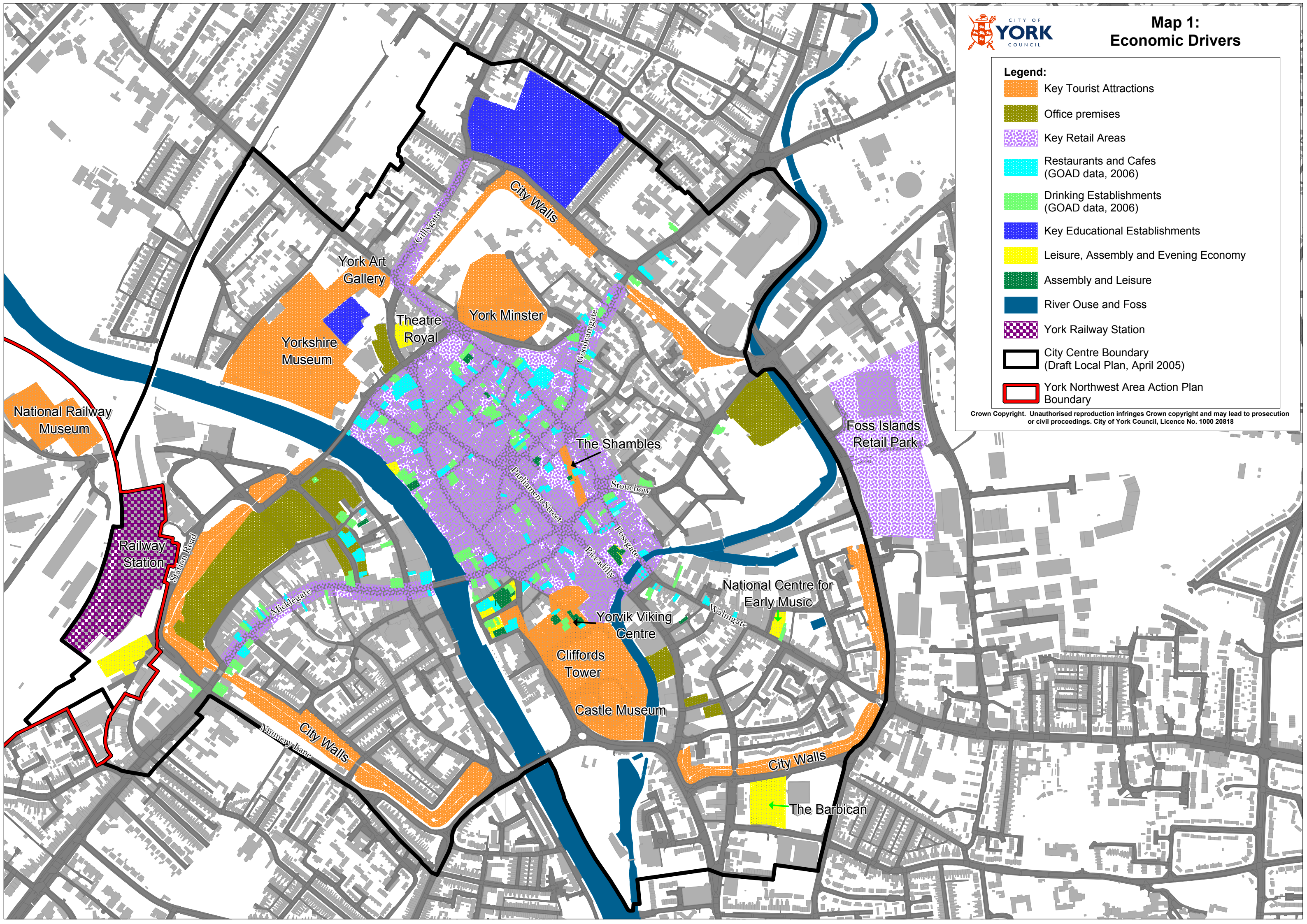
#### 6.8 Retail

- York is ranked as third highest retail destination in the region after Leeds and Hull.
- City Centre Retail floor space equates to 138,426 sq m (this includes all retail and town centre uses).
- There is a good range of major mainstream multiple retailers in York (49%), as well as a number of specialist, independent local shops (51%).
- York's retail position is vulnerable to a declining market share currently being experienced. York's market share has declined from 34% in 2000 to 31% in 2004 and then to 28% in 2007.
- York is essentially a successful retail centre - rents have been increasing year on year, yields remain consistently low despite a slight upward move in the last two years and the proportion of vacant units is below national average.
- However, York is not the first choice shopping destination for a large proportion of the catchment population, who choose higher order centres such as Leeds for certain goods.






- Legend:**
-  Key Tourist Attractions
  -  Office premises
  -  Key Retail Areas
  -  Restaurants and Cafes  
(GOAD data, 2006)
  -  Drinking Establishments  
(GOAD data, 2006)
  -  Key Educational Establishments
  -  Leisure, Assembly and Evening Economy
  -  Assembly and Leisure
  -  River Ouse and Foss
  -  York Railway Station
  -  City Centre Boundary  
(Draft Local Plan, April 2005)
  -  York Northwest Area Action Plan  
Boundary

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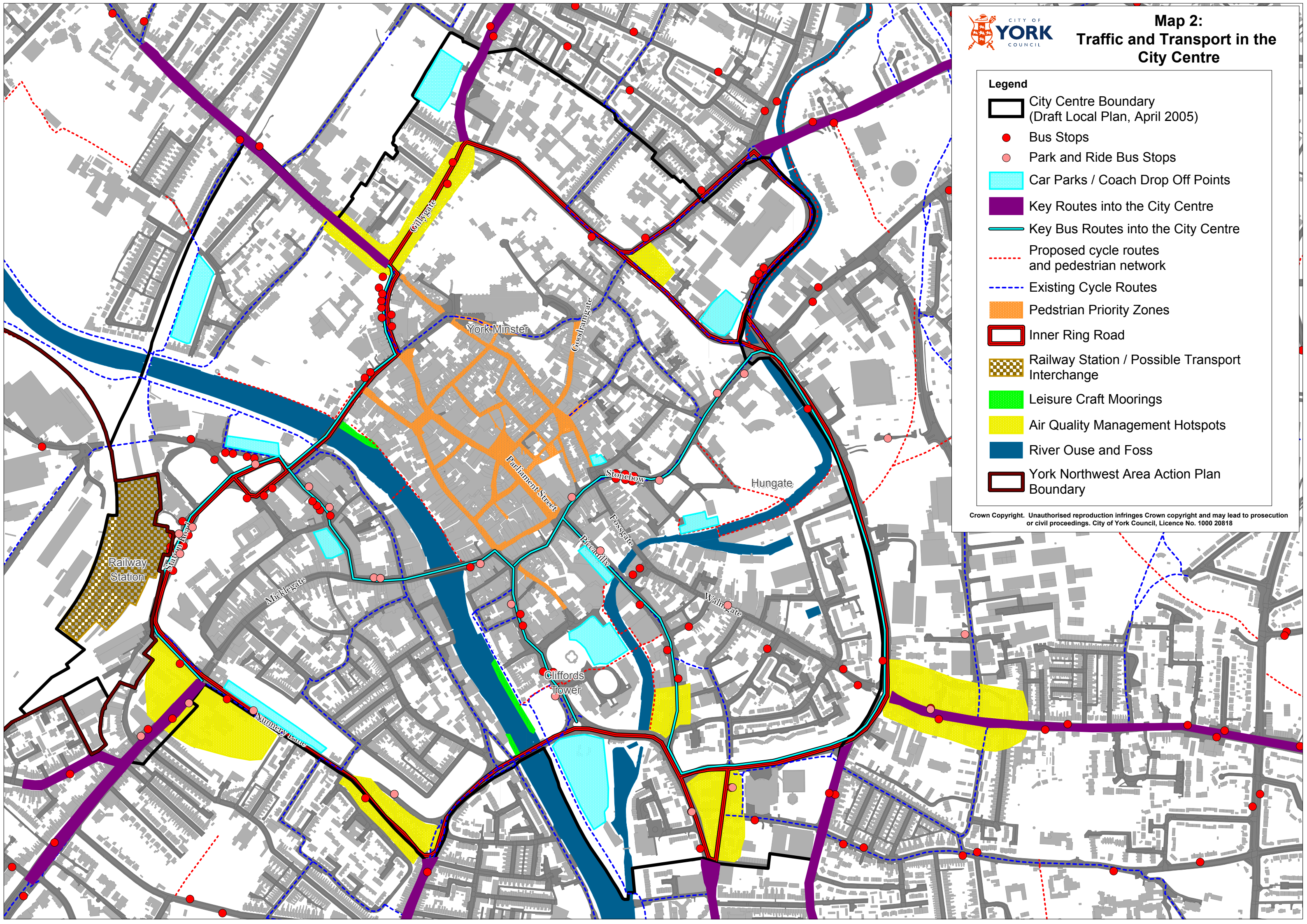




**Legend**

-  City Centre Boundary  
(Draft Local Plan, April 2005)
-  Bus Stops
-  Park and Ride Bus Stops
-  Car Parks / Coach Drop Off Points
-  Key Routes into the City Centre
-  Key Bus Routes into the City Centre
-  Proposed cycle routes  
and pedestrian network
-  Existing Cycle Routes
-  Pedestrian Priority Zones
-  Inner Ring Road
-  Railway Station / Possible Transport  
Interchange
-  Leisure Craft Moorings
-  Air Quality Management Hotspots
-  River Ouse and Foss
-  York Northwest Area Action Plan  
Boundary

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**Busy shoppers on Coney Street**

Overleaf are maps to provide context:  
Map 1: Economic Drivers overleaf,  
Map 2: Traffic and Transport in the  
City Centre

### 6.9 Tourism

- York attracts 4.18 million visitors a year<sup>3</sup> of which 15% are overseas visitors.
- Out of all the visitors in 2006/7 79% were repeat visitors.
- Visitors spend in 2006/7 totalled £332.9 million, supporting 9,970 tourism related jobs.
- A large proportion of visitor accommodation is located within or close to the city centre. In 2006 there were 12,500 year-round and seasonal bed spaces with a 59.6% room occupancy rate.
- The top attractions in the city centre include York Minster, National Railway Museum, Yorkshire Museum and gardens, City Walls, Jorvik Centre, Clifford's Tower and Castle Museum.



**Yorkshire Museum and Gardens**

### 6.10 Evening economy

- 16% of visitors to York stay overnight and account for 61% of the total visitor spend in the local economy (£191 million pa)<sup>4</sup>.
- The average length of stay in York is 3.28 nights and this has increased over recent years.
- In total there are 2 million visitor nights spent in York's evening economy per year.
- York's popularity as a tourist destination has resulted in the city centre being able to provide visitors and residents with a higher than national average number of restaurants, pubs and bars to choose from (2004 Retail Study) for the size of the city.
- There are high levels of regular usage of cafes, pubs, bars and restaurants by residents with just under 3,500 people being employed in restaurants and licensed premises<sup>5</sup>.
- Ghost walks and walking are also popular activities for visitors in an evening<sup>6</sup>.
- Changes to licensing regulation has lead to longer drinking hours over the past few years while the same period has

<sup>3</sup> 2006 estimate – Key statistics on York tourism

<sup>4</sup> York After Dark, Research into the evening economy and the visitor experience of York in the evening

<sup>5</sup> 3,430 - State of the Cities Database Report on the Urban Competitiveness, Theme for York Town Centre.

<sup>6</sup> Visitors and the Evening Economy First Stop York Visitor Survey – 1996-2006 and The Economic Impact of Tourism in York



seen a decline in alternative (i.e. alcohol independent) evening entertainment.



City centre by night

#### 6.11 Universities

- The University of York has departments in the city centre and incorporates the Hull York Medical School a joint venture with the NHS.
- York St. John University is located on Lord Mayor's Walk to the northern edge of the city centre. It has significantly enhanced its presence in the city centre in recent years.

#### 6.12 Accessibility

- York city centre has excellent rail connections, being situated on the East coast main line.
- York has 5 park and ride sites connecting with the city centre in addition to a number of service bus routes.
- Cycling is popular in York and there is a well established cycle route network.
- Within York, the city centre is predominately accessed by a number of key "gateway" routes – arterial routes that converge on the city centre and meet the inner ring road which encircles the city centre.
- The core of the city centre is pedestrianised and compact. The extensive "footstreets", one of the largest

pedestrianised areas in western Europe when opened, allow for ease of movement amongst the core retailing area.

- Despite these advantages, the city centre is frequently congested, particularly on the inner ring road.
- By 2011 traffic levels in the morning peak in York are, without the implementation of measures to widen transport choice and influence travel behaviour, forecast to increase by 14% with this figure doubling by 2021<sup>7</sup>.
- The car is still the dominant choice for journeys in general. However, in the case of journeys to the city centre, 18% are by bus (including 2.3 million park and ride passengers each year), 16% by foot (40,619) and 4.2% by cycle (10,564)<sup>8</sup>.
- At peak times bus travel increases to 23% and journeys by cycle to 6%.
- In 2002 the Council declared an Air Quality Management Area that includes 5 areas of 'technical breach', within or adjoining the city centre: Gillygate / Lord Mayors Walk; Fishergate; Lawrence Street; Nunnery Lane / Price Lane; Holgate Road / Blossom Street.
- The York Northwest area, especially The York Central site, has huge potential to complement the city centre in providing opportunities for development that cannot be accommodated in the city centre. Improved accessibility will be key if the city centre and YNW are to benefit from close proximity.

<sup>7</sup> Local Transport Plan 2 (2006-2011)

<sup>8</sup> Bus figs from Local Transport Plan 2 taken in 2005 and cycle and pedestrian statistics City of York Transport Surveys(2007)

**Question 1: Do you think this is an accurate description of the city centre in economic terms?**

**If not, what elements should be added/ removed to 'paint a better picture' of the city centre?**

## **Key Theme 1: Issues and Options**

### **Shopping in the City Centre**

6.13 The city centre of York is a popular place to shop. City centre shops are crucial to York's economy, to meeting residents needs and to its success as a tourist and leisure destination.

6.14 The unique culture and heritage of York, along with its good range of multiple retailers, independent and specialist stores provides an attractive and varied environment to shop in.

6.15 The LDF Core Strategy pledges to "support York's role as a regional and sub-regional retail centre and to ensure that major retail and leisure development is located where it will contribute to the vitality and viability of York's retail centres". It will identify the overall approach taken to retail provision in York by identifying the additional floorspace required, the scale of retail development and the role of different retail locations. The Core Strategy, in accordance with national and regional policy, promotes the city centre as the main focus for retailing and leisure activities in York.

6.16 Ensuring York is a vibrant successful retail centre will help to achieve the objectives of the current Community Strategy – Without Walls (2004 - 2024) and its strategic aims, particularly those contained in the partnership themes – The Thriving

City, The Sustainable City and The Inclusive City.

6.17 Whilst York is a successful regional shopping centre, current evidence is now showing a decrease in its market share from 34% in 2000 to 31% in 2004 and then to 28% in 2007. The Retail Study for York<sup>9</sup> suggests that a 'do nothing' approach could jeopardise York's position in the regional retail hierarchy, especially in light of large-scale developments that are proposed in competing cities, for example Hull and Leeds, the success of competing 'out of centre' retail destinations (e.g. Monks Cross and the Designer Outlet at Naburn) and the increase in Internet shopping.

6.18 Consultation responses to the Core Strategy support the view that it is important to at least retain the market share, if not claw it back and to make York peoples' first choice shopping destination - whilst conserving, respecting and enhancing the heritage of York. However, the 2007 citywide questionnaire illustrated that 55% said no to more shops in the city centre.

### **Issue: Protecting the existing shopping environment**






6.19 To safeguard the viability and vitality of the centre's shopping role there is a need to ensure that certain areas of the city centre remain as retail areas and are not diluted by other uses.

6.20 Defining a Central Shopping Area ensures that retail providers first consider sites for retail in this area before looking at the edge or out of centre. This is known as the sequential approach, and is established in national guidance. The red line on Map 3 shows the central shopping area as defined in the City of York draft Local Plan (2005). The Retail Study (2008) states that this Central Shopping boundary is now

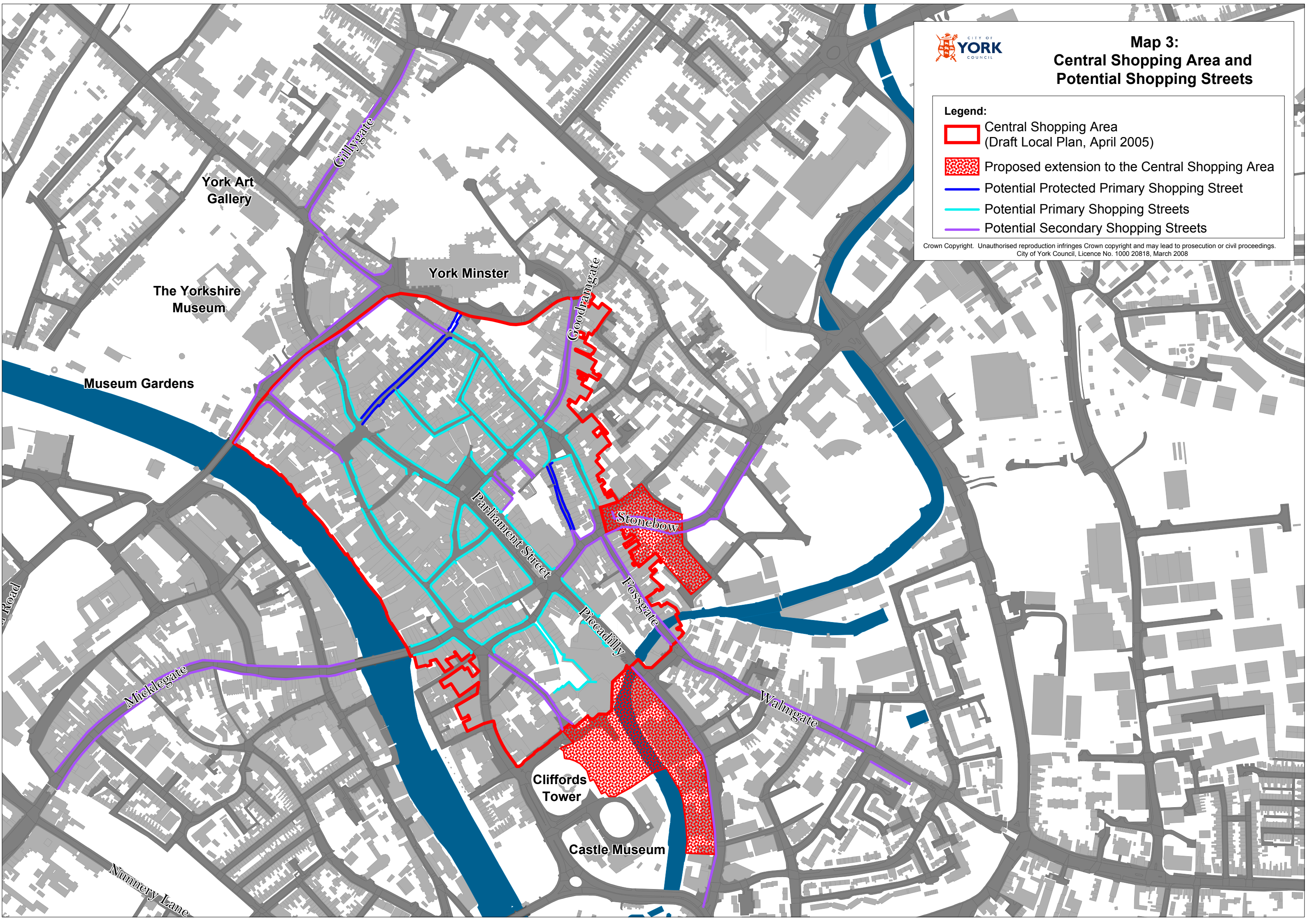
<sup>10</sup> Draft Retail Study 2008 by GVA Grimley



**Legend:**

-  Central Shopping Area  
(Draft Local Plan, April 2005)
-  Proposed extension to the Central Shopping Area
-  Potential Protected Primary Shopping Street
-  Potential Primary Shopping Streets
-  Potential Secondary Shopping Streets

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considerably out of date, although it remains for the most part accurate given the built form and extent of the main shopping area. The Retail Study recommends that the Castle Piccadilly area is identified as a potential extension to the central shopping area and that we may wish to incorporate areas between the Core Shopping Area and Hungate and the area east of Castle Piccadilly. Development on these sites could enhance, expand and consolidate the Core Shopping Area provided, although the retail study recognises key constraints to their development potential.

Map 3: the Central Shopping Area and Potential Central Shopping Streets overleaf sets out the context for these areas.

**Question 2: Where should the Central Shopping Area boundary be located?**

OPTION 1: It should reflect the recommendations in the Retail Study (2008).

OPTION 2: The Local Plan boundary on Map 3 (Central Shopping Area and Potential Shopping Streets) should be incorporated in this AAP as the Central Shopping Area.

OPTION 3: The boundary should be redrawn to delete or encompass other areas you consider could form part of the Central Shopping Area - please provide your suggested boundary with reasoning.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: Managing Retail Uses**

6.21 Whilst it is accepted that other uses may help to maintain a diverse and commercially prosperous city centre, it is also important to manage the number of such uses in the retail core to prevent the continuous break up of shop frontages and the dilution of the retail function of the retail core. It is generally accepted that future development should not result in decline of specialist, independent or other retailing elsewhere in the city centre.

6.22 To encourage lively town centres the AAP could define primary and secondary shopping frontages. Primary shopping frontages generally contain a much higher proportion of retail uses to non-retail uses. In some areas of the city it may be appropriate to designate protected Primary Shopping Streets, for example Stonegate/Minster Gates and Shambles are streets of unique historic character and appearance where the character is almost entirely retail. The introduction of non-shopping uses would be detrimental and considered unjustifiable to resist any further non-shopping uses. Secondary shopping frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses. Where frontages are identified there would be a policy that makes clear which uses will and will not be permitted on those streets. Currently York only defines primary shopping frontages. The designation of secondary frontages could assist in protecting the vitality and viability of more secondary retail areas and, drawing on the new Use Classes order, can maintain the mix of uses and prevent against undesirable uses. The peripheral streets such as Fossgate and Goodramgate would benefit from a greater level of policy management over the lifetime of this plan.





**Low Petergate – a potential secondary shopping street**



**Spurriergate designated a primary shopping street in the draft York Local Plan 2005**

**Question 3: Should some street frontages be protected for retail uses and, if you agree, how should they be protected? Tell us which option(s) if any, you agree with in principle...**

**OPTION 1:** Yes, continue to identify street frontages on a map where we would restrict development mainly to shopping uses (Primary Shopping Frontages)

**OPTION 2:** Yes, secondary shopping frontages should be identified to help protect the vitality and viability of secondary retail areas.

**OPTION 3:** Yes, have a policy that restricts the loss of retail stores/ subdivision of retail floorspace in the centre shopping area and which limits other non-retail uses.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if*

*you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

### **Issue: New Retail**

#### **Development**

6.23 The Retail Study (2008) concludes that the lack of new modern retail space is one of the biggest problems that the city faces. Due to the built form and historic nature of the city there is a lack of space to accommodate new modern units that are desired by retailers. The lack of units has seen retailers choose out of town sites or other centres, which can result in people shopping elsewhere, consequently this may mean the city is losing employment or people are having to travel elsewhere.



**Monks Cross out of town retail park (courtesy of Monks Cross Shopping Centre)**

6.24 The Retail Study concludes that, within the City of York Local Authority area, there is capacity for 99,750 sq m (1,073,701 sq ft) net floorspace for comparison goods from now until 2029 (more of 34% market share). Whilst the Retail Study does not provide a breakdown of how much of this should be located within the city centre, it does emphasise the importance of the city centre for comparison retailing, and states that the city centre should be the priority location for new retail development in order to retain its regional shopping position. The Retail Study also recommends that another small top up food store should also be located within the centre.

6.25 The area known as 'Castle Piccadilly' is a major development opportunity site in York city centre and the Retail Study concludes that it should be given priority. The site forms a natural extension to the existing core central shopping area and adjoins the key concentration of national multiple retailers. It is centrally located and can play a key role in accommodating the scale of comparison goods retail floorspace needed to meet York's needs as a shopping destination and compete effectively with the larger centres in the wider sub-region, according to the Retail Study.

6.26 This site alone will not be able to fully meet the city centre's retail needs. The Castle Piccadilly scheme rejected at the 'Call in' Inquiry proposed 250,000 sq ft so, clearly, there is a need to identify opportunities for new retail development beyond the Castle Piccadilly site. The Retail Study recognises some smaller sites within the centre could form good infill development/ redevelopment opportunities (see Map 4 overleaf) and there is potential for additional retail development on the Telephone Exchange and Stonebow House sites, if ever agreed to be redeveloped, although these could be difficult to assemble and would offer limited capacity.

6.27 However, due to limited opportunities within the built up historic centre, the 'York Central' site is considered by the draft retail study to be preferable to out of centre locations for additional retail. Improved linkages and integration to the city, with 'York Central' providing a complementary comparison retail offer, will be considered as part of the retail strategy being developed for the Core Strategy preferred options (this will include testing that the development of York Central for such a retail role will not effect the vitality and viability of the city centre). The strategy will also ensure that capacity is first directed to the existing retail core. Map 4 overleaf

shows some potential redevelopment and infill opportunities.

**Question 4: Do you agree with the approaches proposed in the retail study for delivering new retail space required in the city centre ? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION 1: Castle Piccadilly area should be promoted within the AAP as the key retail site in the city centre.

OPTION 2: The AAP should promote the redevelopment/infill of sites which satisfy other planning requirements in the Central Shopping Area, for example any individual infill opportunities within the areas shown on Map 4 overleaf (Potential Redevelopment/Infill areas for Retail).

OPTION 3: Improved linkages and integration with York Central should be developed to allow this area to provide a complementary retail role.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

## Tourism

6.28 York's unmistakable sense of place is enjoyed by over 4 million visitors a year<sup>10</sup>. In 2007, York was crowned Europe's top city destination by European Cities Marketing (ECM) at the first ever European Cities Tourism Awards.

6.29 Continuing to be ranked as an international quality tourism, leisure and business visitor destination will help to deliver the objectives of the Community Strategy and it's strategic aims, especially those contained in the

<sup>10</sup> 4.18 million visitors a year (2006 estimate)  
Key Statistics on York Tourism, York Tourism Partnership (2007)





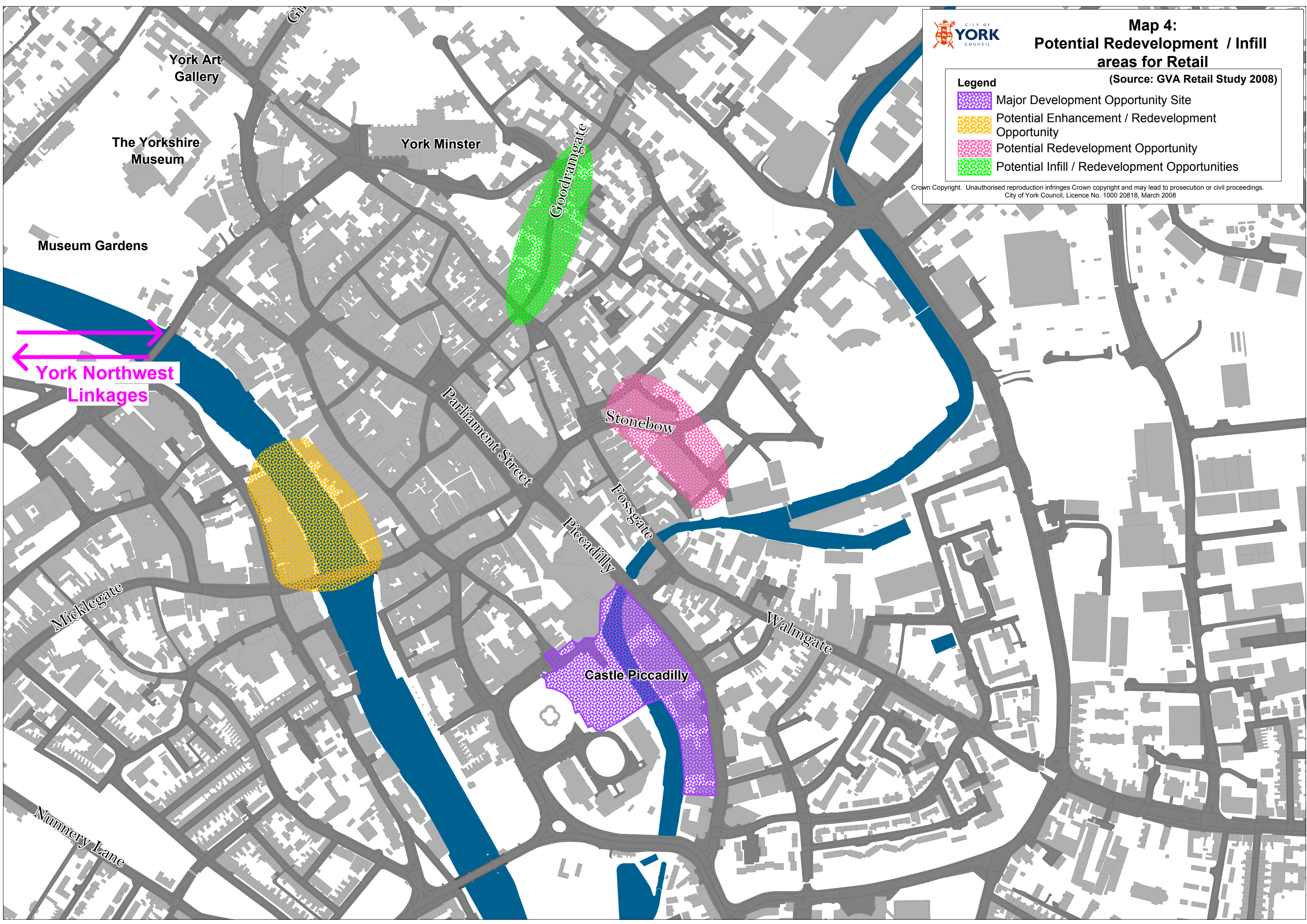
# Map 4: Potential Redevelopment / Infill areas for Retail

(Source: GVA Retail Study 2008)

## Legend

- Major Development Opportunity Site
- Potential Enhancement / Redevelopment Opportunity
- Potential Redevelopment Opportunity
- Potential Infill / Redevelopment Opportunities

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theme partnership 'York – The Thriving City'.

6.30 The Council's tourism objective is to focus on growing the value of the visitor economy<sup>11</sup>. 'Visit York,' a new Single Tourism Organisation combining both the public and private sector, is now responsible for delivering a target of 5% per annum growth in tourism earnings and making York an exemplar of good practice. The emerging Core Strategy recognises the important contribution tourism makes to the York economy and has consulted the public on aspects the LDF should prioritise.



York Minster

**Issue: Improving York's visitor experience and exceeding expectations**

6.31 Major investment propositions of the York Tourism Partnership Strategy and Action Plan in 2007 include a tourist attraction around the Minster East End and a project presently known as the 'Cultural Quarter'. Work on the cultural quarter project is already underway. The principle behind it is to showcase a number of outstanding built and natural attractions in a key part of the city centre. **This area has been**

<sup>11</sup> York Tourism Partnership Strategy and Action Plan in 2007

**identified as an Opportunity Area,** see section 9.

6.32 Yorkshire Forward and the Yorkshire Tourist Board seek to capitalise on the economic benefit of events and festivals. York City of Festivals' programme includes popular events such as the York Early Music Festival, the York Festival of Food & Drink and the St Nicholas Fayre. Large scale events such as these can attract visitors in their own right, whilst an array of smaller events contribute to the vitality of the city centre. At present the city centre lacks some of the infrastructure needed to run events and requires investment to attain this.

6.33 A review of events taking place in the city centre<sup>12</sup> found overwhelming support for events both as tourist attractions and as a means of bringing residents together. Consultation undertaken as part of the review found that better publicity of events is needed if they are to achieve their full potential. Equally, recent research into participation in the evening economy<sup>13</sup> found there is also a need to improve information about evening events. The review recommends that a consensus is reached on temporary and permanent signage to promote key events of interest to the public.

**Question 5: How can we help to improve York's overall visitor experience and exceed their expectations? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

**OPTION 1: Redesign city centre public spaces to enhance the physical experience of the city centre and install the necessary infrastructure to enable a greater number and variety of**

<sup>12</sup> City centre events review, York City Centre Partnership (2006)

<sup>13</sup> York After Dark: Research and proposed action plan on the evening economy and the visitor experience of York in the evening, York Tourism Partnership (2007)



events.

OPTION 2: Provide appropriate temporary and permanent signage in public spaces in order to promote key events of interest.

OPTION 3: Enhance existing and/ or encourage major new tourist attractions

OPTION 4: Do nothing, there is no need to intervene or change York's visitor experience.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: Attracting overnight, higher value visitors**

6.34 There is currently significant demand for hotel development throughout York, and not just the city centre. Hotels are deemed to be a city centre use in national planning policy and the sequential approach applies to applications for new hotels or converting existing buildings to hotel use. PPS6 emphasises that in selecting sites, all options in the centre should be thoroughly assessed before less central sites are considered. There is an opportunity for the emerging LDF to set the strategic approach to future hotel provision in York to support the City's tourism objectives.



**Park Inn Hotel**

6.35 York city centre is served by a number of well located 3 and 4-star hotels and a choice of guesthouses, bed and breakfasts and inns. Hotels provide the main form of overnight accommodation in the city centre and consequently their provision is vital in contributing to the tourism economy. A visitor survey carried out between April 2006 and March 2007<sup>14</sup> found that the majority of those surveyed stayed in either 3-star hotels or guesthouses and bed and breakfasts. Fewer people stayed in 1 and 2-star hotels. The AAP could contain a policy that protects against the change of use of a certain type or size of visitor accommodation.

**Question 6: How can we support the growth of the visitor economy through planning visitor accommodation? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION 1: The city centre AAP should contain a policy to ensure that the necessary type and standard of hotel development takes place.

OPTION 2: Include a policy which protects overnight accommodation in the city centre. If you agree, what form of protection is most appropriate?

- a) Threshold based criteria (e.g. protect hotels with 30 or more rooms).
- b) Type based criteria (e.g. protect smaller scale accommodation such as guesthouses and bed and breakfasts).
- c) Other criteria, please state.

OPTION 3: It should be left to the market to decide on the type and location of visitor accommodation.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

<sup>14</sup> Key Facts on Tourism in York (as at October 2007)

6.36 The York Northwest Area Action Plan 'Issues and Options Report' proposed two possible options for a high quality, 4 or 5-star hotel on either the York Central or British Sugar sites<sup>15</sup>. In addition to visitor accommodation the York Northwest AAP 'Issues and Options' consultation identifies the drive to enhance business tourism and conference facilities at a Regional and Sub-regional level. York as a regional gateway should provide a focus for increasing the region's conference venue facilities and providing larger delegate venue space. There are limited opportunities for providing for such accommodation within the city centre. As a large brownfield site in close proximity to the city centre and railway station the York Northwest site has the potential to enhance business tourism and conference facilities in York.

### Evening Economy

6.37 Various national and local studies and guidance emphasise the social, economic and environmental benefits in creating a more inclusive evening experience through a more exciting and diverse range of evening activities. A more inclusive and diverse evening economy will improve the attractiveness of the city centre after dark and be good for the economy and create jobs.

6.38 At present 14% of visitors to York stay overnight, with an average length of stay of approximately 3 nights. This equates to 2 million visitor nights per year. The total spend by overnight visitors on eating and drinking out, on accommodation and on evening entertainment is some £115m (including the multiplier effect 2006-07 figures)<sup>16</sup>. A more interesting

and attractive evening experience will encourage people to stay longer and generate greater economic benefits.

6.39 Community Strategy theme 'York - The Thriving City' supports York's existing businesses and aims to "encourage new enterprises in order to maintain a prosperous and flourishing economy". The emerging LDF Core Strategy identifies developing the evening economy as a possible priority to be addressed in the LDF.

6.40 Research on the evening economy by Visit York<sup>17</sup> proposes that a permanent high quality, dedicated outdoor events area would help to improve the provision of evening activities and entertainment. This could provide a fixed site for street entertainment to take place every early evening at a fixed time, and be a place to find out the latest information about evening entertainment in the city. An outdoor events area could also assist in the delivery of a large scale event to showcase York as an overnight destination. This issue is also addressed in Key Theme 2 – Historic Environment.



Nightlife on King's Staith

### Issue: 5-7pm lull

6.41 York boasts one of the largest pedestrian zones in Europe. Most days of the week vehicles are

<sup>15</sup> Options C3 and C4 p67-68: York Northwest AAP Issues and Options Report November 2007

<sup>16</sup> York After Dark: Research and proposed action plan on the evening economy and the visitor experience of York in the evening, York Tourism Partnership (2007)

<sup>17</sup> Draft for Discussion York After Dark: Research and proposed action plan on the evening economy and the visitor experience of York in the evening, York Tourism Partnership, 2007

excluded from the pedestrian zone (or footstreets) between 11am and 4pm. The end of this period coincides with the arrival of many vans and cars for servicing and other reasons, giving the perception that the city centre is closing down. Furthermore, by 6pm all visitor attractions are closed to the public and most shops are closed for business.

6.42 There is currently no co-ordinated late-night shopping with the exception of the Christmas period. In 2003 pedestrianisation was extended until 8pm on Thursday evenings and Park and Ride services operated later to accommodate evening shopping. However, the decision was taken later to remove the extended pedestrianisation order as it was found to have had little affect on the success of evening shopping mainly because not enough retailers took part.

6.43 Latest research<sup>18</sup> reaffirms that there is sufficient demand for retailers to extend trading hours between 5pm and 7pm. A different approach may yield a greater level of success. As an alternative to having a designated evening for late-night shopping, a more gradual extension of pedestrian hours could make shops more convenient for people finishing work. There is potential to coordinate this with evening entertainment.

6.44 Peripheral streets may benefit from co-ordinated early evening activities. Gillygate, Bootham, Goodramgate, Micklegate, Fossgate and Walmsgate attract a high footfall in the early evening as people leave the city on their way home. These streets are closely linked to some of the city centre's residential communities such as, Aldwark, Walmsgate and Bishopthorpe. They tend to have a good mix of independent shops, cafes, restaurants and bars which have the potential to deliver a varied and inclusive evening

economy. Physical improvements to the pedestrian environment may help to encourage greater prosperity in these streets. Another option could be to create evening pedestrian zones (or evening footstreets) for a safer and more attractive environment in which people can shop, socialise, eat and drink outdoors as well as indoors into the evening. This may be possible on Fossgate, Goodramgate and Micklegate.



Fossgate



Illustration of how Fossgate might look as an evening footstreet

**Question 7: Are there opportunities for a more vibrant evening economy starting earlier in the day? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

**OPTION 1:** Pro-actively encourage a vibrant evening economy including shopping and entertainment, through the following actions:

<sup>18</sup> York After Dark Appendix 8: Discussion Groups with Evenings Economy Stakeholders



a) Extend the hours of operation of the existing footstreets into the 5-7pm period as an incentive to encourage shops, cafés and attractions to stay open later by making them more convenient for people after work.

b) Physical improvements to the pedestrian environment.

c) Creating new pedestrian zones throughout the evening ('evening footstreets'). For example, Fossgate, Goodramgate and Micklegate?

**OPTION 2:** It is for individual retailers and proprietors to determine opening hours and there is no need to introduce incentives to encourage them to stay open later.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

### **Offices in the City Centre**

6.45 The Employment Land Review 2007 indicates that the York office market currently supports demand for an additional 12,000-15,000 sq m per year. Demand for office space in York, in the short to medium term, could be met by new out-of-centre office developments. In the longer term, the York Northwest development, adjacent to the city centre to the west of the railway station, has the potential to deliver a significant supply of new office floorspace in a sustainable location. However, it is important for the future economic well-being of York that there is a good supply of quality office space in the city centre, therefore the LDF Core Strategy identifies the city centre as a focus for office employment.

6.46 The Employment Land Review finds that there is good demand for city centre office accommodation but this is not being met due to the lack of

available high quality space. The Review found that, while 40% of the city centre space is of "reasonably marketable high quality", the high quality space is occupied by established organisations and little other high quality space is available.

### **Issue: Existing Office Space in the City Centre**

6.47 This issue will be addressed in more detail as part of a second phase to the Employment Land Review, which will be complete in Autumn 2008. This will examine the extent of demand for office accommodation within or adjacent to the city centre and the type of space required. The Review will also assess the potential for office accommodation in York Northwest and its ability to complement existing office provision within the city centre (the York Northwest Area Action Plan includes options to create a new high quality Central Business District adjacent to the railway station). These findings will influence the city centre AAP Preferred Options document. In addition, the Core Strategy Issues and Options 2 document contained options for identifying employment sites. The Options provided an alternative between promoting city and district centre locations or giving a greater emphasis to prioritising market demands. The Preferred Option for the Core Strategy (which will be informed by the Employment Land Review) will be taken into account in the Preferred Option for the City Centre AAP.

6.48 The existing office space in the city centre provides employment opportunities in a sustainable location, with ready access to public transport and facilities for staff. The presence of large numbers of office staff has direct benefits for the wider economy of the city centre.





Norwich Union, Well Row

6.49 To ensure a continuing supply of employment space to support the local economy, the existing Council policy position with regard to employment land generally, including offices in the city centre, is that they should be retained in employment use, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a sufficient supply of employment land in quantitative and qualitative terms to meet requirements.

6.50 A possible approach to ensuring that a supply of offices in a marketable location is retained in the city centre would be to designate a particular area as an office 'quarter'. It is considered that the Toft Green area, near to the railway station, which already has a concentration of office accommodation, could be an office quarter. This approach would assist the Council in resisting pressure for changes of use.

6.51 The AAP needs to consider the future of the 60% of office space in the city centre which is not of "reasonably marketable high quality". Some existing office buildings in the city centre are ill-suited because of size, shape and Disability Discrimination Act compliance issues. Some existing offices are out-of-keeping with the character of the Conservation Area. Businesses are demanding larger, more open and flexible floorspace, with better provision for technology, than that available in many of the older

buildings in the city centre. A number of office buildings in the city centre are listed which reduces the flexibility of the space and makes those buildings less attractive to businesses.

**Question 8: What should be the policy approach of the AAP for existing office space in the city centre? Tell us which option(s) if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION 1: Develop a policy approach consistent with the existing Draft Local Plan approach described above - a presumption in favour of retaining office buildings in employment use except in exceptional circumstances.

OPTION 2: Develop a policy to designate an "office quarter" centred around the Toft Green / Rougier Street area to promote the area as a focus for business activity well connected with the railway station and to restrict change of use.

OPTION 3: Develop a policy to designate other area(s) as an "office quarter". Please state which area.

OPTION 4: Develop a policy to allow the change of use of certain office buildings where they are considered to be ill-suited to modern business needs, subject to criteria, and seek to maximise the benefit from redevelopment opportunities as and when they arise.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: New Office Development in the City Centre**

6.52 Opportunities to provide new high quality office space in the city centre are relatively limited at present. However, over the timeframe of the AAP, it is reasonable to anticipate that new development opportunities will come forward, including redevelopment of existing office buildings. The potential office quarter at Toft Green could be a location to increase the provision of high quality office space in the city centre through more efficient use of the land.



**Toft Green offices**

6.53 In determining the best location for office space, should site(s) become available, the key factors to be considered will include the character of different parts of the Conservation Area and the ease of access to the public transport network.

6.54 Given the opportunity to meet demand for office space as part of the York Northwest development, it may be that the complementary role of the city centre would be to focus on meeting demand for small to medium size office floorplates, more in keeping with the dense and varied character of the Conservation Area.

**Question 9: How should the AAP identify opportunities for new office development? Tell us which option(s) if any, you agree with in principle...**

**OPTION 1: Identify opportunities for**

large floorplate new office development in the city centre.

**OPTION 2: Concentrate new office development within an identified office quarter centred on Toft Green**

**OPTION 3: Identify opportunities for new small to medium size office development in the city centre.**

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Universities**

6.55 The Universities play an important role in the educational, economic and cultural life of the city. Within the city centre, the main 3.2ha campus of York St John University is located on Lords Mayor's Walk with over 5,600 students. The University of York's Department of Archaeology, Centre for Medieval Studies and Centre for Eighteenth Century Studies are located in King's Manor.

6.56 National and regional planning policy and York's Community Strategy recognise the importance of further growth in the higher education sector. The AAP needs to look at ways to support the role of the universities in the city centre.

**Issue: Supporting the Universities in the City Centre**

6.57 The universities are the destination for a large number of students, staff and delegates on a daily basis, therefore public transport, cycling and walking connections with these locations need to be considered. The King's Manor is part of the Cultural Quarter Opportunity Area in the AAP which looks at the potential for improving the pedestrian environment in the area and how to improve linkages with the railway station. The York St John campus feels somewhat isolated from the city centre and more could be done to

highlight the presence of the university.

6.58 Students contribute artistic talent and participate in cultural events that benefit local communities and more work could be done to communicate, promote and support this benefit.

6.59 Issues relating to accommodation for students are addressed in the LDF Core Strategy.

**Question 10: What approach should the AAP take to support the continued growth and success of the universities within the city centre?**

OPTION 1: The AAP should review the physical linkages between the York St John University campus and the wider city centre.

OPTION 2: Investigate ways of working with the universities to help encourage students to come to, and remain within York, such as providing a dedicated space to help students showcase their creative talent.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Accessing the City Centre**

6.60 Excellent accessibility is vital to the long term economic, social and environmental success of the city centre. The tourism, retail, leisure and office sectors of the city centre economy demand excellent accessibility to remain competitive. Ease of access to community facilities is key to the quality of life of York's residents. See Plan x for an overview of the highway network and public transport in the city centre.

6.61 The unique and attractive historic environment of the city centre is key to the city's success economically, and congested traffic and road infrastructure are at odds with that character. Poor air quality is an issue in a number of locations in the city centre and this has a negative impact on health and the experience of visiting and living in the city centre. Reducing car traffic would therefore be an aim of the AAP in conjunction with improvements to public transport access and improving the ease of movement for pedestrians and cyclists.

6.62 Significant progress has been made to address congestion in York city centre, for example since 2001 there are 35% more pedestrians walking to / from the city centre throughout the day<sup>19</sup>. Initiatives to improve the accessibility of the city centre by foot, cycle and public transport are contained in York's Local Transport Plan 2.

6.63 In order to continue this progress, the AAP will support the initiatives of LTP2 and ensure that they are closely co-ordinated with the policies and proposals of the AAP to achieve the maximum benefit for the city centre.

**Local Transport Plan**

6.64 The Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (LTP2) sets-out the desired transport measures for the short term up to 2011 and the principles for a longer term transport vision to 2021. There are a number of proposed actions in LTP2 which could have a significant positive effect on traffic and public transport in the city centre, that will be addressed at a city-wide level through the LDF Core Strategy. These include: improvements to the outer ring road to encourage more people to make cross city journeys around the city rather than through the middle, new and improved park and

<sup>19</sup> Local Transport Plan 2 (2006-2011)



ride services, tram-Train between York, Harrogate and Leeds and a new rail station at Haxby.

6.65 There are other proposed actions in LTP2 which involve or could lead to physical changes within the city centre and are therefore planning issues relevant for this AAP to consider. These include:

- City centre road space freed up by redistributed traffic could be used for wider footways, cycle paths and bus lanes (issue 10)
- Tackling congestion through demand management measures such as parking controls and access restrictions in the city centre (issue 10)
- Enhancement of the Footstreets Pedestrian Priority Zone (see Key Theme 2)
- Providing more and better cycle parking (see Key Theme 2)
- Improving accessibility for disabled people (see Key Theme 3)
- Improving the cycle route network (issue 11)
- Improvements to bus interchange facilities in the city centre to increase bus patronage and to link the 'overground' bus network – orbital public transport loops linked into the main radial routes into the city centre (issue 12)
- Developing a city centre electric shuttle bus system (issue 12)
- Investigating the potential for water-based transport (issue 13)
- Developing a freight 'transhipment' centre (issue 14).

**Issue: Congested Road Network**

6.66 The careful management of car traffic in the city centre will be essential if accessibility is to be

maintained and improved. There are already measures to discourage unnecessary car access into the core of the city centre, particularly where its impact would be most negative, for example restrictions in the Footstreets. There is potential to extend this area (see Key Theme 2) and further reduce car access to the city centre.

6.67 Outside the footstreets area, there may be potential for closure or restricted access to certain streets to through traffic, potentially including one or more city centre bridges. A number of opportunities could arise from reduced traffic, such as a redesign of the carriageway to improve pedestrian and cycle access or to create new public spaces. There is, however, the possibility that restrictive measures may deter some visitors, potentially reducing the city's competitive advantage.



**Congestion detracts from the historic environment**

6.68 The potential for significant measures, such as demand management or a low emission zone, will be addressed at a strategic level in the Core Strategy and the LTP. LTP2 identifies the need to undertake a Low Emission Zone feasibility study.

**Car Parks**

6.69 Managing car parking is an important means of discouraging unnecessary car trips, particularly managing public parking and private non-residential parking (mainly workplace parking). There are over

5000 off street parking spaces in the city centre. There is scope to limit public and commercial parking, which would mean visitors and employees would need to travel by other modes, including Park and Ride.



**Castle Car Park**

#### Residential Car Parking

6.70 Residential parking is not an efficient use of land in the city centre as there are realistic alternatives to use of the private car. With new residential development in the city centre there is an opportunity for providing car-free developments, as so many amenities and facilities are available in the area. As an alternative, Car Clubs are a popular means of allowing people to have access to a car even if they do not own it themselves.

#### **Question 11: What methods could be supported by the AAP to help reduce traffic congestion in the city centre?**

OPTION 1: Close or restrict access to certain streets and / or bridges within the city centre subject to a comprehensive assessment of traffic impacts and forecasts of future demand.

OPTION 2: Limit or actively seek to reduce the level of car parking provision in the city centre.

OPTION 3: Support a requirement for new residential and commercial development in the city centre which do not incorporate car parking.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

#### **Issue: Pedestrian and Cycle Routes into the City Centre**

6.71 Key to reducing congestion in the city centre is making opportunities to access the city centre by walking and cycling as attractive as possible. It is also important that city centre residents have the ability to access facilities in other parts of the city by walking and cycling.

6.72 The AAP would therefore support any opportunity to ease movement for pedestrians and cyclists, a significant aspect of this could be options for the 'gateway' streets and cultural quarter Opportunity Areas.

6.73 There are a number of existing initiatives to improve pedestrian and cycle flow around the city centre, including a bridge connecting the Hungate development area with the Navigation Road area and re-routing cyclists as part of the Fulford Road Corridor study. There could be other opportunities to 'plug gaps' in the cycle network and we would like your views on where these may be. The strategic cycle network in York includes an East-West route through the city centre. There is a need for a strategic North-South route.



**Off-road walking / cycle routes**

6.74 There are sections of the inner ring-road which do not maximise opportunities to enhance the cycle network. One-way sections could provide cycle ways in the opposite direction to traffic, shortening routes and increasing the attractiveness of cycling in the city.

#### Pedestrian and Cycle Linkages with York Northwest

6.75 The development of the York Northwest area will lead to a significant increase in movement between the area and the city centre. Safe, legible and efficient cycling and walking routes between York Northwest and the city centre will be a priority.

6.76 The options for improving linkages between the city centre and York Northwest, considered in the York Northwest AAP Issues and Options report, include:

- New bridge across the River Ouse near Scarborough Bridge (see the Cultural Quarter Opportunity Area).
- Pedestrian / cycle route through the railway station
- Pedestrian / cycle route in conjunction with potential new vehicular access from Queen Street.

#### **Question 12: What improvements are needed to pedestrian and cycle routes into and through the City Centre?**

OPTION 1: Develop policy in the AAP to require development proposals to include all feasible opportunities to provide new and improved pedestrian and cycle routes, linking key locations and following 'desire lines'.

OPTION 2: Identify a North-South cycle route as part of the strategic cycle network.

OPTION 3: Reallocate sections of the inner ring road, giving priority to

cycles.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

#### **Issue: Buses**

6.77 York has a well developed bus network. In a constrained city like York, buses are one of the best ways of moving large numbers of people into and around the city. LTP2 contains strategies for Park and Ride, service buses and coaches. Public transport at a strategic level is addressed within the LDF Core Strategy.

6.78 A key issue for the AAP is making the city centre as accessible as possible to public transport through the quality of bus services, facilities and stops. It is also important for this AAP to consider the implications of bus access on the historic streets and spaces of the city centre.



**Buses are key to keeping the city moving**

6.79 The city centre bus routes can create a hostile environment and barriers to pedestrian movement. This affects the experience for visitors and residents and detracts from the commercial potential of certain streets.





**Bus queues can block the pavement**



**Stops can detract from historic buildings**

6.80 Bus shelters are an essential part of the transport infrastructure serving the city centre. However, in some instances they can detract from the setting of important buildings and spaces, or can create a bottleneck on the pavement when queues form.

#### Electric Shuttle Bus System

6.81 As part of the longer-term strategy of improving public transport access to the city centre, LTP2 identifies the potential for the development of a city centre electric shuttle system. This would provide a high quality, ultra-light public transport system, electrically powered and specially designed to operate in town centres. Feasibility work will be undertaken over the lifetime of the LTP for a pilot scheme, with a view to introducing a loop-system serving key city centre destinations (for example, linking the rail station with city centre tourist attractions) and potentially other key city destination such as the hospital, in the longer term. This system could have benefits for the less mobile.

#### Transport Interchange

6.82 The LTP identifies the need to provide a better co-ordinated public transport system for York. A key element of this system is considered to be the provision of a transport interchange which will facilitate the connection of existing public transport routes and promote connections between these existing routes, the Railway Station, the city centre and the proposed development of the York Northwest area. The concept of a transport interchange in the vicinity of York Station is outlined in the 'Access York' Major Scheme proposal within LTP2 and options for it have been consulted on in the York Northwest AAP.

6.83 There could also be potential for a second interchange elsewhere in the city centre to better co-ordinate bus routes. There are a number of bus stops to the East of the footstreets area, such as those on Piccadilly and Stonebow, which could be improved to make bus services more effective and attractive, as part of the wider enhancement of the public realm in that area.

#### Visitor Coaches

6.84 A Coach Parking Strategy is currently being prepared for the Council. The findings will be considered and presented in the Preferred Options document. 10% of visitors to the city centre arrive by coach<sup>20</sup>. Provision for coaches is therefore an important consideration for the tourism economy. The Strategy will examine the need for additional coach parking space within the city centre to inform the AAP.

<sup>20</sup> Key Facts on Tourism in York, May 2007, York Tourism Partnership



**Coaches bring tourists to the city**

**Question 13: What could be done in the city centre to improve bus accessibility?**

OPTION 1: Improve the location of bus stops and bus routes to maximise the accessibility and attractiveness of public transport within the city centre.

OPTION 2: Investigate opportunities to re-locate bus stops where they detract from the setting of a key buildings or spaces, or create an obstruction when queues form.

OPTION 3: Provide a city centre shuttle bus to link the railway station (and transport interchange) with key destinations including for example tourist attractions, shopping areas and the hospital.

OPTION 4: Investigate the feasibility of creating a bus interchange point to the East of the city centre to complement the proposed interchange to the West of the city centre adjacent to the railway station.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: River Transport**

6.85 The Local Transport Plan contains a Waterways Strategy that considers ways in which the Council

can promote the use of waterway transport as a means of reducing road traffic congestion.

6.86 The rivers are no longer regularly used for commercial transport of freight or passengers, but have been used in recent years for construction materials (Yorkshire Herald building) and for passenger trips to the racecourse. The rivers are however well used for leisure and tourist boats, rowing and angling.



**River Transport for Tourism on the Ouse**

6.87 The consultation carried out for LTP2 found that the rivers are considered to be an under-utilised asset and the Waterways Strategy supports proposals for the use of the rivers for passenger and freight transport. However, the research undertaken for LTP2 found that the potential for water transport is constrained by physical, financial and environmental issues.

6.88 Where significant development projects are to be implemented in the city centre the AAP could support the use of the rivers to transport construction materials. This would be particularly beneficial for sites within the footstreets area, reducing the need for HGVs to enter the pedestrianised area.

6.89 If a river transport service is to be implemented the AAP would consider the best locations for landing stages.



**Question 14: Is there potential for river transport in York to ease congestion in the city centre?**

OPTION 1: Include a policy in the AAP to support the potential for river transport for freight and / or passengers.

OPTION 2: Do not pursue a policy to promote commercial river transport in York.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: Commercial Traffic**

6.90 Delivery vehicles and other vehicles that require access for construction or maintenance make up a small but significant proportion of overall traffic. If they are not properly catered for, servicing vehicles can be forced to park in a way that blocks the road, pavement, or both. This causes inconvenience, delay and can be dangerous. It is therefore important that servicing vehicles are properly considered in the design of streets and buildings.

6.91 It is also important to consider the timing of deliveries to the city centre. At present there are restrictions on access to the footstreets area for commercial vehicles. Times vary for different streets and day, but generally the area is closed to all vehicles between 11am and 4pm. While this improves the pedestrian environment during those times, there is a concentration of deliveries immediately before and after the restricted times, leading to conflict with pedestrian flows. This issue will be considered in detail in the Council's review of the footstreets (see Key Theme 2).



**Commercial Traffic in High Ousegate**

6.92 The Local Transport Plan includes a Freight Strategy. Part of this examines the possibility of creating a 'Transshipment Centre' on the outskirts of York where deliveries bound for the city centre could be amalgamated and transferred to low emission vehicles to complete the journey, thus reducing the number of vehicles needing to access the city centre.

**Question 15: What methods could be supported by the AAP to reduce the amount and impact of commercial traffic in the city centre?**

OPTION 1: Change the times of access to the Footstreets area for commercial traffic. Please state which times of day you think would be best.

OPTION 2: Explore opportunities as part of the LTP2 Freight Strategy to condense deliveries to a smaller number of vehicles, including less polluting vehicles, through a new Transshipment Centre.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

## Key Theme 2: Historic Environment

### Introduction

7.1 York is famous for its historic environment, its unique townscape and rich architectural heritage. This is the city's greatest asset and its unique selling point. The importance of the historic environment of the city centre cannot be overstated and this will be evident in the policies and proposals of the AAP, as well as the wider LDF. York's Community Strategy states that: "Our City's heritage will be conserved and enhanced to safeguard the special character of York for the generations to come".

7.2 The historic city centre of York is a major regional asset and is of national and international importance in terms of its history, heritage, architecture and archaeology. It is an established major generator of tourism and a 'gateway' to the Region's range of built and natural attractions<sup>21</sup>.

7.3 This section of the AAP contains options for ensuring successful management of the Conservation Area, good design standards and an improved public realm.

### Spatial portrait

7.4 The city centre area represents almost 2000 years of development and evolution reflecting the city's rich economic, social, cultural, ecclesiastical and military history. Evolving from a geometric Roman form, York is a prime example of a medieval town, set within historic walls.

7.5 York is possibly the largest, richest, most complicated and most important archaeological site in the country with a significant proportion of the resource intact. A significant proportion of these buried

archaeological deposits are waterlogged and anoxic, meaning there is very good preservation of organic materials. York is one of only five cities whose archaeology is considered to be of such significance that it is designated as an Area of Archaeological Importance under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act and has the longest continuous city walls within the country.

7.6 Within the area covered by the City Centre AAP there are 9 scheduled ancient monuments, including the City Walls, over 750 listed buildings and a registered historic park and garden; the Yorkshire Museum Gardens – see Map 5: Historic Environment Map overleaf.



Historic Yorkshire Museum Gardens

### Character Appraisal

7.7 The city centre is designated as a Conservation Area. The Central Historic Core Conservation Area (see Historic Environment Map) mainly defines the old City of Roman, Viking and Medieval York, for the most part contained inside the ancient City Walls. The Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 and extended in 1975 to include the bars and walls themselves, their approaches and surroundings which contained Georgian, Regency and Victorian buildings. The Conservation Area was designated in response to the pressures on the built fabric of the city during the 1960s, including traffic and

<sup>21</sup> Regional Spatial Strategy



economic decline, and based on the findings of the 1968 Esher Report.

7.8 The Council is currently undertaking a Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) for the Central Historic Core Conservation Area. The Appraisal will describe, define and analyse the special character and appearance of the Area and assess its current condition. This new report will identify the pressures evident today. It is proposed to organise the report around the individual character areas identified in the Esher report as these are considered to still be relevant today

7.9 A summary Character Statement for each of the 11 character areas that have been identified within the Conservation Area is attached as Appendix A. Comments received on these Statements will be fed into the process of drafting the Appraisal. We would like to hear your views on the boundaries of the character areas and the statements.

7.10 The CAA will be completed prior to the Preferred Options stage of the AAP and its findings incorporated in the options presented. The CAA will be subject to public consultation, in a separate process to the AAP.

#### Public Realm and Rivers

7.11 The use and appearance of York's streets and spaces has evolved over many years. Today, there is scope for enhancing the appearance and use of the public realm. It is therefore important to look in more detail at the current condition of the public realm in the city centre.

7.12 Key public spaces in York are connected by a network of alleyways and streets and these are grouped together in a variety of form and period. They give variety of experience and are generally in proportion with the scale of the buildings in the city. York does not have a grand plaza.



**St Helen's Square and the Mansion House**

7.13 The city has a number of squares within its walls: St Helen's Square; Exhibition Square; Parliament Street; Sampson's Square; King's Square and St Mary's at Piccadilly. An additional large public square, St John's Square, is proposed in Hungate. See Map 6: Public Realm Map overleaf for location of urban public areas and green spaces.

7.14 Key green spaces provide a strong landscape structure and include the Yorkshire Museum Gardens around the former St Mary's Abbey ruins, Dean's Park, the Memorial Gardens and the riversides. They offer places for relaxation or quiet reflection as well as encouraging informal recreation and physical activity. The City Walls and the green spaces that provide the setting for them, provide many important views and offer the opportunity to access the city away from the traffic and noisy main roads.

7.15 The River Ouse and its tributary the Foss are both open to navigation.



**The Ouse riverside from Lendal Bridge**

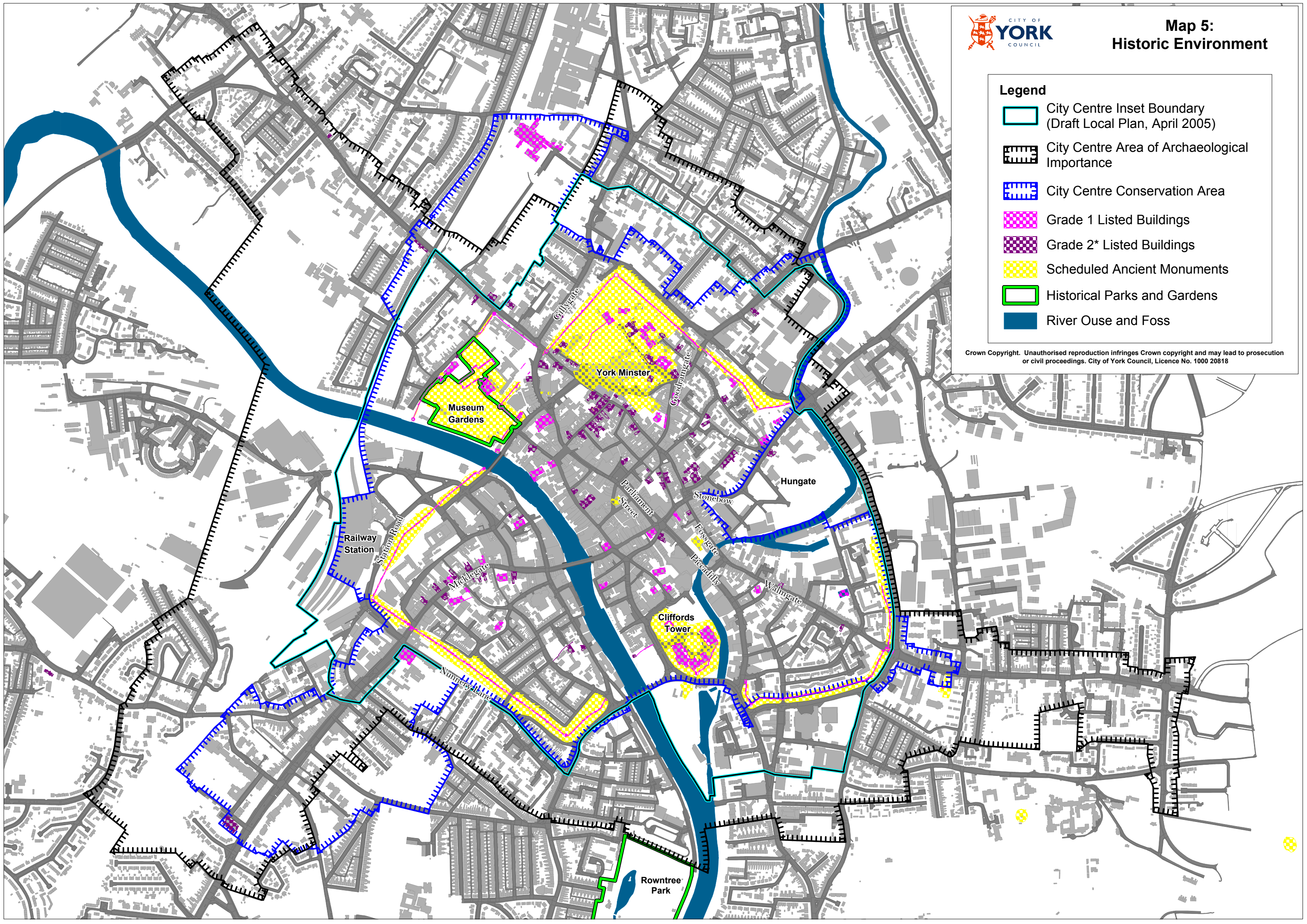
However, in some areas, the city centre tends to turn its back on the rivers, and opportunities are being missed which would make more use of this underused asset.



**Legend**

-  City Centre Inset Boundary  
(Draft Local Plan, April 2005)
-  City Centre Area of Archaeological  
Importance
-  City Centre Conservation Area
-  Grade 1 Listed Buildings
-  Grade 2\* Listed Buildings
-  Scheduled Ancient Monuments
-  Historical Parks and Gardens
-  River Ouse and Foss

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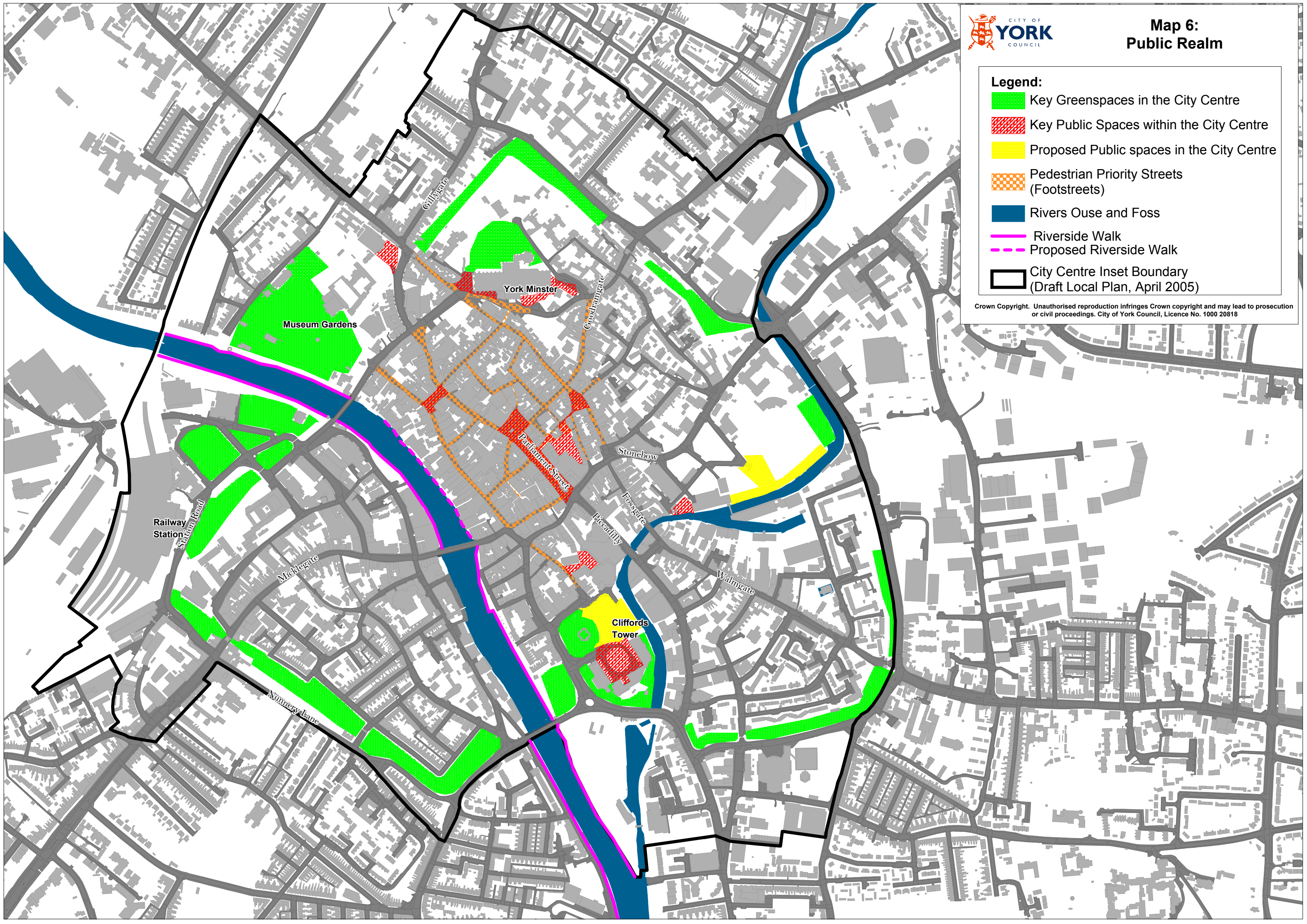




**Legend:**

-  Key Greenspaces in the City Centre
-  Key Public Spaces within the City Centre
-  Proposed Public spaces in the City Centre
-  Pedestrian Priority Streets (Footstreets)
-  Rivers Ouse and Foss
-  Riverside Walk
-  Proposed Riverside Walk
-  City Centre Inset Boundary (Draft Local Plan, April 2005)

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**Badly designed areas beside the river and Yorkshire Museum Gardens**



**Dark areas on western side of River that could be improved**

7.16 The rivers are subject to flooding and climate change is expected to increase flood events. Following severe floods in 1947, 1978, 1982 the Foss Barrier was built in 1986/7 to isolate the Foss from the Ouse and stop floodwater surging back upstream. The 2000 flood was over 11 times the normal average summer flow flooding over 350 premises in the area but most of the city centre was protected by the flood barriers.

#### World Heritage Site

7.17 There could potentially be a bid for World Heritage Status (WHS) for York city centre. WHS would raise York's worldwide standing and recognition, and provide a major selling point for inward investment and attracting funding. Achieving this would increase tourism pressure on the city and would therefore necessitate a management plan. The relationship between this and the AAP would need careful consideration should a WHS bid be successful. The AAP should form the basis for a management plan.

**Question 16:** Do you think this is an accurate description of the city centre historic environment?

If not, what elements should be added/ removed to 'paint a better picture' of the city centre'?

## **Key Theme 2: Issues and Options**

### **Conservation and Design**

7.18 Managing York's historic environment to safeguard and enhance its character is a key issue for the city. Managing change in the city centre over the next 20 years will be a challenge. This is the crucial process of ensuring we take the best of the past forward with us. Another challenge for the city is ensuring that new layers added to the amazing history of York are examples of the best urban design and architecture of the day.

### **Issue: Managing the Historic Environment**

7.19 Crucial in developing the policies of the AAP will be the findings of the Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA). It is proposed that the AAP contain a statement and policies for each character area, building on the findings of the Appraisal to identify the key elements of character that need to be safeguarded and enhanced, parameters for new development, opportunities for new development and opportunities for streetscape enhancement.



**York Minster**

7.20 There are no options for this issue. Preferred options will be based on the findings of the CAA. The CAA itself will be subject to public consultation.

7.21 There are a number of approaches to managing the historic environment that will be considered in the Conservation Area Appraisal and will influence the preferred options:

- Through appraisal of the urban framework, identify pressures created by the mix of uses in different areas and the impact of traffic movement. From this appraisal identify measures to relieve these pressures and manage conflict. This will consider the ability of streets and spaces to continue to adapt over time to serve the needs of today.
- Identify areas, which will be subject to specific controls over development (e.g. Article 4 directions). This may be necessary to control incremental change.
- Policies to provide criteria for specific development issues such as shop fronts or renewable energy plant.
- Identify buildings and structures suitable for protection through listing.
- Identify 'buildings at risk' and promote solutions.
- Produce site-specific development briefs to guide new development.
- Review the Conservation Area boundary.
- Disseminate information from the CAA and historic maps and photographs to provide a resource to architects and developers, through GIS.
- Review the processes by which the public realm is maintained and altered, to consider how best to ensure character is not eroded.
- Consider the resources needed to manage the historic environment including for example, craft skills, sources of materials, technical guidance.



**Materials intrinsic to York's character**

#### Managing the Archaeological Resource

7.22 The management of archaeological deposits within the City Centre AAP is based on the principles set out in two documents: the *York Development and Archaeology Study* (Arup et al 1992) and the policy document *Conservation Policies for York: Archaeology* adopted by York City Council in 1992. These are supported and supplemented by the guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning. These principles were incorporated into policies HE9 and HE10 in the Draft Local Plan.

7.23 These principles are: that an archaeological evaluation of a site must be carried out in accordance with a scheme of investigation agreed by the local planning authority; that a report on the evaluation and an

archaeological mitigation strategy demonstrating how the development will preserve at least 95% of the archaeological deposits within the development site must be submitted with a planning application; an application will normally be approved with appropriate conditions provided both these criteria are met. A site may contain archaeological deposits which offer the opportunity to address local, regional or national archaeological research questions set out in the Arup Report, in regional or in national research frameworks. In these circumstances the opportunity to explore the possibility of carrying out an archaeological research excavation. An example of this happening within the historic core is at Hungate. On some sites it may be impossible to carry out a development and meet the 95% preservation target. On these sites permission for development may be refused or development may be approved with appropriate conditions to allow the archaeological deposits to be recorded prior to development commencing. An issue for discussion is whether these principles still represent best practice in 2008? Should the principles in the Arup Report be revisited in the light of archaeological advances made since 1992?

7.24 The archaeological deposits in the city centre are often wet, anoxic and very deep - up to 9m deep along the rivers Ouse and Foss. The effect, beneficial or detrimental - of development on these deposits through piling and other intrusive operations has been the subject of much debate. In order to provide scientific evidence for this debate, developers in York have been asked to install groundwater and archaeological deposit monitoring regimes on and around their development sites. This has been achieved without a formal policy framework through negotiation and agreement with individual developers. This has been done at Marks and

Spencers, Hungate, Dixon's Yard Walmgate, York College for Girls, the former NCP car-park Skeldergate, Merchant Exchange. However, this network is patchy and needs extending. An issue is should the City adopt a formal policy framework for the installation and monitoring of groundwater and archaeological deposits?



**Hungate late 19 century tipper flush toilet**



**Roman sargophagus with gypsum burial**

7.25 The archaeological deposits within the City Centre offer the opportunity for education, public engagement, and promotion of the City. The Hungate Archaeological Project is a good example where this has been carried out. However, all archaeological interventions must offer the opportunity for public engagement. Where archaeological interventions take place within the City appropriate provision for education and public engagement must be made. An issue for discussion is the precise nature of this engagement. This varies from full programmes of guided visits, open days, volunteer



options, and training programmes (e.g. Hungate) to site notices, one-off open days, press reports and talks to Ward Committees (e.g. the recent Barbican excavation). Should this be codified into a protocol for each type of archaeological intervention (evaluation, excavation, research project, watching brief, etc)?

7.26 The City of York Council maintains a Historic Environment Record (CYCHER) for York. In addition, the Yorkshire Museum provides a long-term curatorial service for archives of material from York excavations. A copy of all reports on archaeological interventions within the City must be deposited with the CYCHER. The HER will curate and make this information available to general and specialist audiences through the HER. An issue is whether developers should make a contribution to towards the development and maintenance of the CYCHER? Should such a contribution be a flat rate contribution of £100 for each report or electronic file? The Yorkshire Museum makes a charge for the deposition and curation of archaeological archives. Should the Council make it a condition that all excavated material from excavations in York must be deposited with the Yorkshire Museum?

**Question 17: How do you think we should manage the Archaeological Resource in the city centre? Tell us which option(s) if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION1: Revisit the principles in the Arup Report in the light of archaeological advances made since 1992.

OPTION 2: Adopt a formal policy framework for the installation and monitoring of groundwater and archaeological deposits.

OPTION 3: Provide opportunities for education and public engagement for all archaeological interventions. Please state which methods of education and engagement should be used.

OPTION 4: Require developers to make a contribution towards the development and maintenance of the CYCHER. Please state what level of contribution you think is appropriate.

OPTION 5: Require that all excavated material from excavations in York must be deposited with the Yorkshire Museum.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

### **Issue: Designing in the City Centre**

7.27 It is proposed that the AAP should contain a robust policy framework to ensure new development is achieved with high quality urban design and architecture with respect for the historic environment. It is imperative that the Council has a strong statutory basis to defend the city centre against insensitive development. Equally it is very important the Council provides a lead and promotes the benefits of good design and gives guidance on how this can be achieved.

7.28 Conservation of historic areas and high quality design are prominent requirements of national and regional planning policy. There is also a wealth of guidance for these topics from English Heritage and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) amongst others. One of the purposes of the AAP will therefore be to consider how this can be best achieved in York city centre including the process by which the Council and the York community makes decisions on significant new

developments. There is considered to be a number of options for a design policy specific to the city centre: an updated version of the existing Council policies with generic requirements for quality; a policy approach requiring cognisance of the findings of the Conservation Area Appraisal; a detailed design code setting out standards to be met; and a combination of the above.

#### Existing Design Policy

7.29 The existing design policies of the Draft Local Plan require buildings to be designed with reference to their surroundings with a thorough understanding of the location. The policies are considered to work well in practice as they are not overly prescriptive and allow proposals to be considered on their merits. However, in the absence of the Conservation Area Appraisal, this approach relies on an assessment of the location in each case and proper consideration of proposals is resource intensive. New buildings in the city centre since the introduction of the policies of the 1998 Draft Local Plan have been of variable architectural merit.



**A design reflecting its context, Davygate**

#### Findings of the Character Appraisal

7.30 An understanding of context is crucial to design. This means designing with an appreciation of the local architecture and street pattern of the surrounding area. The Conservation Area Appraisal will provide us with this understanding of context through defining the main

elements of the character and appearance of the area and what gives York its unique 'sense of place'.

7.31 A design policy could be developed through the AAP that requires proposals to demonstrate that the findings of the CAA have guided the design solution. This will include an appreciation of the relative importance of buildings and spaces in the context and from this an identification of the appropriate urban form. By taking this context-led approach to design, the policy framework would not favour one design language over another. The most appropriate solution in each case will depend on the context – the form and style of adjacent buildings.

7.32 This approach to design policy could produce more York-specific design solutions. However, it is a more resource intensive approach and quality is not guaranteed as the justification for a design is based on interpretation of the findings of the CAA and how they might be applied in a certain case.

#### Design Code

7.33 Another potential approach to ensuring design quality could be to produce a 'design code' that would apply to all new development in the city centre. This would include a series of design objectives, drawn from the widely accepted set of general urban design principles for good place making, including requirements for uniqueness, ease of movement, legibility and adaptability. The Code could include more specific aspects of design including for example a palette of materials that would be acceptable, requirements for particular detailing and proportions. The design code would not be about imposing style, but rather about setting parameters: a framework within which to work, to maintain the essential qualities of good urban places.

7.34 This would be a more prescriptive, criteria-based approach to design policy and could lead to uniform solutions. However, it would be less resource intensive than the alternative approaches and would ensure minimum design standards are met.

#### Key Views and Tall Buildings

7.35 An important element of the character of York is long distance views of key buildings and the varied and rich roofscape. Tall and prominent buildings can add interest and make skylines distinct to York, but can also interrupt important views and impair valued street scenes. There are a number of existing buildings in York that are not sensitive to its special character. The AAP will seek out opportunities to address this and could include a policy framework to ensure that key views are not adversely affected by new development, potentially through a requirement for visual impact assessment for buildings over a certain height.



**Important views need to be protected; the church here is now hidden**

7.36 In some circumstances, tall or prominent buildings could create exciting new landmarks in the city that would allow the present generation to express itself and to create new sources of civic pride.

**Question 18: What approach should the AAP take to design in the City**

#### **Centre? Tell us which option(s) if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION1: Develop a policy based on the criteria set-out in the Draft Local Plan.

OPTION 2: Develop a policy approach that requires design to be drawn from the requirements of the Conservation Area Appraisal and considered in that context.

OPTION 3: Develop a Design Code to provide a series of design principles to be applied to all new development in the city centre. Please state which principles should be included.

For Key Views and Tall Buildings:

OPTION 4: Develop a policy on views, vistas and tall buildings to protect against developments that detract from the skyline and key features of the City Centre.

OPTION 5: Opportunities should be explored to create new contemporary landmarks in the City Centre.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

#### **Issue: Design Decisions**

7.37 The process by which decisions are made is also crucial in achieving high quality architecture and urban design. At present the Council determines the quality of development proposals against the policies of the Draft Local Plan with informal advice from the Conservation Area Advisory Panel. There is limited specialist advice available within the Council, however Officers liaise with the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment to provide advice on significant schemes and with English Heritage to whom proposals affecting important buildings and spaces,



including all Grade I and II\* buildings, are referred. At present there is no Conservation Area Appraisal, guidance on the special character of the area, only a brief statement contained in the Local Plan.

7.38 The Conservation Area designation, the listed status of many buildings within the city centre and the designated Area of Archaeological Importance, means that there is a considerable legislative framework to control development within the city centre. This control results in a great deal of applications to the Council. The Appraisal once complete has the potential to greatly assist in decision-making. However, there could be ways in which the decision making process could be made more efficient and effective, with more public debate on important decisions.

7.39 Some ways in which the decision making process could be improved, for developments within the city centre:

#### Design Competitions

7.40 The AAP could develop a policy approach to encourage Design Competitions for major development proposals. This would promote York as a focus for high quality design and would ensure that the best architects are involved.

#### Design Champion

7.41 Many cities have a Design Champion - someone who ensures quality design is always high up the agenda. CABI state that the key purpose of a Design Champion should be to:

- Ensure the local authority provides a vision for how they see the quality of their built environment improving. This will require an overview of the host of responsibilities the local authority has, for example via planning, conservation, the procurement of new buildings and the

management of streets and green spaces.

- Promote an integrated approach to 'place-making', ensuring that the various departments within the local authority are working in a co-ordinated fashion to deliver the vision for their area. For example ensuring that highways departments are working within the framework of any local area appraisals and historic environment policies, understanding how their interventions can enhance the local environment" (CABI, Design Champions, 2006).
- The Champion could support the existing York Design Awards and give even more prominence to the awards in order to promote best practice.

#### Design Panel

7.42 Another way in which the AAP could help ensure quality of design is by promoting the creation of a Design Panel. This would advise the Council both proactively and reactively on significant development sites or public realm enhancements. CABI state that a Panel would offer a "fresh viewpoint, identifying flaws that the designer has failed to recognise; it can broaden discussions and draw attention to the bigger picture" (CABI, How to Do Design Review, 2006).



A Design Panel can provide a fresh viewpoint (CABI)

**Question 19: In what way can the AAP help to improve the decision making process?**

OPTION 1: Continue with our existing approach.

OPTION 2: Promote the creation of Design Competitions for major or sensitive schemes.

OPTION 3: Promote the appointment of a Design Champion.

OPTION 4: Promote the creation of a Design Panel for significant developments.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Public Spaces, Footstreets and Rivers**

7.43 York's Community Strategy defines the public realm as 'the physical experience of the city and the pleasure that comes from being in its green spaces, squares, and streets with their unexpected twists and turns and hidden quarters'. Public spaces define the quality of people's experience and give a sense of place and identity.

7.44 Open spaces are valuable in their own right and can help people to enjoy healthy lifestyles. Research reveals that 'we continue to undervalue public spaces in all their forms – streets, squares, parks, gardens and the many incidental spaces in our cities<sup>22</sup> and a lack of investment in these areas can lead to a sense of physical decline. There are opportunities to improve the public squares and spaces in York that do not function as well as they could

<sup>22</sup> CABE Space 'Wasted Space?'  
[www.projectevergreen.com/pdf/TheValueofPublicSpace.pdf](http://www.projectevergreen.com/pdf/TheValueofPublicSpace.pdf)

because they are not flexible enough and do not have the infrastructure to cope with modern demands.



**Parliament Street showing elongated design of spatial area**

**Issue: Improving Pedestrian Routes around the City Centre**

7.45 York has an excellent network of picturesque walking routes that wind between its buildings and include the City Walls. However, in some areas there are poor linkages to public spaces, which in turn have become under-used and neglected.

7.46 Pedestrians and cyclists need to feel safe and able to enjoy a pleasant environment in which conflict between different road users is minimised; however, conflict does exist in some areas between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles for example at Duncombe Place and where Parliament Street meets Piccadilly. Well-designed public realm can help to manage risk and ensure public safety without having to compromise pedestrian movement, the pedestrian environment or the orientation for younger, older and disabled people.

7.47 Some areas have become disconnected from more central areas through a poor pedestrian environment or have physical barriers/ street furniture which impede their connection with other more vibrant areas. These areas include Fossgate, Micklegate and Walmgate. Improving linkages will encourage more people into less visited areas helping which will help to improve the prosperity of the area.



**Toilets create a physical barrier between Parliament Street and Piccadilly**

7.48 A national bid for lottery funding - to make better sense of the landscape and public spaces in the city centre - was presented by the Council in 2006. It proposed to create a network of recognisable routes around the key spaces and features so that different areas, vistas and 'hidden' discoveries would be experienced. The 'York Songline' bid failed to progress to the final stages, but received very positive feedback from the funding board. Many of the themes and aims of the bid have been raised as issues to address through the 'Without Walls' initiative and subsequent Community Strategy.

7.49 The 'Gateways Streets', 'City Spaces' and 'Cultural Quarter' Opportunity Areas in this Plan explore the potential for improvements in more detail.

**Question 20: Do you think that the existing routes shown on Map 6: Public Realm promote and connect our public spaces and key attractions could be improved, and if so how? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

**OPTION 1:** Carry out an assessment to identify areas where conflict exists between different road users and apply this to a strategy to manage such conflict in the public realm.

**OPTION 2:** Develop and expand 'The

'York Songline' concept by defining a clear and recognisable network of routes around the city centre that encourages people to explore.

**OPTION 3:** Do nothing, the routes to and around our public spaces do not need promoting or improving.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

### **Issue: Improving the appearance of and de-cluttering public spaces**

7.50 Some of York's public spaces are looking tired and in need of improvement. When the provision of street furniture and paraphernalia such as seating, lighting, signage, utility boxes and phone boxes has not been properly co-ordinated it can result in public spaces which appear cluttered with obstacles to free movement, and in some cases this can compromise the character of the space. Public spaces in York should be de-cluttered, creatively lit, accessible, vibrant and attractive.

7.51 Better publicity, in the form of temporary and permanent signage, is needed in the city centre in order to help people navigate their way around different areas and to introduce new areas of character and interest. The city spaces would seem the obvious place to put these information points, although this should form part of a co-ordinated strategy and be careful not to contradict efforts to de-clutter public space. The City Spaces Opportunity Area in this Plan considers how these spaces could be improved.



**Kings Square as existing**





**Illustrative suggestion showing redesigned square with improved seating, performance space and surface treatment**

#### Newgate Market

7.52 The current location is accessed from some of the most visited spots in York at the Shambles and Parliament Street but may not be fulfilling its true potential. It can appear dark and unwelcoming in the evenings. It is facing serious economic challenges and might benefit from relocation to a new space capable of accommodating flexible uses, which would attract a different client base at different times of the day.



**Vacant market stall during market hours**

#### Performance Space/ Public Art

7.53 York has a wealth of talented artistic performers but no dedicated performance space for them to use. The York After Dark Study identifies a need for performance space in the city centre, which would help to showcase York as a visitor destination.

7.54 Public art in all its forms can contribute to creating a better quality environment and can reinforce the identity and character of different areas. It could be freestanding sculpture, but is just as likely to be part of the design of new development, or

of the paving and general appearance of the public space.

**Question 21: What do you think should be done to improve the public streets, squares and spaces in the city centre in order to protect and enhance their quality and how do you think public art should be used to enhance the city centre? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

**OPTION 1:** Enhance and de-clutter public spaces where necessary (i.e. St Sampson's Square - see City Spaces Opportunity Area Map 12) for suggestions) and re-design areas to incorporate co-ordinated lighting and street furniture improvements throughout the city centre.

**OPTION 2:** Review the potential to redesign and enhance Newgate Market to maximise the potential of the site and ensure the continuation of the historic market.

**OPTION 3:** Relocate the market stalls to another site as part of wider proposals to improve the use and prosperity of Newgate Square. Where do you think this should be?

**OPTION 4:** Provide a dedicated outdoor performance area. Where do you think this should be?

- a) Newgate area alongside the market
- b) Castle Piccadilly
- c) St John's Square (proposed urban square at Hungate)
- d) Duncombe Place
- e) Somewhere else – please state where

**OPTION 5:** Provide for public art schemes within the city spaces.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

### **Issue: Footstreets**

7.55 A review of the current function of the footstreets (introduced in 1987) is taking place, which will assess whether they need to be modernised to reflect the demands placed upon the city centre by its many users. The review deals with operational aspects of the zone but will also take into account other issues such as the potential to expand the zone into peripheral streets, signage and cycle routes.

7.56 Extending the footstreets will help to maximise opportunities for enhancing cultural, tourist and evening economies, improve pedestrian accessibility, enhance the setting of valued buildings such as York Minster and support retail in peripheral areas of the city.



**Duncombe Place from Museum Street**

### **Question 22: Where, if at all, should the footstreets be extended?**

OPTION 1: Fossgate

OPTION 2: All of Goodramgate

OPTION 3: Duncombe Place

OPTION 4: Piccadilly

OPTION 5: Other areas (please state where).

OPTION 6: There should be no extension of the footstreets.

OPTION 7: Further restrictions on vehicles that currently are exempt to

reduce traffic in restricted areas.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

### **Issue: Green spaces and the Riversides**

7.57 Green spaces bring aspects of the countryside into the city centre, offering people the chance to experience the benefits of the natural environment. Green spaces need to be well connected to the city and it is important to know where they are, how to get to them, how they are used and by whom. Green spaces form part of the green infrastructure (a network of gardens, rivers, trees, parks and open spaces within and between cities that have wider benefits for wildlife and people). The main green spaces in the city centre are identified on the Public Realm Map 6 (see page 29), and some opportunities for improvement are explored in the Riversides Opportunity Area Map 13 (see page 70).

7.58 The benefits of green spaces are well documented and include:

- the opportunity for people to encounter and interact with wildlife and nature as it links the countryside to the city centre;
- reduced stress levels and improved mental well-being;
- increased physical activity helping to support healthy lifestyles;
- absorption of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and reduction of air pollution;
- reduced surface water run-off;
- provision of wildlife habitats, linking wildlife corridors, improving ecological environments and supporting green infrastructure;
- creation of tranquil escapes away from the bustle of city life;



- encouragement of social gatherings through informal recreation.

7.59 The Community Strategy aims to 'increase the amount and quality of publicly accessible green space'. There are limited opportunities for provision in the city centre, but there are discussions to explore the viability of providing a gym and other facilities within the Hungate development. This Plan can also help by improving access to facilities elsewhere and promoting design which incorporates opportunities for informal sport and physical activity.

7.60 Connectivity between some green spaces and other parts of the city centre is not always apparent, for example the Memorial Garden cannot be accessed from the riverside, and there are opportunities to make better connections between busy pedestrian areas and riversides.



**Poor permeability to the riversides**

7.61 Some of the green spaces, which provide the setting for the City Walls, could provide more opportunities for informal recreation and education. Over one million people a year visit the walls, but they are inaccessible to many members of the community who cannot climb the steps.



**Underused green spaces around city walls**

7.62 The city centre has poor provision of children's play areas (there are only two) and opportunities can be explored to provide a new area.

**Question 23: Connectivity between green spaces in the city centre is poor and could be improved. What are the best ways to improve access to, and awareness of, key green spaces, and in which areas? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION 1: Improve access between the riverside and the Memorial and Yorkshire Museum Gardens by opening up spaces to the riversides where appropriate.

OPTION 2: Integrate the large green space at Station Road with the Memorial Garden to form one large green space (see photograph below).

OPTION 3: Further explore the viability of projects such as the City Wall ramparts (a green corridor around the city walls).

OPTION 4: Explore the need for and viability of creating a new children's play area. Where do you think this should be located?

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*



**Road bisecting green spaces and the Memorial Gardens**

**Issue: Increasing opportunities for greening the city centre**

7.63 Parks and green areas are important wildlife habitats, which add variety to our experience of being in the city. Key habitats in the city centre include the river corridors, trees and gardens, and the River Foss area known as Kings Pool, which is a local nature reserve. Enhancement opportunities from a biodiversity perspective, especially in parks and gardens, are important considerations within the city centre.

7.64 Trees provide shelter, habitats, create oxygen and absorb CO<sub>2</sub> breaking up harsh building lines and giving colour, texture and setting to the City. They are susceptible to damage caused by new development, contamination or vandalism. It is important to achieve a correct balance between providing setting for historical features such as the City Walls, and ensuring that trees do not obscure views.

7.65 Green or 'living roofs' have a wide range of environmental and economic benefits (they insulate and cool properties, substantially reduce the rate of rainwater runoff and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as well as promoting biodiversity and habitats in built-up areas). They would need careful consideration on historic buildings but do convey a commitment to sustainable building and give a very positive and distinctive image. The Community Strategy aims to 'protect and enhance the biodiversity of nature in the city' (Strategic Aim 9 of The Sustainable City).



**Green or 'living' roof**  
(courtesy of St Nicholas Fields)

**Question 24: How should we be developing further opportunities to enhance existing green spaces in the city centre? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION 1: Investigate and identify city centre opportunities for additional new planting of appropriate indigenous plants and trees.

OPTION 2: Green roofs should be encouraged where appropriate on new buildings to improve biodiversity and surface water run-off.

OPTION 3: Maximise opportunities for Green Infrastructure by linking green spaces and corridors.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: Managing Flood Risk**

7.66 The Council published a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in September 2007, which assesses the different levels of flood risk within York to ensure that new development adopts a risk-based approach in areas of least risk. Additionally, the Interim Planning Policy Statement on Sustainable Design and Construction

(approved November 2007) requires a sustainability statement evaluating rainwater harvesting systems, grey water systems and sustainable urban drainage systems for new housing and commercial development.

7.67 The emerging Core Strategy which covers the whole of the York area asks which option should underpin the policy approach of the LDF: either to prioritise sustainable locations and seek to mitigate potential flood risk through technical solutions; or to identify sites in non high flood risk areas regardless of site sustainability. However, the key issue in the City Centre is how to accommodate growth balanced with the need to mitigate potential flood risk through technical solutions. With the increasing risk of flooding and limited resources for flood defence there may be opportunities to strengthen existing local policies further to help to manage flood risk.



**Flooding between Ouse Bridge and Skeldergate**

7.68 In June 2007 records showed that 170mm of rain fell, 3 times the average rainfall for June. This exceptional rainfall overwhelmed the capacity of the drainage infrastructure in certain parts of the City. Yorkshire Water, the Environment Agency, City of York Council and the Internal Drainage Boards are working together to review the ageing drainage networks in York. As a result of the summer of 2007 flooding the Government is now considering integrated management of surface water drainage systems.

7.69 Surface water drainage methods that take account of quantity, quality and amenity issues are collectively referred to as Sustainable Drainage

Systems<sup>23</sup> (SUDS) and can allow new development in areas where existing sewerage systems are close to full capacity by dealing with runoff close to where the rain falls. Most areas of York have very heavy clay soil and the only usable SUDS method in many cases is storage and attenuation. Whilst SUDS is encouraged for all new development this method can require space and may not be a viable option for much of the city centre.

7.70 The options below suggest additional measures that could be considered to strengthen existing policies by suggesting a requirement as opposed to encouragement.

**Question 25: Flooding is a serious problem for York City Centre and is likely to increase with climate change. Tell us which option(s) if any, you agree with in principle to help the management of flood risk.**

OPTION 1: Investigate the requirement for all development in the city centre to incorporate rainwater harvesting and re-use of water where appropriate.

OPTION 2: Investigate the requirement for all development in the city centre to incorporate technical solutions that will mitigate against flooding such as recognised flood resilience and resistance measures.

OPTION 3: Investigate a requirement for all development within the city centre to incorporate means of reducing run off such as porous surfaces, green roofs etc.

OPTION 4: Do nothing, flood risk management is dealt with through other policies and strategies.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*



## Key Theme 3: Community Life

### Introduction

8.1 The city centre of York is not just the focus for retail and business activity; it is the cultural and community heart of York, with community, leisure, cultural and religious facilities as well as local shops and informal meeting areas.

8.2 Depending on factors such as age, social and ethnic background, employment circumstances and personal interests, York residents will have different expectations from their city centre. Besides serving people living within its immediate vicinity, the city centre also serves the wider York community. In order to successfully plan for the city centre we must understand what York's population is, and how it may change.

8.3 Social inclusion is regarded as a cross cutting theme in the Local Development Framework for York, and the city centre is regarded as having an important role in delivering many of the objectives of the Community Strategy. The AAP provides an opportunity to respond to what people want from the city centre now and in the future.

### Spatial portrait

#### 8.4 Growth in York Unitary Area

- York unitary area has a population of approximately 191,800 people and this is expected to increase by a further 12.2% between 2006 and 2021 to 215,200 people. This is higher than the expected UK increase of 10.2%.
- York has one of the highest growth rates of all small cities in the UK.

#### 8.5 Housing in York City Centre

- There were around 6,457 people living in the city centre in 3638 households in 2001<sup>23</sup>.
- The 'Urban Area', as defined by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007, is dominated by flats and terraced houses (82.4% of the total when taken together). This relates to the wider York urban area, not just the city centre.
- The tenure of the urban area stock is over 60% Owner Occupied, with the next highest tenure being Private Rented.
- 41% of all single non-pensioners in York live in the city centre.
- Only 9.3% of households with two or more children live in the city centre.
- The regeneration of the Hungate area includes a range of apartments and townhouses which, when completed, will be home to more than 1,000 people.



**Residential development in the Aldwark area**

See Map 7: Residential Areas in and adjoining the City Centre overleaf.

Map 8: Lower Level Super Output Areas, is also shown overleaf. These show the national format for dividing areas of cities to make collection of statistics more meaningful.

#### 8.6 Deprivation

- Three Council ward boundaries cover the area commonly regarded as the city centre - including Micklegate and Fishergate, but predominately Guildhall.
- The city centre is covered by 4 Lower Level Super Output Areas:

<sup>23</sup> City Centre Area Action Plan Scoping Report

- The 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) shows that each of the four Lower Level Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that make up the city centre fall within the 25% most deprived in England in terms of the Living Environment<sup>24</sup>.
- In the 2007 IMD, the Walmgate LSOA E01013367 falls within the 20% most deprived in England and is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most deprived in York.

#### 8.7 Age (Figures relate to the York authority area)

- York has a higher than national average percentage of young adults (20-24 years) which can largely be attributed to the high number of students in the city.
- There is a higher than national average proportion of people aged over 75 years.
- People aged 65 and over account for 16.5%<sup>25</sup> of York's population and it is projected that the population profile of people aged 65 and over will continue to increase.

#### 8.8 BME (figures relate to the York authority area)

- York has a lower proportion of ethnic minorities than both the regional and national averages.
- Based on 2003 estimates 6.12% of York's population were from black and ethnic minority (BME) backgrounds (11,200).
- Ethnic diversity is increasing and York has experienced the second highest population growth rate in ethnic minorities in the country between 1991 and 2002<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Sub domain: indoors living environment - Social & private housing in poor condition, Houses without central heating.  
Sub domain: outdoors living environment - Air quality, Road traffic accidents involving injury to pedestrians and cyclists.

<sup>25</sup> LDF Annual Monitoring Report December 2007.

<sup>26</sup> The State of English Cities Report (ODPM, 2006)

#### 8.9 Culture and leisure

- York city centre provides a wide variety of leisure and cultural facilities including four theatres, art galleries, museums, library, music venues and the cinema at the City Screen.
- There are a large number of restaurants, cafes and pubs for a city of York's size.
- City centre pubs, bars and clubs are very popular in the evenings, especially over the weekend.




City Art Gallery


#### 8.10 Religion

- York city centre is an important ecclesiastical centre.
- In the city centre there are 8 Grade I Listed, 7 Grade II\* Listed and 2 Grade II Listed places of worship.
- York city centre is home to one of the Archbishops of the Church of England. The Archbishop of York is Archbishop of the Province of York – the whole northern half of England. York Minster is the most famous of many historic churches in the city centre.
- The Hindu community in York do not have a place of worship in the city and so travel to Leeds and Bradford.
- There are more than 1,500 Muslims living in York from many different backgrounds and nationalities including many international Muslim students studying in the city. The main mosque in York is situated on Bull Lane off Hull Road to the east of the city centre and is often over capacity.
- At the time of the 2001 Census around 200 Jews lived in York and the nearest synagogue is in Leeds.

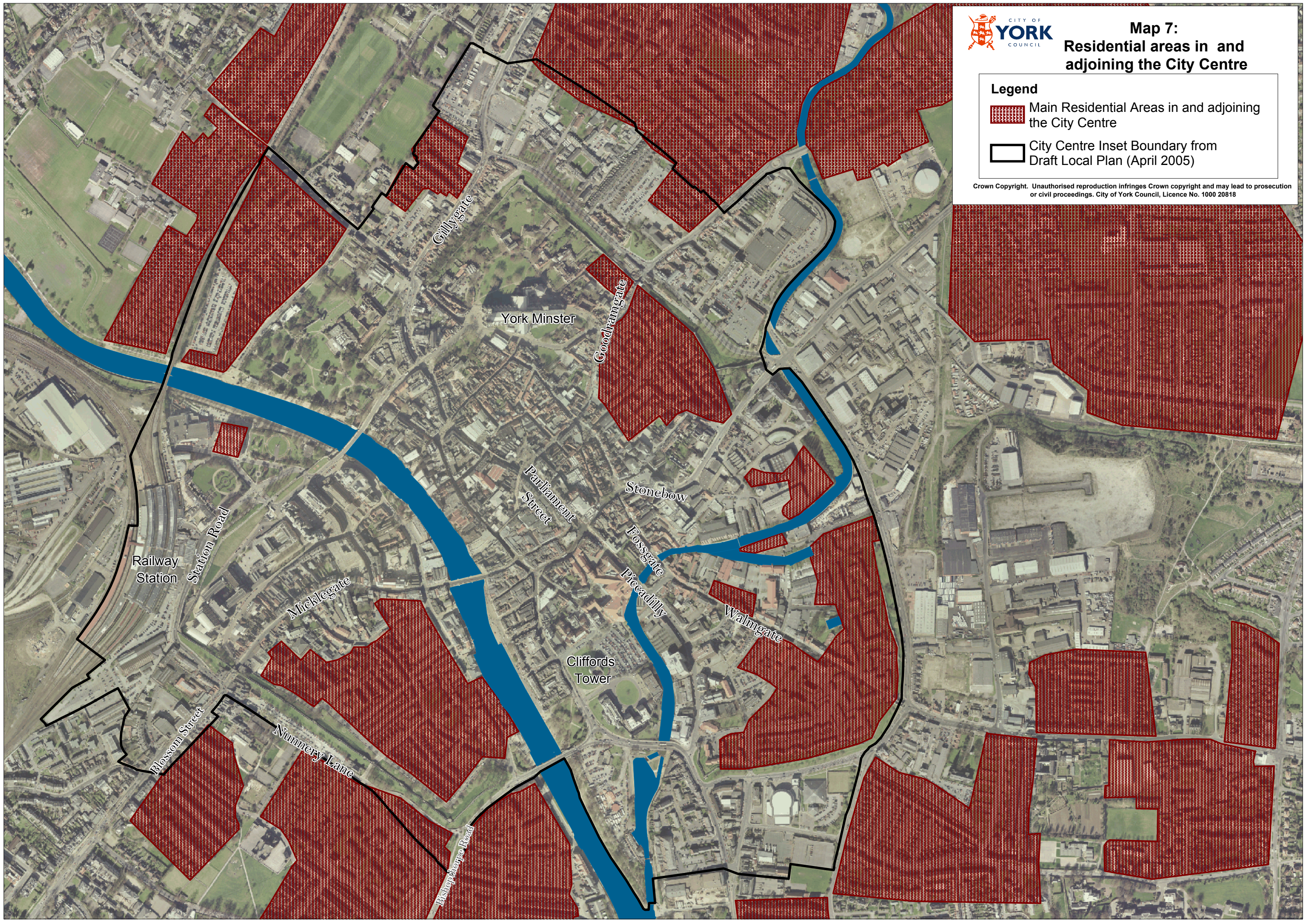


**Legend**

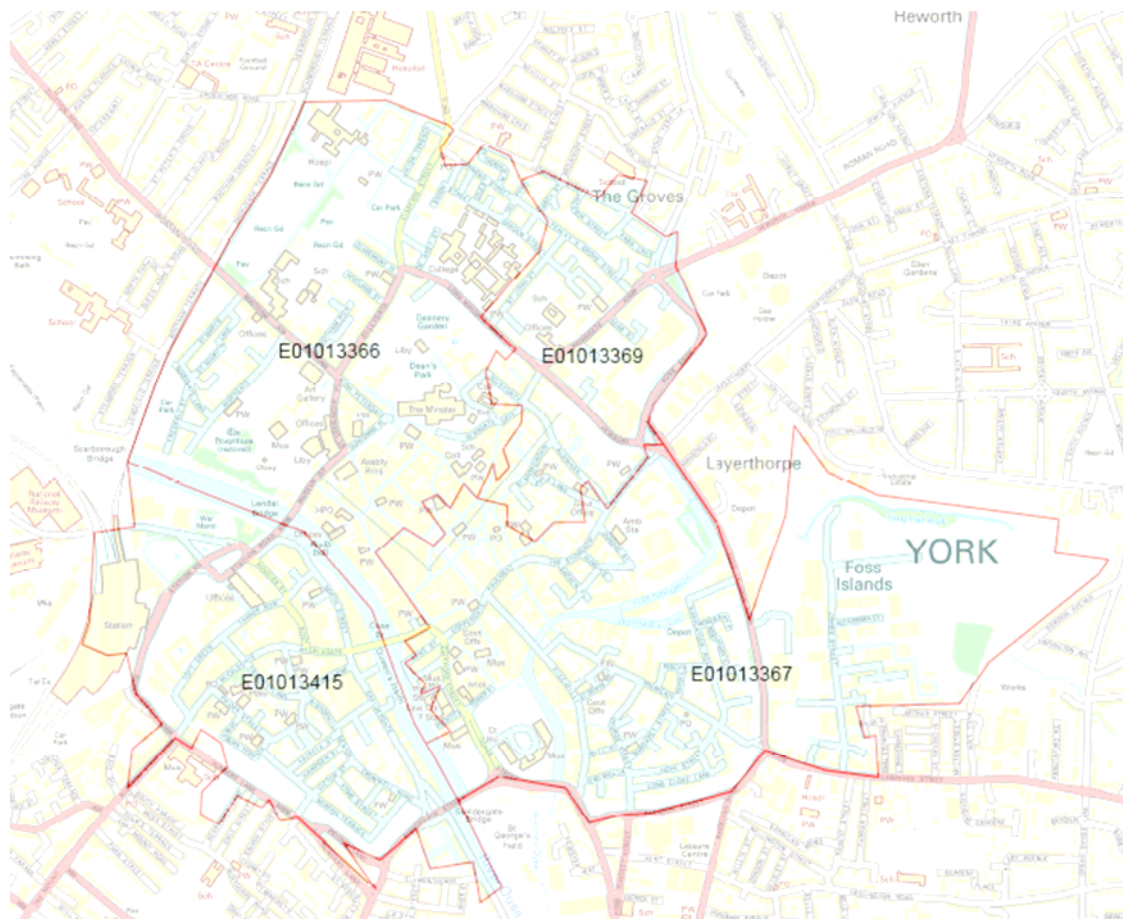
 Main Residential Areas in and adjoining the City Centre

 City Centre Inset Boundary from Draft Local Plan (April 2005)

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**Map 8: City centre Lower Level Super Output areas**

- The site of Clifford's Tower in the city centre is significant to the Jewish community.
- Most Sikh community activities and regular prayer take place at York St John University and the nearest Sikh community centres are in Leeds.

#### 8.11 Health and social well being

- Overall there is a shortfall of open space in the city centre<sup>27</sup>.
- The city centre is lacking in provision of recreation open space for children and teenagers. People located in the North of the city centre have limited access to a children's play area and have a lack of amenity open space.
- There is a deficiency of allotments in the city centre, specifically in Guildhall ward where there is high density housing and a lack of garden space.
- By 2029 deficiency of natural and semi natural open spaces will increase. Residents close to the northern edge of the city centre have very poor access to natural or semi natural open space.
- There is a lack of outdoor sports facilities in the city centre and by 2029 the deficiency is expected to be greater.



Bowling Green, Marygate

#### 8.12 Disability and accessibility (Figures relate to the York authority area)

- Approximately 30.5% of households include at least 1 disabled person.
- Shopmobility York is a scheme run by a Board of Trustees that lends wheelchairs and scooters to people with limited mobility who are using the city centre.
- The city centre access guide contains maps of wheelchair accessible routes in the city centre, information on disabled parking and also the locations of talking signs.

#### 8.13 Safety and crime (figures relate to the York authority area)

- In 2006/07 53% of residents felt York was a safe place to live in general.
- However, over half the people living in York are concerned that anti-social and rowdy behaviour, vandalism, graffiti and drug use are a big problem.

**Question 26:** Do you think this is an accurate description of city centre community life?

If not, what elements should be added/removed to 'paint a better picture' of the city centre'?

### **Key Theme 3: Issues and options**

#### Issue: Community services and facilities

8.14 As more people come to live in the city centre, more support services will be needed, for example healthcare, local food stores, schools, leisure and sports facilities and open space.

<sup>27</sup> Draft CYC Open space, Sport and Recreation Study (2007)



8.15 PPG17<sup>28</sup> states that the Government's objectives for open space, sport and recreation include supporting an urban renaissance and promoting social inclusion. The SHMA shows that city centre residents have the most difficulties in accessing leisure facilities. The Council's draft Open Space and Sport Study (December 2007) identifies a deficiency in the city centre of facilities for children and young people, allotments, natural and semi natural open space and outdoor sports facilities. People located in the North of the city centre have limited access to children's play areas and experience a lack of amenity open space and natural or semi natural open space. New facilities would need to cater for a range of age groups and be accessible to all. Provision would ideally be provided in or close to the city centre to serve residential communities and the many people who work in, or visit the centre.



**Children's Play Area next to the City Walls**

8.16 Where there is a proven need for any type of community, sport, leisure or recreational facility there is the opportunity to consider incorporating them into development sites as they come forward over the longer term. Such facilities can be comprehensively planned over the AAP lifetime and can be provided on site as part of all new residential, employment, retail, leisure and mixed use developments, or funded through development contributions. An audit of existing facilities in the city centre may

be needed for the next stage of this process.

8.17 The AAP can identify and plan for facilities the city centre currently lacks. Facilities which meet the needs of specific people and groups, for instance, provision for disabled people to fully participate in the city centre is at present limited. In some cases, existing facilities can be adapted to increase their benefits for all. For example, green spaces are a much valued asset which could incorporate changes such as the addition of a sensory garden or children's play facilities.

8.18 Accessibility requirements of disabled and elderly people using the city centre can be addressed in the AAP by ensuring new developments and enhancements to existing spaces and facilities, and routes within, through and surrounding the city centre are accessible to all. Improvements to the city's pedestrian and cycle network will also be delivered throughout LTP2 to improve local accessibility, particularly for short journeys to local facilities.

8.19 Working closely with representatives of disabled people, the Council will assess barriers to physical accessibility and reduce them where possible. The council's 'City Centre Access: A Guide for Disabled People' produced a plan by disabled people, based on their own experiences of getting around the city centre using wheelchairs or electric scooters. The guide contains grading of routes from 'good' to 'extremely difficult' and takes into account pavement width, pavement surfaces, availability of dropped kerbs, gradient and camber, bollards and pavement furniture. Key Theme 2 of this plan looks at issues relating to the public realm and specifically improving the pedestrian flow around the city centre and decluttering public space. Options put forward to address these issues will

<sup>28</sup> Planning for open space, sport and recreation (2002)

consider the accessibility requirements of all users.

**Question 27: Should there be more community services and facilities in the city centre?**

OPTION 1: Type of service or facilities needed, for example;

- local food stores.
- health and care facilities.
- recreational and sports facilities as identified in the Open Space and Sport Study.
- other services or facilities, please state?

OPTION 2: To let the market decide if community services and facilities are viable.

.....

**Question 28: How can we ensure that city centre facilities and services are accessible to all members of the community**

OPTION 1: By adapting existing services and facilities to improve accessibility for all needs.

OPTION 2: By providing facilities targeted at specific groups (e.g. elderly people, teenagers, children, disabled people, other groups) where a specific need exists, please state which?

.....

**Question 29: Where and how should these services and facilities be provide to meet local needs?**

OPTION 1: Provided on site as part of all new developments, regardless of location, that are likely to create additional demand for community services and facilities.

OPTION 2: Use Section 106 developer contributions from developments to comprehensively plan the provision of services and facilities off site in areas where there is a proven need.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: Cultural activity**

8.20 York city centre offers much to enjoy, including world class heritage and quality cultural attractions, a growing festival and events calendar, and a constantly developing choice of shops, cafés and restaurants. All this is underpinned by one of Europe's finest heritage environments.

8.21 The Community Strategy theme 'York – A City of Culture' states "to celebrate uniqueness and our diversity, we will promote a culture that helps build a confident and creative community, welcomes and inspires resident and visitor alike, and encourages quality opportunities for fun and fulfilment open to all". Recent ideas by the York @ Large Partnership on updating the aims of 'A City of Culture' include paying greater attention to the physical experience of the city, it's green spaces, squares and streets. The experience of York's public realm is a key driver of cultural activity, the economy, quality of life and much more.

8.22 Opportunities to enhance cultural activity in the city centre should be realised in a variety of different ways. The 'City Spaces' and 'Cultural Quarter' Opportunity Areas (section 9) will look at ways to enhance public spaces and routes around the city centre to encourage greater activity by day and after dark and help people to access and appreciate the quality of rich culture on offer. It is also important to promote greater participation in cultural activities through the provision of suitable cultural facilities and venues.

8.23 Local traditions such as arts, foods, and independent shops contribute to York's rich cultural offer.



Recognition of, and provision for, cultural entrepreneurs will improve the vitality of the city and draw on York's own creative talents. Proposals to enhance pedestrian environments provide opportunities to engage the talents of local people in the design and redesign of public space.

8.24 York has an important role as an ecclesiastical centre. A great number of religious buildings enhance the city centre both culturally and architecturally. Places of worship hold great significance for the many people who attend them and for many years have been a source of interest for visitors to the city.

8.25 Places of worship that have previously become redundant have been converted to a range of different uses such as art exhibition space, community centres, offices and a pub. The AAP could contain a policy that, where appropriate, retains redundant places of worship in a community use. Places of worship could be retained as D1 uses (non-residential institutions) including health centres, day nurseries, museums, libraries, art galleries and training centres. There are examples of this happening already such as at York St. Mary's and the St Sampson's Social Centre for over 60s.



**York St Mary's is now a venue for art exhibitions**

**Question 30: How should the AAP provide opportunities for the city's cultural and social scenes to be developed?**

OPTION 1: Develop new cultural facilities and venues within the city centre. Tell us what facilities and venues you would like to see developed?

OPTION 2: Develop local skills, traditions and produce within York's cultural attraction, and appoint local artistic talents in projects to enhance public spaces.

OPTION 3: Provide protection for retaining redundant places of worship for cultural and/or community uses.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: Evening activity**

8.26 A more inclusive evening economy will help to address some of the issues which currently prevent many people from enjoying the city centre on an evening. A greater diversity of evening entertainment should attract more people to participate in evening activities.

8.27 York benefits from tourism trade which stimulates the evening economy. This enables the provision of a wider range of facilities such as restaurants and bars than might otherwise be the case in a city of York's size. Research shows that amongst York residents there are high levels of use of cafes, pubs, bars and restaurants. In 2007 the Council's Talkabout questionnaire<sup>29</sup> found that the top three favourite evening

<sup>29</sup> York After Dark Appendix 5: Residents and the evening economy – CYC's TalkAbout Panel 2000-2006 and questionnaire 28 (June 2007) Evening Economy

activities were visiting restaurants, going to a pub or bar and going to the theatre. Research also found that support exists for developing a more continental café culture and more non-alcohol dependent activities such as outdoor music and theatre performances, outdoor cinema, street entertainment and evening festivals.

8.28 In recent years the evening and night-time economies in UK towns and cities have been the subject of much debate as a result of the 2003 Licensing Act and national media coverage of growing concerns over binge drinking. The extreme consequences forecast by many before the 2003 Act have not materialised, and the deregulation of licensing laws has enabled Local Authorities to take greater responsibility for dealing with the problems and opportunities facing the evening economy in their local area.

**Issue: Encouraging a diversity of things to do**

8.29 The Community Strategy theme 'York – A City of Culture' aims for a culture that is more 'diverse, inclusive and accessible'.

8.30 The Civic Trust<sup>30</sup> believe that market forces have not encouraged diversity, but instead, have created a uniformity of provision whereby nightlife is dominated by large national and multi-national corporate brands and chain venues. This makes it difficult for independent and local operators of nightlife to find suitable premises, often meaning more diverse nightlife venues struggle to gain a foothold.

8.31 In recent years licensed premises in York city centre have opened even later whilst non-licensed attractions such as museums and galleries are closed during the evening. York lacks alternatives to

traditional evening activities. Popular exceptions to this include ghost walks and brewery tours, as well as live music in pubs, religious buildings and the National Centre for Early Music. Whether at entertainment venues or performed outdoors, live music and other cultural events have great potential for encouraging wider participation in the evening economy.



**Evening entertainment during 'Illuminating York'**

8.32 It is important that York is positive about the value of more experimental and diverse activities. The city has received recognition for several projects aimed at promoting diversity and encouraging family friendly evening activities. 'Illuminating York' in 2007 combined outdoor cinema, artwork exhibitions in shop windows, site-specific performances and light and sound installations. The annual event hosted throughout the city centre during October and November was well received by residents and visitors alike. Survey responses were positive about the quality, variety and number of activities at the festival<sup>31</sup>.

8.33 'Illuminating York' takes inspiration from historic cities on the continent where city streets at night are occupied not only by people who have been drinking but by people of a variety of ages who come out to socialise in cafés, watch a play or concert, eat out with the whole family, or enjoy walking in a safe night-time environment.

<sup>30</sup> The Civic Trust, NightVision, Town Centres for All (2006)

<sup>31</sup> Illuminating York Evaluation Report, Economic Development Unit, CYC





**Illuminating York: Crowds at the Minster light show**

**Question 31: How can we encourage greater diversity in York's evening economy, and what level of intervention is appropriate? Tell us which option(s) if any, you agree with in principle...**

**OPTION 1:** Maximise the potential of what we already have such as museums, galleries and libraries, which could open later into the evenings.

**OPTION 2:** Pursue greater diversity through new development which promotes evening activity. What types of facilities are we currently lacking?

**OPTION 3:** Pursue greater diversity through restricting the growth of alcohol dependent activities, specifically Planning Use Class A4 drinking establishments.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

**Issue: Ambience and perceptions**

8.34 General consensus is that city centres at night are not very welcoming for some people, specifically children and the elderly<sup>32</sup>. Friday and Saturday evenings can be associated with rowdy anti-social

<sup>32</sup> Safer York Partnership TalkAbout Survey

behaviour and this perception is a serious threat to efforts to attract more people to visit the city centre in the evening.

8.35 Research findings into current perceptions of York in the evening<sup>33</sup> show that there is support for promoting more café culture. Continental-style eating and drinking, including alfresco dining in the evenings, is regarded as a popular activity elsewhere. More outdoor seating for cafes, bars and restaurants has benefits in terms of improving levels of informal surveillance. A more continental approach can be linked with proposals to encourage a more vibrant early evening economy and the possibility of creating evening footstreets, as discussed in Key Theme 1.



**Cafe culture**

8.36 Improved lighting can increase the number of people out on foot at night, which in turn increases the level of informal surveillance which acts as a strong crime deterrent. Experience from other cities supports the view that improved public lighting reduces the fear of crime, and Home Office research shows that improved lighting is an effective crime deterrent. People taking part in active recreation such as evening walks, jogging and cycling would benefit from improved lighting. Recent lighting schemes have received a positive reaction and

<sup>33</sup> York After Dark Appendix 7: Focus Groups with Visitors and Residents of York, York Tourism Board (2006)

temporary lighting installations as part of 'Illuminating York' are considered popular attractions.

**Question 32: How can we help to improve the ambience and perception of the city centre in the evening? Tell us which options, if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION 1: Work with the relevant licensing decision makers to promote greater adoption of café culture by encouraging more outdoor seating for café bars and restaurants.

OPTION 2: Improve the amenity value of the city centre by expanding lighting schemes so that a wider area is well lit after dark.

In which areas would lighting be most beneficial ?

OPTION 3: Do nothing, there is no need to intervene and change the ambience or current perceptions of the city centre in the evenings.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

### **Issue: Night-time transport**

8.37 It is important that people visiting the city centre in the evening are given the opportunity to use safe and sustainable transport. Most of the year the latest park and ride bus leaves the city centre around 8pm and the latest bus service in the evening is around 11.30pm. Research<sup>34</sup> shows that people leaving the city centre later in the evening are less likely to use public transport and more likely to walk or hire a taxi home. This evidence suggests there is a lack of safe, affordable public transport for people travelling home late at night.

<sup>34</sup> YAD Appendix 5: Residents and the evening economy – CYC's TalkAbout Panel 2000-2006 and questionnaire 28 (June 2007) Evening Economy

8.38 A popular mode of transport at night is to hire a taxi from one of the city centre ranks. Other cities have introduced schemes to provide a managed area for taxis in a safe pedestrian environment to ensure people don't risk hiring unlicensed taxis. Communities and Local Government publication 'How to manage town centres' endorses schemes whereby taxi marshals are employed and street closures are enforced to allow vehicular access to licensed taxis only. The Local Transport Plan 2006-11 (Annex G *Taxi Strategy*) endorses marshalling schemes across the city and is working towards providing taxi rank shelters where appropriate. In the future there may also be an opportunity to provide similar facilities as part of the proposed new transport interchange.

**Question 33: Are there opportunities to provide a safer and more flexible choice of night-time transport? Tell us which options, if any, you agree with in principle...**

OPTION 1: Park and ride schemes should operate later into the evening (e.g. until 11.30pm) specifically to cover times when people are leaving evening entertainment venues such as the theatre, opera house and concerts.

OPTION 2: Work with transport providers to extend their services into the evening.

OPTION 3: Work with stakeholders to facilitate improved facilities at city centre taxi ranks in the evenings and at night.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*



## Housing

8.39 The emerging LDF Core Strategy will set out housing allocations for York as a whole and explain issues and options for providing more affordable housing within mixed and balanced communities. In this Plan we are interested to know if there should be a separate policy stance for the city centre. We want to know what type of housing should be built in the city centre and for who.



**Terraced housing, Hampden Street**

### **Issue: Housing types**

8.40 The city centre should be able to provide for all sectors of society and the AAP needs to plan for this to develop a mixed and balanced society.

8.41 'City Living' has been coined as a phrase to describe new ways of living in the country's city centres. It has led to massive economic recovery and investment in a number of cities, but what does it mean for York's city centre?

8.42 Young and single people live in flats and terraced housing in the centre. They are attracted by the proximity to local attractions. Living in the city allows them to walk to work, shops, bars and cafes. There is little conflict with the evening economy – in fact it is one of the attractions. It is a short-term experience for most people – more a way of living than a place to live.

8.43 Older people can also find the idea of city living attractive due to the convenient access to local services, good transport links and leisure/cultural. Barriers to this, such as noise or fear of crime, can be overcome with careful thought about design.



**Modern flats in the city centre, Piccadilly Plaza**

8.44 The 'look' of the city centre is changing as old buildings become converted and new buildings fill previously derelict areas. For some people the feeling is that the city centre is becoming too cramped, and that buildings are getting higher and higher. At the same time the city centre has traditionally accommodated some very tall buildings next to narrow streets, which includes housing as well as commercial uses.



**City living in York is not just confined to new flats and apartments**

8.45 The types of homes in the city centre have changed as investors and developers look to make the most effective use of the small parcels of land left to develop. Densities have increased, room sizes have got smaller, and flats/apartments have been built rather than houses. At the same time it represents a substantial supply of housing, both market and affordable, which inevitably relieves pressure for new build elsewhere in the city.

8.46 The Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation has already asked who we should be providing housing for, based on the results of the 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment. We are keen in this Plan

to know which housing types you think we should be trying to provide for within the city centre.

**Issue: Equality and Access to Housing**

8.47 Guildhall is the fourth most deprived in York and within the 13% most deprived in the country based on income, employment, health deprivation, education and skills, crime and living environment.

8.48 The housing stock reveals wide differences in quality and suitability, for example there is a large Council house stock in the Walmgate/ Navigation Road area, newer private housing in Aldwark, and modern flats and apartments along Skeldergate and under construction at Hungate. Residential development is often at a premium price due to competing land prices and the desire to live in the city centre.



**Converted apartments overlooking the Ouse, Skeldergate**

8.49 Affordable housing for local people is required within new housing development in York, but the provision secured can be affected by high costs of remediation, flood mitigation, archaeological works and construction. These costs are especially high in the city centre.

8.50 The LDF Core Strategy Issues and Options asked questions about affordable housing generally in York. We are keen in this Plan to know whether you think there should be specific consideration for the city centre due to its relative deprivation and high house prices.

8.51 Should there, for example, be lower site size thresholds at which

affordable housing should be sought, and should there be an area based programme of housing renewal ?

**Question 34: For who should new housing in the city centre be designed for... single people, families, young people, older people ? Tell us which option(s), if any, you agree with...**

OPTION 1: New housing in the city centre should be built for a wide range of different people.

OPTION 2: Housing to suit families and older people should be prioritised.

OPTION 3: New housing should continue to be about modern city living.

OPTION 4: New housing should especially cater for local people on low incomes.

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

8.52 Clearly schemes would still need to be viable but this is a potential way of delivering more affordable homes and diversifying the city centre population. Other methods could also be employed to secure affordable homes, for example by bringing empty properties back into use or living above the shops, where resources allow this.



**Question 35: How should affordable housing be delivered in the city centre?**

OPTION 1: By reducing the affordable housing threshold even further than currently applied in York which is 15 units/0.3ha for city centre schemes.

OPTION 2: By sticking to the existing threshold but by targeting different methods i.e. use of empty properties perhaps with the use of off site contributions.

OPTION 3: There should be no variation from the Core Strategy policy for delivering affordable housing in the city centre.

OPTION 4: Consider specific areas for housing renewal which would provide better quality and more appropriate housing provision. (Please list areas you think should be prioritised).

*The above options are not exhaustive, if you feel there are additional options that need to be considered please submit these with your reasons in the any other comments section of the response form.*

## 9 The Opportunity Areas

9.1 The AAP will identify areas within the city centre that are considered to have potential to address the issues outlined in this report. The AAP will include policies to set the parameters for development and details of who is responsible for implementing the projects, the timetable and sources of funding. It will provide a strategic context and framework for detailed plans, projects and programmes.

9.2 To start the debate on which areas should be identified as Opportunity Areas, this document includes those that the Council consider have the potential to go along way towards delivering the visions for the city centre. The key criteria is the ability of these areas to address the issues identified in the Key Themes: Economic Vitality; Historic Environment and Community Life.

9.3 It is important to emphasise that these Opportunity Areas have been identified because there is either a specific need or good opportunities in the area for development which will address the issues outlined in the Key Themes. However, the policies and proposals within the AAP will apply throughout the city centre and not solely in the Opportunity Areas.

9.4 Some of the proposed actions are based on existing projects, research or partnership working arrangements. The AAP will build on these and use existing and newly formed partnerships in order to identify new opportunities to improve the city centre. Once adopted the AAP will provide a strong strategic framework for attracting funding and making funding bids.

**The five proposed Opportunity Areas are:**

- **Castle Piccadilly**
- **The Cultural Quarter**
- **Gateway Streets**
- **City Spaces**
- **Riversides**

**Question 36:** Do you agree that these areas should be a priority for action and, if not, why?

**Question 37:** Are there any other areas in the city centre you think should be a priority for action, and why?

9.5 The Council will fully consider responses to this consultation and intends to carry out detailed feasibility work before presenting the Preferred Options at the next stage. For this 'Issues and Options' stage we would like to establish if we have identified the right issues for Opportunity Areas. Detailed proposals and schemes will be worked up for the Preferred Options stage and be subject to further consultation.



## Castle Piccadilly

9.6 The Castle Piccadilly area includes buildings of exceptional historical and architectural quality, for example Clifford's Tower, the Castle Museum and the Crown Court building. However, there are also buildings and land uses here that detract from the quality of the area and setting of these buildings, for example the White Swan Hotel and empty properties along Piccadilly and Castle car park.



9.7 The Council's vision, as set out in the approved Planning Brief (2006) promotes the sustainable regeneration of Castle Piccadilly. It aims to develop the positive attributes of the existing area by enhancing the unique setting of these buildings whilst removing elements which currently devalue the area.

9.8 There are opportunities to embrace a quality mixed use development which would add to the quality and offer of retailing within the centre of York. The Retail Study<sup>35</sup> concludes that this is the key development opportunity site in York city centre, which has sufficient space to deliver new modern retail units. The retail element of this mixed use development is the catalyst to regenerating this area.

9.9 New public open space can be created around the Eye of York and Clifford's Tower to enhance the Historic Environment and appearance of the area and assist in the public's understanding of the Castle Precinct.

9.10 The area provides the opportunity to maximise the potential of the River Foss in terms of its contribution to the visual amenity of the area and its value as a wildlife corridor.

9.11 The Castle Piccadilly Opportunity Area has great potential for providing substantial quality civic and open space and ecological improvements and conservation of the River Foss, it can contribute to the future and viability of the city and improve connections with other areas of change such as Hungate and Walmgate.

9.12 At present the area is poorly integrated with the city centre and the River Foss separates the Castle and Piccadilly areas. The integration of Castle Piccadilly into the character of adjoining areas is critical for drawing people into this part of the city.

See Map 9: Castle Piccadilly Opportunity Area overleaf

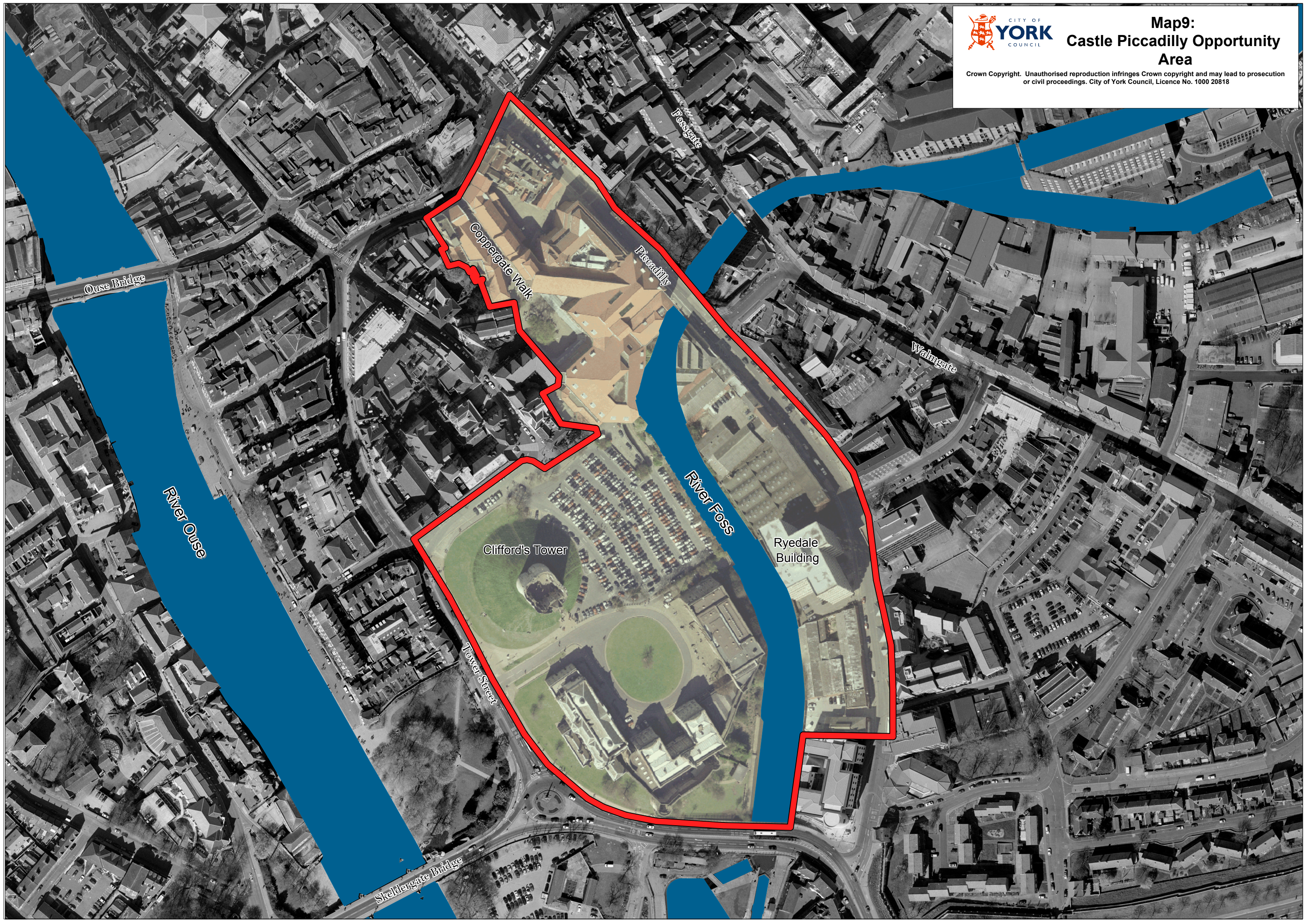
<sup>36</sup> Draft Retail Study by GVA Grimley 2008





# Map9: Castle Piccadilly Opportunity Area

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River Foss between Piccadilly & Castle area



Vacant White Swan Hotel



Piccadilly



View of Castle car park from Clifford's Tower

9.13 Table 1: below shows the issues, as identified in the Key Themes, that can be addressed through the Castle Piccadilly Opportunity Area.

Key Theme	Issue
Economic Vitality	New retail development; Evening economy; Existing office space; New office development; Improving York's visitor experience and exceeding expectations; Attracting overnight, higher value visitors; Protecting the existing shopping environment; Pedestrian and cycle routes into the city centre;
Historic Environment	Managing the historic environment; Designing in the city centre; Improving pedestrian routes around the city centre; Improving the appearance and de-cluttering public spaces; Green spaces and riversides; Increasing opportunities for greening the city centre;
Community Life	Community services and facilities; Cultural activity; Evening activity; Housing;
<b>Question 38:</b> Are the issues identified here correct? <b>Question 39:</b> Are there other issues to address in this Opportunity Area?	

## Cultural Quarter

9.14 The Cultural Quarter is an existing project looking at an area between the National Railway Museum and York Minster. It is intended to provide a focus for enhancements to the public realm along a network of route ways from the NRM and Station area to the Minster, across the Ouse through Museum Gardens and Exhibition Square. It will also develop opportunities to open up the cultural attractions within this area such as the Yorkshire Museum, St Mary's Abbey ruins and the City Art Gallery, so that residents and visitors can fully access and appreciate the quality of this area of rich cultural and historic heritage.

9.15 In April 2008 the Council's Scrutiny Management Committee agreed to a six month scrutiny review involving external partners into The Cultural Quarter. This aims to explore the relationship between the different areas within the quarter and consider pedestrian and vehicular movement, design, open spaces, the potential for a river crossing, performance areas, lighting, landscaping, cultural production, promotion and public art. The finding from this review will provide evidence for the AAP Preferred Options document and Cultural Quarter Opportunity Area.

9.16 The Cultural Quarter project and Opportunity Area will also look at the critical physical linkages between the city centre and York Northwest AAP site.

9.17 Map 10: Cultural Quarter Opportunity Area, overleaf, shows the Cultural Quarter area. On the map the potential for an attractive and prominent corridor is clear to see. However, on the ground, the attractions can appear remote from one another and poorly connected. Links between attractions are difficult to interpret and there is no overall sense of connectivity. There is a perception that the NRM and the Minster are a significant distance apart - whereas in reality they are only a short walk apart. The ambition of the project is to create a better sense of place and help people to find their way through the area along identifiable routes, and enhance their interpretation and appreciation of the attractions along the way.



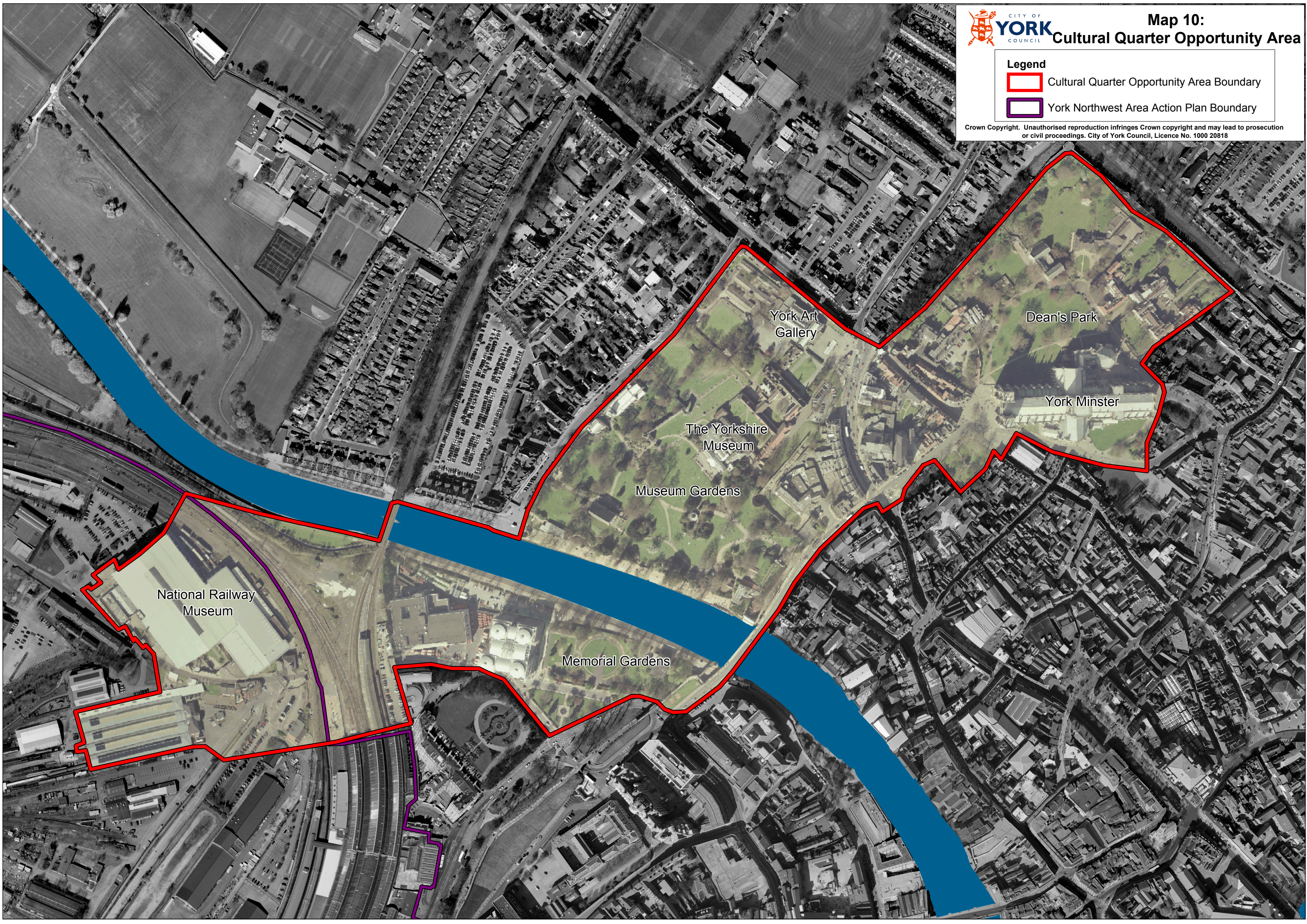
**Marble Arch, main pedestrian route connecting the NRM with the city centre**



**View towards the NRM from the South bank of the River Ouse**

9.18 A number of opportunities exist within the area for small-scale developments to enhance existing attractions and to provide new space for cultural activities.









**Pedestrian route from City Art Gallery to the Yorkshire Museum and Gardens**



**Area between Memorial Gardens and station**

9.19 Table 2: below shows the issues, as identified in the Key Themes, that can be addressed through the Cultural Quarter Opportunity Area.

Key Theme	Issue
Economic Vitality	Evening economy; Improving York's visitor experience and exceeding expectations; Attracting overnight, higher value visitors; Pedestrian and cycle routes into the city centre
Historic Environment	Managing the historic environment; Designing in the city centre; Improving pedestrian routes around the city centre; Improving the appearance and de-cluttering public spaces; Footstreets; Green spaces and riversides; Increasing opportunities for greening the city centre;
Community Life	Community services and facilities; Cultural activity; Evening activity;
<b>Question 40:</b> Are the issues identified here correct? <b>Question 41:</b> Are there other issues to address in this Opportunity Area?	



## Gateway Streets



9.20 The term Gateway Streets refers to routes in and out of the main shopping areas of the city centre, or central pedestrianised area ('footstreets'). This includes Bootham; Gillygate; Goodramgate; Stonebow and Peasholme Green; Fossgate and Walmgate; Piccadilly; and Micklegate.






9.21 The Council is concerned that, whilst businesses in the main shopping areas of the city are performing well, some of the peripheral streets are not benefiting from this prosperity. Some streets are appearing under used and run down as a result. By identifying Gateway Streets as Opportunity Areas, the AAP will consider how best to encourage people to explore these peripheral areas and how best to ensure they can play a key economic and cultural role in an attractive physical setting. The streets fulfil an important function as routes which carry people in and out of the city centre and this provides an opportunity to enhance their activity and prosperity.

9.22 The AAP will consider the best approach to enhancing a culture of vibrancy and prosperity in these streets. At present there are a number of issues that could be acting as a barrier to them fulfilling their potential. Issues facing one or more of the Gateway Streets include traffic congestion, lack of promotion and the inability to attract people into them, incompatibility between opening hours and peak times for footfall, vacancy rates and safety perceptions.

9.23 However, it is strongly felt that there is a great deal of individual character and interest as well as opportunities in the Gateway Streets, and that the right approach can deliver many benefits to businesses, residents and visitors. Opportunities exist to increase the diversity of evening activities, including evening shopping and café culture. Gateway Streets offer a distinctive alternative to the main shopping areas through an array of independent retailers, restaurants and bars unique to York.

**Table 3: Gateway Streets**

Gateway Street	Current condition	Description
Gillygate		Gillygate has a large number of independent shops, cafes and restaurants and is a popular place when shopping for unusual goods. The street is a key route from the city centre to the District Hospital and York St John University. The length of Gillygate has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and at times suffers from heavy congestion.
Goodramgate		Between Church Street and the corner of Deangate and College Street, Goodramgate is a pedestrian zone between 11am and 4pm. However, outside this time it can become very busy with pedestrians, cars and lorries - all negotiating a narrow streetscape. There is a mixture of independent and multiple retailers on the street and a number of charity shops. A variety of bars and restaurants contribute to a vibrant evening economy.

Stonebow/ Peasholme Green		Stonebow and Peasholme Green link the central area with Layerthorpe and Foss Island Road on the eastern edge of the city centre. Apart from the Black Swan building there is very little else in terms of architectural interest at present. Over the next 3 years the Hungate redevelopment will be populated and the street will become an important link with the existing centre. The street is a busy bus route and private traffic is restricted from entering Pavement. Stonebow house contains a mix of uses at ground floor including a nightclub and café. The area provides a large proportion of city centre car parking spaces.
Fossgate		Fossgate is a very popular destination for restaurant goers. Shops on Fossgate have had varied success and a number of units have been vacated recently. Traders have previously called for the street to be pedestrianised. Large vehicles parked on the street often cause traffic problems. Fossgate has potential to be a footstreet both during the day and in the evening.
Walmgate		Until the creation of Piccadilly in the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century, Walmgate was the main access to the city from the east. Retail uses have become disaggregated and interspersed with office and residential buildings. The street is very quiet and shopping is vulnerable to further decline. Walmgate remains important to the surrounding residential communities in the George Street and Navigation Road areas. St Margaret's Church is now home to the National Centre for Early Music.
Piccadilly		Piccadilly connects Parliament Street with the inner ring road at Tower Street. The street runs parallel with the River Foss, crossing the river at Merchant Gate. At the southern end of Piccadilly a modern hotel development forms a gateway to the street opposite the Fishergate Tower. Developments along the street are of differing architectural style and quality. There is scope to enhance the pedestrian environment linked to major retail led regeneration. There may be scope for change on both the east and west sides of the street, particularly to the west where the relationship with the Foss and impact on the Castle Piccadilly Opportunity Area needs to be considered.
Micklegate		Between Micklegate Bar and George Hudson Street, Micklegate has a richness of architecture emphasised by the slope and curve of the street. It is quiet, almost hidden, during the day despite a variety of independent shops, restaurants and pubs. There is activity in the evening, especially during the weekend, when many people join the traditional 'Micklegate Run' of pubs and bars. Streets off Micklegate have experienced an increase in residential conversions and infill schemes in recent times and the street remains important to the Bishophill community.



Bootham		Bootham has a wide carriageway with a cobbled margin into which is set an avenue of mature trees with intermittent car parking. The street is congested and the section of road towards Bootham Bar at the junction with Gillygate has been designated as an AQMA. The streets around Bootham are mainly residential and the area has a number of hotels and guesthouses. Marygate connects Bootham with Museum Gardens and the Ouse riverside.
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9.24 Table 4 below shows the issues, as identified in the Key Themes, that can be addressed through the Gateway Streets Opportunity Area.

Key Theme	Issue
Economic Vitality	Evening economy; Improving York's visitor experience and exceeding expectations; Protecting the existing shopping environment; New retail development; Managing uses; Pedestrian and cycle routes into the city centre; Buses; Congested Road Network
Historic Environment	Managing the historic environment; Designing in the city centre; Improving pedestrian routes around the city centre; Footstreets; Increasing opportunities for greening the city centre;
Community Life	Community services and facilities; Cultural activity; Evening activity;
<b>Question 42:</b> Are the issues identified here correct? <b>Question 43:</b> Are there other issues to address in this Opportunity Area?	

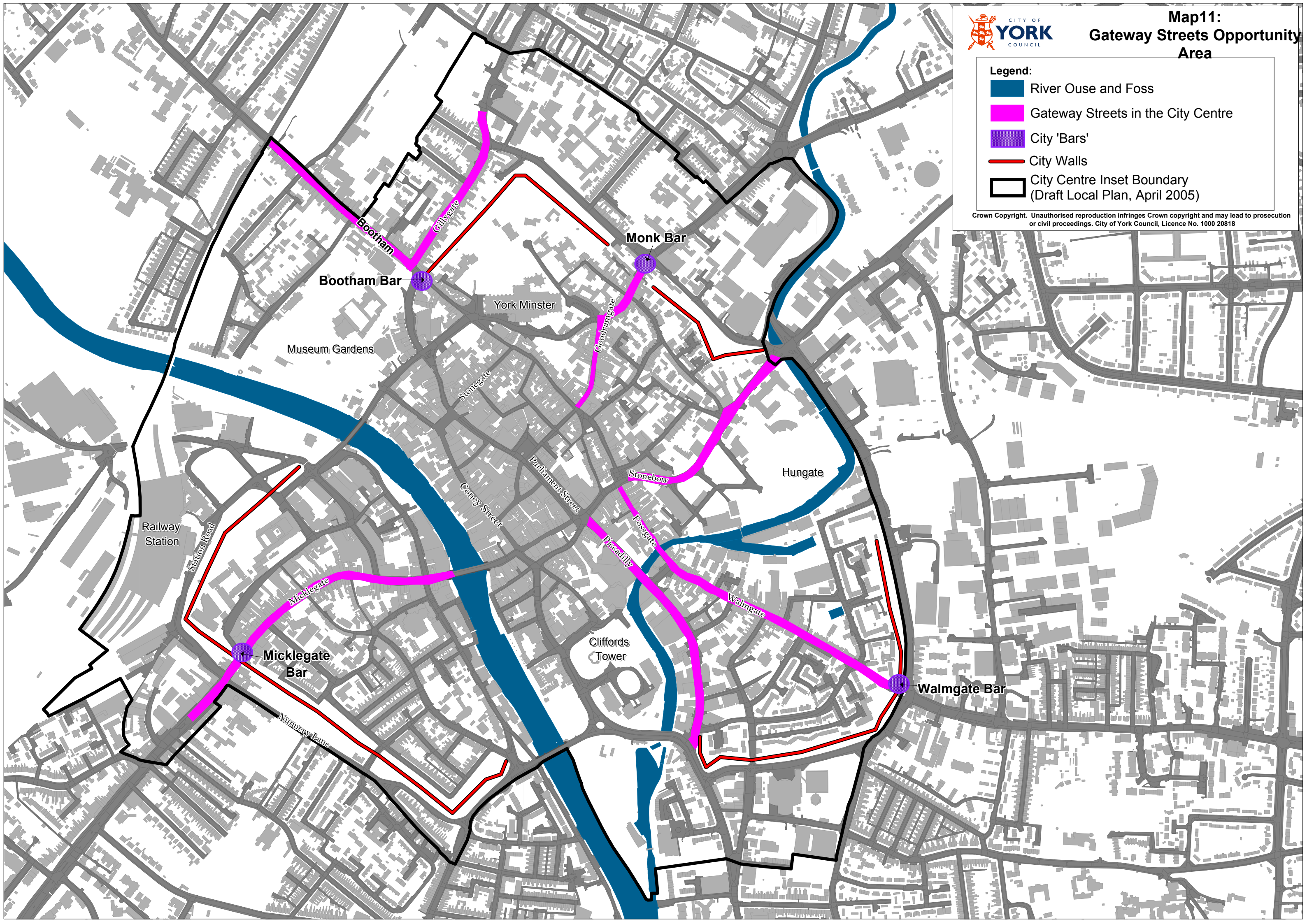
See Map 11: Gateway Streets Opportunity Area overleaf



**Legend:**

-  River Ouse and Foss
-  Gateway Streets in the City Centre
-  City 'Bars'
-  City Walls
-  City Centre Inset Boundary  
(Draft Local Plan, April 2005)

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## City Spaces

9.25 The 'City Spaces' in York centre incorporate a diverse range of public squares such as St Sampson's Square and St Helen's Square and 'snickleways' which link them and their connecting streets. This Opportunity Area seeks to enhance these city spaces:

- to provide an environment that reinforces the distinct identity of each space;
- to create a network of recognisable routes around the city centre to enhance the visitor experience using distinct signage, lighting, surface materials etc to define key tourist routes, the 'retail circuit' and to distinguish between areas of activity and quieter, residential areas;
- to provide a focus for activity with flexible, usable space for performance, events and festivals as well as creating quiet, contemplative places;
- to increase footfall in less well known shopping areas of the city;
- to enhance the setting for historic buildings;
- to provide better interpretation of the historic environment;
- to ensure a consistently high quality in lighting and seating;
- to provide opportunities for public art;
- to improve accessibility, security and sense of ownership of the spaces;
- to co-ordinate investment.







9.26 The AAP will explore ways to manage conflict of use in the public realm and de-clutter and redesign spaces to make them more accessible, attractive and easier to use. Good design can improve the public's enjoyment of these spaces as well as manage risk and ensure public safety without having to compromise pedestrian movement or the quality and flexibility of the space.

9.27 This Opportunity Area will consider all aspects of the public realm and aim to co-ordinate public and private investment. This would improve the quality and potential of individual spaces, whilst creating a much stronger overall sense of place.




See Map 12: City Spaces Opportunity Area following page 67.

**Table 5: Current Condition of City Spaces**

City Space	Current Condition	Description and Opportunities
Exhibition Square		A major urban space surrounded by listed buildings and a Scheduled Ancient Monument (the City Walls), which is not displayed to its best advantage. There is potential to better integrate the spaces on the perimeter of this area and help to improve the environment of Exhibition Square.
Duncombe Place		This key approach to the Minster is currently dominated by space for vehicular traffic. It has the potential to become a pedestrian boulevard. There are opportunities to make quiet spaces at the north and south end helping to create a higher quality approach and setting for York Minster and the War Memorial.

Minster Plaza		This space includes, Precentors Court, Minster Yard, Deangate and Dean's Park. The Minster Trust proposes to make several enhancements to improve the setting of York Minster to the west and south including an improved access ramp and better lighting. Subtle paving would allow free pedestrian movement and improve visual connectivity with surrounding streets.
Newgate		This space is looking tired and in need of improvement. It hosts a regular market as well vendors selling food and drink. It can be accessed from some of the busiest streets in York (The Shambles and Parliament Street). This space currently does not fulfil its true potential, the market is underperforming and the area can suffer from anti social behaviour after dark. This space has the potential to offer a wider range of uses.
St Helen's Square		The setting for the Mansion House and St Helen's Church at either end of the square. The square connects key streets such as Coney Street, Davygate and Lendal and is linked to the Minster by Stonegate. Issues include street furniture location, lack of information provision and facilities for street performances.
St Sampson's Square / Parliament Street		Linked spaces in the heart of the city centre. Parliament Street was created in the mid 19c driven through the medieval city fabric to create a street market. The space is well used for a number of events, exhibitions and performances. The fountain is poor quality and the public realm is looking tired (e.g. paving and street furniture). The area needs to be better co-ordinated for performances and events.
College Green		College Green showcases the historic buildings of the 15c St William's College and the Minster. This space is an ideal location for a peaceful haven within the city and would benefit from enhancements such as improved landscaping and more seating.
King's Square		An important space in terms of its human scale and location. It frames important views of the medieval cityscape and the Minster. The square is not harmonised with the surrounding buildings and has disabled access issues with raised levels, poor surfacing and unco-ordinated street paraphernalia.
St Mary's Square		An informal lively space with shops and the Jorvik Centre which changes from a pedestrian street (Coppergate Walk) to the larger scale of the enclosed Square with its mature horse-chestnut tree and St Mary's Church. May benefit from better co-ordination and upgrading.



Castle Precinct		A major urban space of immense architectural, historic and archaeological importance with Clifford's Tower and the Eye of York at its heart. It is currently subject to a planning brief and needs major enhancement measures to upgrade the public spaces around this important area.
Hungate (St John's Square and Friar's Quay)		St John's Square within the Hungate development will be the largest public square in York. It will be linked to a public piazza at Friars Quay on the bank of the River Foss and both spaces will be linked to the proposed community building. There will be spaces to eat, drink and watch live outdoor performances. The area will be innovatively lit giving a contemporary vibrant space.
Snickleways such as Straker's Passage.		The city centre has a series of alleys that connect key streets and spaces and form an important part of the pedestrian network and are intrinsic to the character of the Medieval core of the city. A number of these alleys are at present unwelcoming and would benefit from enhancement.



**Davygate**



**Minster West end**






**Exhibition Square as existing**



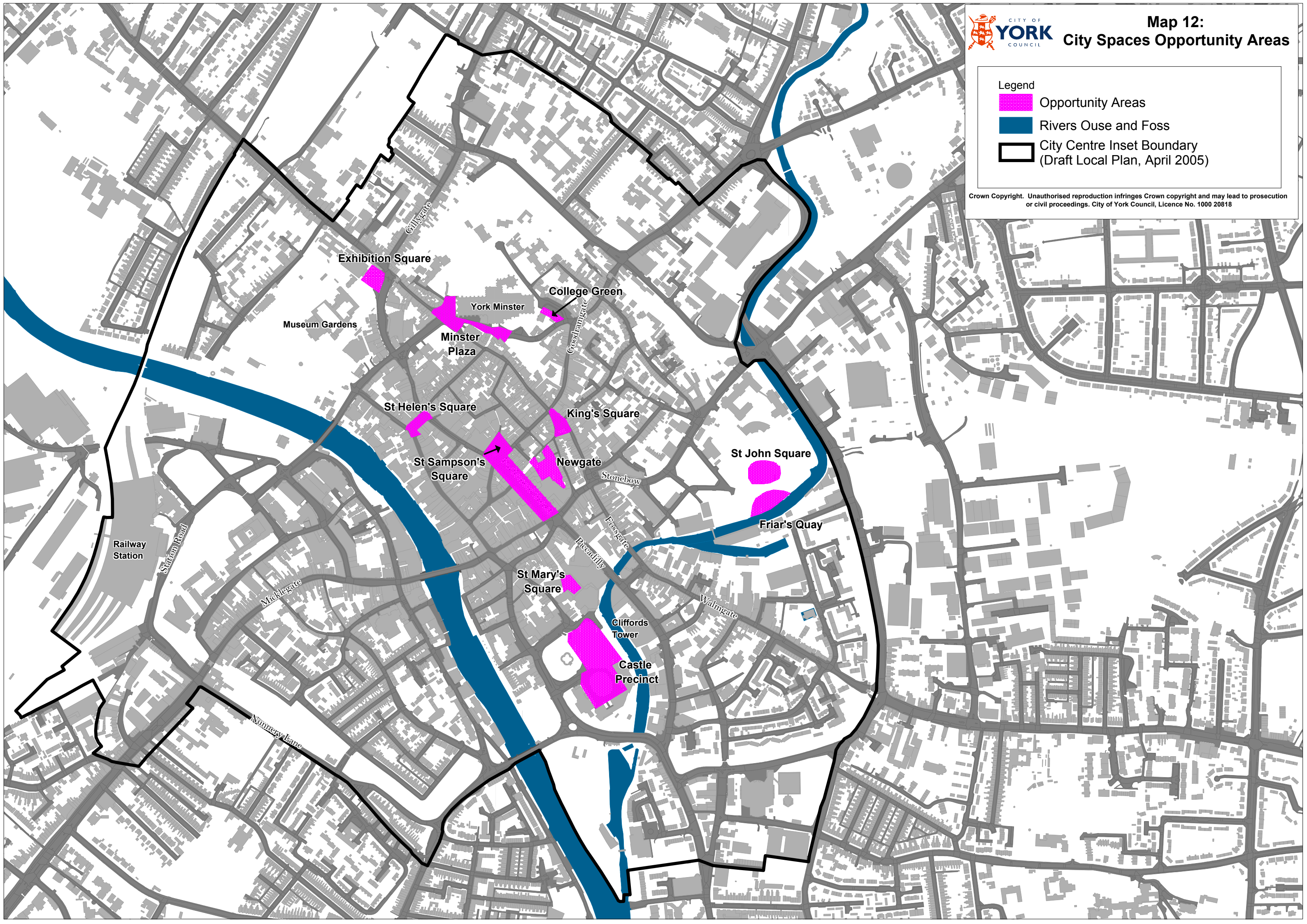
**Illustration of Exhibition Square with larger pedestrian area. Please note this is just an illustrative suggestion of what could be achieved and not a firm proposal.**



Legend

-  Opportunity Areas
-  Rivers Ouse and Foss
-  City Centre Inset Boundary  
(Draft Local Plan, April 2005)

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**King's Square as existing**



**Illustration of how King's Square could be enhanced**

9.28 Table 6 shows the issues, as identified in the Key Themes that can be addressed through the City Spaces Opportunity Area.

Key Theme	Issue
Economic Vitality	Improving York's visitor experience and exceeding expectations; Commercial traffic;
Historical Environment	Managing the historic environment; Designing in the city centre; Improving pedestrian routes around the city centre; Improving the appearance and de-cluttering public spaces; Footstreets; Green spaces and riversides;
Community Life	Cultural activity; Evening activity;
<b>Question 44:</b> Are the issues identified here correct? <b>Question 45:</b> Are there other issues to address in this Opportunity Area?	



## Riversides



9.29 The River Ouse and the River Foss both flow through the city centre and are intrinsic to York's history and form. The rivers are a huge asset, which need to be appreciated and encompassed within the development and use of the city centre. They are an important resource, having many uses including tourist boats, boating, rowing and angling and other recreation activities. Both of the rivers are ecologically important and support a variety of flora and fauna.

9.30 The Community Strategy includes the aim to 'protect and enhance biodiversity of nature' and the emerging LDF Core Strategy includes an option to 'protect and enhance the water course corridors, and improve public access where appropriate'.

9.31 At present the city tends to turn its back on the rivers and does not maximise their potential. Access to the riverfronts is piecemeal and facilities along them limited. Specific problems include a deficit of accessible riverfront for all (especially for people with disabilities), sterile and unwelcoming waterfronts in places, and a shortage of vibrant public spaces by the rivers. In some respects the rivers form a barrier to movement in certain areas of the city centre and there are buildings and spaces adjacent to the rivers that are generally poor. In recent years there have been changes for the better with sensitive and vibrant developments such as the City Screen.

9.32 The River Foss has the potential to play a major role in the regeneration of the Castle Piccadilly and Hungate areas providing a focal point and a key component in the connectivity of the scheme and with the wider city.

9.33 Providing walkways along the rivers or new bridges could improve access throughout the city and open up areas which are currently under used, for example the area behind Coney Street/Spurriergate, and provide the impetus for the redevelopment of poorer quality buildings. This area could perhaps include seating, cafes and have dual shopping frontages to attract people and allow improved movement. The illustrations below show just one example of what could be achieved.



**Ouse river side to the rear of Coney Street**



**Illustration of a potential extended Ouse boardwalk**





**Under used area besides the Foss**

9.34 Table 7 shows the issues, as identified in the Key Themes, that can be addressed through the Riversides Opportunity Area.

Key Theme	Issue
Economic Vitality	Evening economy; Improving York's visitor experience and exceeding expectations; New retail development; River transport
Historical Environment	Managing the historic environment; Designing in the city centre; Improving pedestrian routes around the city centre; Improving the appearance and de-cluttering public spaces; Green spaces and riversides; Increasing opportunities for greening the city;
Community Life	Cultural activity; Evening activity;
<b>Question 46:</b> Are the issues identified here correct? <b>Question 47:</b> Are there other issues to address in this Opportunity Area?	

See map 13: Riversides Opportunity Area overleaf.



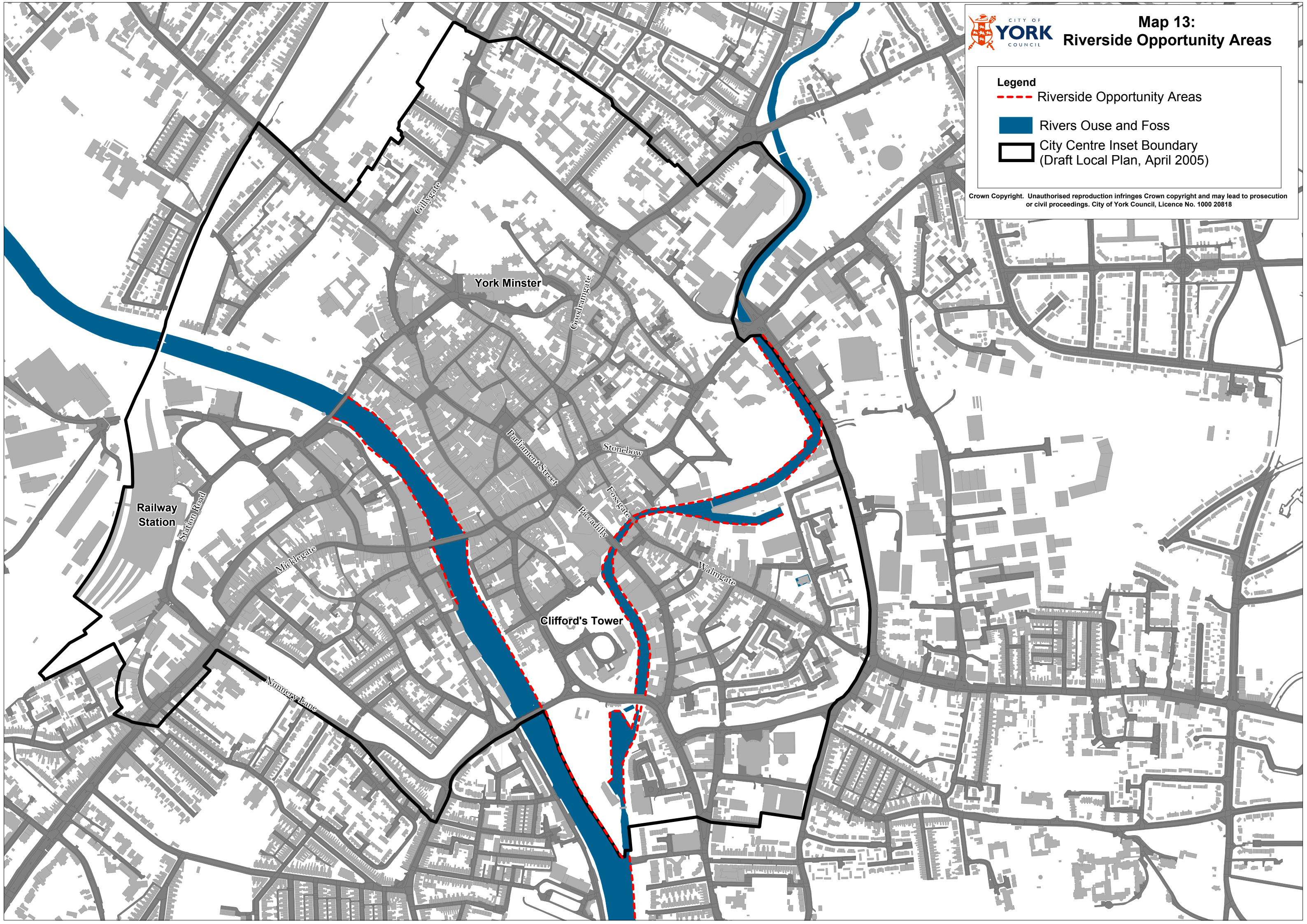


# Map 13: Riverside Opportunity Areas

**Legend**

- Riverside Opportunity Areas
- Rivers Ouse and Foss
- City Centre Inset Boundary (Draft Local Plan, April 2005)

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## 10.0 Boundary

10.1 It is important at this stage to start to consider the location of the boundary for the AAP. We have not defined the AAP boundary in this document, as we feel that the initial issues and options for the area need to be examined before a view can be reached on which areas, if any, on the periphery of the walled city need to be included in order to facilitate the development required. Areas such as Layerthorpe/Foss Islands and Bootham are not included in the city centre as defined in the Draft Local Plan.

10.2 When determining the location of the boundary, it is important to consider the planning implications of including land with the defined city centre. National planning policy aims to locate uses that generate travel within defined city centres in order to help reduce the number of journeys made by car. This principle will underpin the spatial planning approach of York's Core Strategy. This would apply to uses such as retail, offices and entertainment. However, the AAP can focus the preferred location for these uses even further by defining specific areas within the city centre for each use.

10.3 We would like to hear your views on what makes the city centre different from other areas and whether or not you would like to see the city centre grow. Growth would provide economic benefits but would risk the city losing its benefits of compactness. Any boundary is possible, some of the options for the boundary include:

- continuing with the existing boundary contained in the Draft Local Plan – this would provide consistency
- the Historic Core Conservation Area boundary (this will be reviewed as part of the Conservation Area Appraisal) – this would ensure that the AAP policy approach to design and public realm enhancement would be applied consistently across the Conservation Area
- the City Walls – this would reinforce the historic boundary of the city centre, however there is currently a number of areas adjacent to, but outside, the Walls where city centre type activity occurs, for example in Foss Islands, the Railway Station and the York St John University campus.




**Question 48: What do you think the boundary of the city centre should be for the purpose of the Area Action Plan?**

- a) Draft Local Plan
- b) Conservation Area
- c) The Walled City
- d) Should the boundary be different again, and where should it be drawn?

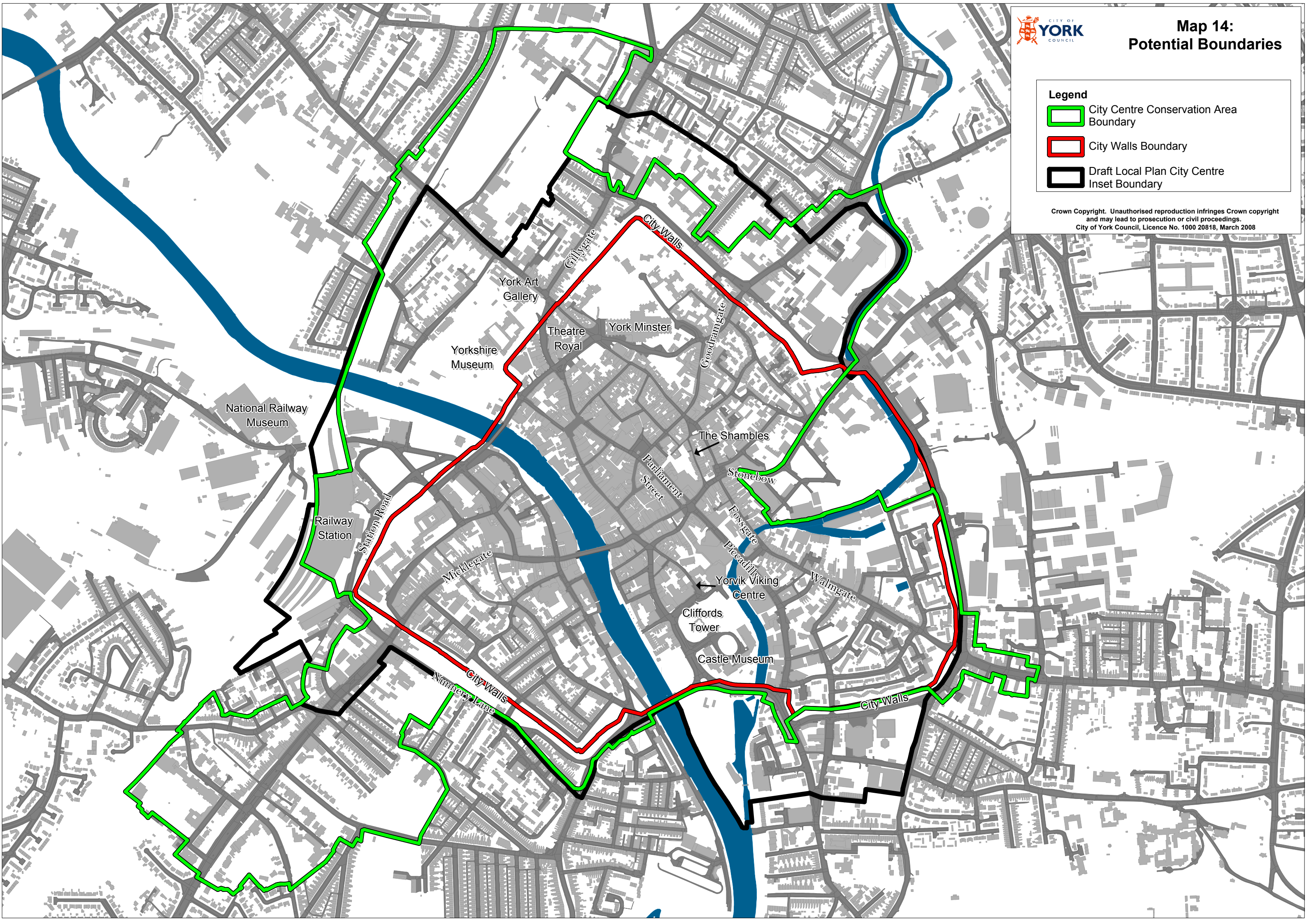
See Map 14: Potential Boundaries map overleaf.



**Legend**

-  City Centre Conservation Area Boundary
-  City Walls Boundary
-  Draft Local Plan City Centre Inset Boundary

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## **11 Monitoring and Delivery**

11.1 Indicators and targets will be established for policies and actions in the Area Action Plan as it is developed through subsequent phases of the process. The monitoring of indicators will allow an assessment of whether the plan is successfully achieving its objectives or whether changes are required in order for it to achieve its purpose. The Annual Monitoring Report will be the key document that reports on implementation of indicators.

11.2 This Issues and Options document for the city centre is designed to provide an initial context for the consideration of more detailed design and feasibility work. It is not intended to explore all avenues available for delivery of actions at this stage. Potential partners, costs, funding and timescales will be identified at the Preferred Options stage.

11.3 Consultation responses received will help to 'build consensus' which will help to take the projects forward and harness political and public will and consensus to see particular projects implemented. The AAP will promote shared working and communication.

11.4 The City Council is committed to the comprehensive delivery of the AAP and, in pursuing the aims of the plan, will:

### **Encourage partnership working**

11.5 To coordinate delivery of options identified through the LDF process it is proposed that a steering group be set up. A City Centre Partnership currently exists in York, and this will be built on in order to represent key stakeholders.

### **Public and Private Investment**

11.6 The AAP could help to bring a substantial amount of investment to the city centre. For the Council to promote the city as a visitor destination that compares with Europe's most famous historic cities, significant public and private investment is required to demonstrate that York is bold and committed to enhancing the city centre.

11.7 Public investment will be required to leverage private investment, and potential sources of funding will be identified at Preferred Options stage for example key public funded investment such as the Local Transport Plan 2.

11.8 A significantly enhanced public realm, new transport interchange and flagship regeneration at Castle Piccadilly will attract substantial private investment to the city. All new developments in the city centre will be expected to contribute towards the cost of delivering infrastructure and environmental improvements, as well as improvements to the public realm and new community facilities.

### **Secure developer contributions**

11.9 The policies and projects supported in the Plan will increase commercial potential and yield through enhancement of the visitor experience and accessibility, and through opening up areas of the city to new commercially attractive uses.

11.10 In return for the uplift in commercial value associated with redevelopment and planning approval, developers will be expected to reasonably contribute towards local improvements to highways and transport, public and recreation space, public

art, learning and skills, education and health facilities as well as ongoing maintenance.

11.11 Reasonable financial contributions will be secured – and co-ordinated throughout the city centre - through legal, Section 106, agreements. Where a number of developments create the need for new infrastructure, the City Council will pool contributions. Affordable housing, as part of any new residential development in the city centre, will be required on-site in accordance with planning policy.

11.12 The need for infrastructure requirements may be identified and costed based on the predicted cumulative impact of developments. The cost will then be split in proportion to ensure that infrastructure is provided in a fair and equitable way.

11.13 Developers will be expected to undertake comprehensive site investigations in order to understand the likely on and off-site costs of remediation and new infrastructure. They will also need to submit detailed assessments of viability in order to agree the appropriate level of contribution, and will work with the City Council to agree what options are available and would best represent the interests of the city centre as set out in the wider vision and objectives.

11.14 A provisional list of infrastructure requirements is listed below. It is not exhaustive; rather it is intended to give initial guidance on the types of projects to be explored.

### **Strategic Infrastructure**

- *Roads and highways measures, including service roads and links*
- *Bus priority measures and improved information/ waiting facilities*
- *Cycle and pedestrian routes and measures to improve the attractiveness of use*
- *Residents parking schemes, especially the York Car Club*
- *New Bridges across the Ouse and Foss*
- *Flood mitigation measures*
- *Sustainable design measures, such as district heating systems and passive solar gain.*

### **Transformational infrastructure**

- *Improvements to the public realm, including city squares and links*
- *Maintenance, landscaping and repair of public realm*
- *Environmental improvements*
- *Biodiversity measures*



- *Tourist information and measures to improve interpretation and navigation of city centre*
- *Improved lighting*
- *Public art*

### **Service Infrastructure**

- *Education facilities*
- *An enhanced Library*
- *Community, social and health care*
- *Affordable housing*
- *Indoor sports facilities*
- *Open space*
- *Children's play space and youth provision*
- *Waste and recycling*

### **Pursue other funding sources**

11.15 Potential grant funding sources, such as lottery funding, will also be set out in the Preferred Options document.

### **Revenue Funding**

11.16 The AAP will not promote projects unless adequate management arrangements and revenue funding are in place for the long term. This will include appropriate provisions for long term maintenance.

### **Use Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) to bring forward land for development.**

11.17 The AAP will include a statement on the Council's use of Compulsory Purchase powers - the willingness to exercise local authority powers and resources needed to assemble the necessary development sites.

### **Next stages**

11.18 The next stages are to develop and refine some of the potential costs, determine the opportunities and merits of projects, and to further explore the options available for funding.

11.19 At the preferred options stage infrastructure projects will be prioritized and set out. Viability assessments will be progressed on individual projects in order to assess appropriate contributions.

## Glossary

**Anoxic:** lacking oxygen.

**Area Action Plan:** used to provide a planning framework for areas of change and areas of conservation. Area Action Plans will have the status of *Development Plan Documents*.

**Article 4 Directions:** Article 4 directions are issued by the Council in circumstances where specific control over development is required, primarily where the character of an area of acknowledged importance would be threatened. They are therefore more commonly applied to conservation areas. They apply to an area rather than an individual property.

**Biodiversity:** the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, their genes and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

**Brownfield Sites/Locations:** previously developed land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry building) and associated fixed surface infrastructure.

**CABE, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment:** the government's advisor on architecture, urban design and public space. CABE was set up in 1999 to work with architects, planners, designers, developers and clients and advise on behalf of the public.

**Carbon Emissions:** emissions to the atmosphere principally from the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation.

**Conservation Area Appraisal:** an appraisal to describe, define and analyse the special character and appearance of the Central Historic Core Conservation Area and assess its current condition.

**Comparison Goods:** Comparison goods comprise clothing, footwear, household appliances (electric or gas), carpets, furniture, computers, books, music/videos, toys, DIY equipment, audio-visual equipment, sports equipment and leisure goods.

**Convenience Goods:** Convenience goods comprise food, drink, tobacco, newspapers, magazines and confectionery. Outlets include bakers, confectioners, butchers, tobacconists, newsagents, fishmongers, frozen food stores, greengrocers, delicatessens, health food stores, off licenses, shoe repairs/key cutting stores, petrol forecourt stores and supermarkets, although not all of the goods sold at these stores are convenience goods.

**Core Strategy:** sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority area and the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision. The Core Strategy will have the status of a *Development Plan Document*.

**Development Plan:** as set out in Section 38(6) of the Act, an authority's development Plan consists of the relevant *Regional Spatial Strategy* (or the Spatial Development Strategy in London) and the *Development Plan Documents* contained within its *Local Development Framework*.

**Development Plan Documents (DPDs):** spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination, and together with the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy, will form the *development plan* for a local authority area for the purpose of the Act. They can include a *Core Strategy*, Site Specific Allocations of land, and *Area Action Plans* (where needed). Other Development Plan Documents, including generic Development Control Policies, can be produced. Individual Development Plan Documents or part of a document can be reviewed independently from other Development Plan Documents. Each authority must set out the programme for preparing its *Development Plan Documents* in the *Local Development Scheme*.



**Development Control Policies:** these will be a suite of criteria based policies which are required to ensure that all development within the areas meets the spatial vision and spatial objectives set out in the *Core Strategy*. They may be included in any *Development Plan Document* or may form a stand-alone document, such as a Development Control DPD.

**English Heritage:** a non-departmental public body of the United Kingdom government (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) with a broad remit of managing the historic environment of England. It was set up under the terms of the National Heritage Act 1983.

**Gateway Streets:** routes in and out of the main shopping areas of the city centre or central pedestrianised areas. These include Bootham; Gillygate; Goodramgate; Fossgate and Whalmgate; Piccadilly and Micklegate.

**GIS (Geographical Information System):** GIS allows a variety of spatial information to be viewed in a map format. It is a system that uses one or more 'mapped' information layers over Ordnance Survey base maps; (for example layers could include residential areas, shopping centres, roads etc).

**Greenfield Sites/Locations:** an area of land that has never been built upon.

**Greenhouse Gases (GHG):** a group of gases that absorb solar radiation, storing some of the heat in the atmosphere. The major natural greenhouse gases are water vapour, carbon dioxide, and ozone. Other greenhouse gases include, but are not limited to: methane, nitrous oxide, sulfur hexafluoride, and chlorofluorocarbons.

**Green or 'Living' Roof**

Flat or angled roof that has been planted with sedum or a similar suitable 'living' material in order to improve insulation properties, slow surface water run off and improve wildlife habitats.

**Green Infrastructure**

Green infrastructure is the physical environment within and between cities, towns and villages. It is a network of multifunctional open spaces including formal parks, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, waterways, street trees, nature reserves and open countryside.

**Historic Environment:** refers to the historic buildings, streetscapes, landscapes and parks which together form an important aspect of the character and appearance of York.

**Issues and Options:** produced during the early production stage of the preparation of *Development Plan Documents* and may be issued for consultation.

**Lifetime Homes:** are homes that incorporate design features that together create a flexible blueprint for accessible and adaptable housing in any setting. Lifetime homes increase choice, independence and longevity of tenure, vital to individual and community well-being.

**Local Development Document (LDDs):** the collective term in the Act for *Development Plan Documents*, *Supplementary Planning Documents* and the *Statement of Community Involvement*.

**Local Development Framework (LDFs):** the name for the portfolio of Local Development Documents. It consists of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports. Together these documents will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for a local authority area and may also include local development orders and simplified planning zones.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS):** sets out the programme for preparing Local Development Documents.

**Local Plan:** A document which, together with the Structure Plan, forms part of the Development Plan for a specified area. The Local Plan consists of a written statement

and a proposals map. It sets out detailed policies and proposals for the development and use of the land within the District. Local Plans are prepared by local planning authorities at District level, following statutory procedures, including public consultation exercises and if necessary, a Local Plan Inquiry. The Local Development Framework documents will supersede the Draft Local Plan.

**Local Transport Plan (LTP2):** 5-year strategy prepared by each local authority for the development of local, integrated transport, supported by a programme of transport improvements. It is used as a bid to Government for funding transport improvements.

**Opportunity Area:** an area of York city centre that is considered to have the potential to address the issues identified in terms of economic vitality, historic character and community life.

**Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16)**

**Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17)**

**Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres (PPS6)**

**Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25)**

**Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS):** sets out the region's policies in relation to the development and use of land and forms part of the development plan for local planning authorities. Planning Policy Statement 11 'Regional Spatial Strategies' provides detailed guidance on the function and preparation of Regional Spatial Strategies.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI):** sets out the standards which authorities will achieve with regard to involving local communities in the preparation of local development documents and development control decisions. The Statement of Community Involvement is not a *development plan document* but is subject to an independent examination.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):** a generic term used to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European 'SEA Directive' (2001/42/EC) requires a formal 'environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use'.

**Strategic Flood Risk Assessment:** is a planning tool, which is used to assess flood risk within an area. It is designed to inform the spatial planning process of relevant issues of flood risk.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA):** tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors) and required in the Act to be undertaken for all local development documents.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs):** provide supplementary information in respect of the policies in the Development Plan Documents. They do not form part of the Development Plan and are not subject to independent examination.

**Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS):** sustainable drainage is a concept that includes long term environmental and social factors in decisions about drainage. It takes account of the quantity and quality of runoff, and the amenity value of surface water in the urban environment. Many existing urban drainage systems can cause problems of flooding, pollution or damage to the environment and are not proving to be sustainable.

**Use Class:** The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 requires the type of use which is being determined in a planning application to be identified for instance A1 is classified as shops, B1 is business etc.

**York Northwest:** An area immediately to the north and west of York city centre consisting of two distinct brownfield sites: York Central and British Sugar. These sites are separate but are located close to one another. There is a separate Area Action Plan for York Northwest that will link in with the City Centre Area Action Plan.



## **Appendix A**

**York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal - Brief descriptive summaries provided by Building Design Partnership (BDP)**

### **Contents**

### **Introduction**

### **Plans**

**The Conservation Area showing proposed extensions**

**Character Areas Plan**

### **Character Areas:**

- 1. Micklegate – Bishophill**
- 2. Central Shopping Area**
- 3. Minster Precinct**
- 4. King's Manor**
- 5. Aldwark**
- 6. Walmgate**
- 7. Castle**
- 8. Bootham**
- 9. Monkgate and Lord Mayor's Walk**
- 10. Blossom Street**
- 11. The Station and Environs**

## **Introduction**

The area within York's ancient city walls was designated a conservation area in 1968. The Conservation Area was extended in 1975 to include the bars and walls themselves and the approaches and surroundings, which contain Georgian, Regency and Victorian buildings.

An appraisal of the character and appearance of the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area is currently being prepared. The purpose of the appraisal is to describe, define and analyse the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its immediate surrounds and assess the area's current condition. Its purpose is to inform those involved in design and development in the area, and assist the public and the planning authority in their decision-making.

The following is a summary of the emerging appraisal. It consists of a spatial portrait of the Conservation Area. In order to analyse and appraise a large and complex conservation area, it has been broken down into eleven identifiable character areas. The character areas are based on the areas identified in 'York – A Study in Conservation' (also known as the Esher report). The report was published in 1968, when the Conservation Area was first designated.

Descriptive summaries of the eleven character areas compiled by Building Design Partnership (BDP) are set out below and accompanied by photographs of the character areas taken by the Council.

The Conservation Area Appraisal will be subject to public consultation, in a separate process to the AAP.

### **How to comment on the Character Area Appraisals**

To comment on the Character Area Appraisals you can either write to us or e-mail to the following address:

City Development

City of York Council

9 St Leonard's Place

York

Y01 7ET

Email: [citycentreaap@york.gov.uk](mailto:citycentreaap@york.gov.uk)

Phone: 01904 551463 Fax: 01904 551392





Character Areas



## 1. MICKLEGATE – BISHOPHILL



### Summary

Micklegate is the area south-west of the river within the city walls. The area corresponds to the Roman civilian settlement - the colonia - which developed after the military garrison south of the river. Very little from this period remains visible above ground. At its southern end close to Micklegate Bar is the highest point within the city walls. The area retains some mediaeval elements and characteristics with overlays of Georgian, Victorian and C20 character prevailing in different parts of the area. There are four distinguishable sub-areas - Micklegate and its side streets; Skeldergate, Toft Green and Bishophill.



#### Micklegate

- C18 townhouses give its central portion a strong Georgian character.
- Mixture of retail, commercial and service uses
- The scale is generally between 2 and 4 storeys with pitched roofs above.
- Building materials include magnesian limestone, lime render and variously coloured bricks. Roofs are of clay tiles and slate
- Three churchyards and one former churchyard provide small but important green spaces. Large non - conformist chapels dominate Priory St
- There is some vacancy in buildings at the southern end.

#### Skeldergate

- Skeldergate is also mediaeval in origin and some early buildings survive
- Distinctive character owes much to C18 and C19 functional buildings related to riverside trade.
- Green space limited to the site of Ann Middleton Hospital and the south-eastern end
- Residential and hotel uses now dominate in converted and new buildings
- The C19 Bonding Warehouse has been redundant until recently
- The area is subject to flooding

#### Toft Green

- An area of gardens and orchards until the early C19.
- From 1840, when the railway station (The Old Railway Station) was constructed here, Toft Green became the centre of railway-related development in York.
- Offices , including offices for railway-related business now prevail
- Good quality and strong character centred on Station Rise and Tanner Row, including good streetscape and public realm.
- Includes an area of poor quality buildings and poor public realm at its northern end centred on Rougier Street.
- Development pressure for change from office to hotel and mixed use

#### Bishophill

- An area of C19 Victorian terraced housing
- generally 2-storeys of red-brown brick with blue-black slate roofs.
- Regular orthogonal streets relieved by views of the green banks of the Bar Walls
- Generally well cared for, but with some insensitive alterations
- Roofscape important with pressure for solar passive interventions

## 2. THE CENTRAL SHOPPING AREA



### Summary

The Central Shopping Area has throughout the city's history been a busy area between the river and the Minster. Today its mainly mediaeval streets are the busy focus for tourists and visitors to the city as well as locals with a wide selection of shops housed in a richly layered historic environment.



- The area is the retail centre of the city with an extensive pedestrianised area
- The character area sits centrally within the Conservation Area, surrounded on all sides by other character areas
- Throughout its history, the area has been a centre for trade, being on the route from the south to the city centre.
- Two of its streets – Petergate and Stonegate follow the lines of principal streets relating to the original Roman Legionary Fortress. These streets are narrow and retain high numbers of timber-framed buildings.
- The area is laced with small courts and alleyways,
- The area has surviving mediaeval street layouts and plot dimensions. It contains a concentration of mediaeval buildings mixed with later Georgian and Victorian streets, buildings, frontages and shopfronts
- The scale is predominantly 2 to 3-storeys rising in height on buildings enclosing Parliament St and adjacent to the river
- The tight urban grain is relieved by three open spaces – St Helen's Square and St Sampson's Square/Parliament Street, and King's Square
- Historic churches provide focal points
- Characteristic walling materials are brickwork and stone – mainly magnesian limestone with some use of other stones such as buff and pink sandstone; coloured render and painted brickwork. Roofs are typically of clay tiles, with later buildings in Welsh slate.
- Some of the historic fabric and character has been lost in Coney Street and the courtyards off it. Buildings are perceived as high due to the narrowness of the street and the busy commercial ground floors. The public realm here is poor. Shopfronts and signage are not of the same quality as elsewhere.
- There is a poor pedestrian environment on the edge of the area at the junction of Parliament Street, High Ousegate and Pavement, aggravated by the narrow pavements across the end of the municipal toilets. This presents a barrier to movement into Piccadilly
- The comprehensive landscape scheme for St Sampson's Square and Parliament St requires review.
- Servicing requirements conflict with historic environment. These are acute in The Shambles

### 3. MINSTER PRECINCT



#### Summary

The Minster Precinct consists of the Minster and the adjacent area within its direct sphere of influence, both physically and in the uses which it accommodates. The area also includes a southerly extension down to the river at Lendal Bridge. This was altered in the C19 as part of a route which extended to and included the Railway Station creating a new route by which to enter the city and approach the Minster.



- This area was the focal point of the headquarters building within the original Roman Legionary Fortress. The site contains archaeology from that period onwards.
- It is dominated by the Minster - the present building dating from the early C13. It contains work of the highest standard from all periods in the development of Gothic architecture in England. Important late mediaeval buildings in the area are St Williams College, Treasurer's House and Gray's Court.
- The area includes extensive open space, including:
  - Deans Park – a quiet, landscaped green space bounded by the Bar walls
  - Minster Yard , a mixture of hard paved and green areas south of the Minster
  - High Petergate, next to the Minster's West Door
- Open spaces include mature trees, good quality boundary railings, street furniture and surfaces
- The principal material of the Minster and the Bar Walls is magnesian limestone. There are a number of early brick buildings incorporating fragments of earlier structures. Georgian buildings in the area are predominantly of brick with stone dressings.
- The area contains a number of quiet semi private and private enclaves, courtyards and walled gardens and streets. Only one of the original gateways into the cathedral close survives on College Street.
- The area within the direct scope of influence of the Minster is bounded on its southern side by the backs of buildings lining Low Petergate and Goodramgate and these include school buildings and workshops.
- The southern part of the character area consists of Duncombe Place, Museum Street and St Leonard's Place, streets created in the C19 to improve access to the Minster and provide a route for traffic to by-pass Bootham Bar. Duncombe Place is lined with mature trees and includes a set-back with lawn as a setting for the War Memorial commemorating the Boer war. These are wider streets more formally planned and lined with larger buildings on wider plots.
- Materials and styles characteristic of the area are
  - Magnesian limestone (the Minster, Bar Walls, St Michael le Belfry)
  - Mediaeval narrow fronted half-timbered buildings, some with jettied facades with brick (orange-red) and render panels and pantile roofs (mediaeval buildings).
  - Georgian buildings and Georgian frontages on earlier buildings of orange-red brickwork with sash windows
  - Victorian buildings in Italianate and Gothic styles, in stucco, dark red brick and stone

Deangate today is the remains of the road which was created in the C19 to provide a route for traffic on the south side of the Minster. Although now closed to vehicles the public realm has not been redesigned as a public space worthy of the Minster.

#### 4. KINGS MANOR



#### Summary

The area, containing the King's Manor, the Museum Gardens with the ruins of St Mary's Abbey and the former Museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, and the City Art Gallery, forms an extension to the walled city but is contained by its own walls and the river.



- The area is of immense historic and cultural significance, retaining standing structures from the ruined C11th St Mary's Abbey and the ruins of St Leonard's Hospital
- It contains the largest open space within the historic core. In the C19th the area was laid out as a was laid out as botanical gardens, and the neo-classical Museum building was built on the site, followed by the City's observatory.
- At the northern end is Exhibition Square, bounded by the mainly mediaeval King's Manor and the C19 neo-classical City Art Gallery.
- Cultural and leisure spaces prevail. The Museum and Art Gallery are popular visitor attractions.
- The boundaries are well defined by the walls of the abbey, the Bar Walls and the River.
- The Greek-style Yorkshire Museum and its terrace provide an imposing focal point for Museum Gardens. There are good views out of the area southwards to the river and beyond.
- At the southern end, the C14 Lendal Tower is a prominent landmark on the route to the Minster over Lendal Bridge. Alongside it the former Lendal Waterworks complex is underutilised.
- The predominant building material is magnesian limestone of the early structures, including St Olave's Church, the abbey walls and Bar Walls. The sandstone of the Yorkshire Museum and City Art Gallery and early brickwork and tiled roofs of King's Manor are also notable.
- Vehicles and pedestrians compete for space on Exhibition Square, which suffers from the pollution and the hardware associated with cars, buses and taxis. The water feature divides the space and is a visual bar to pedestrian movement to the Art Gallery.
- There is an area of poor and derelict post-war buildings and under-utilised space behind the Art Gallery, shielded from view by the structures around it. It is an area for potential improvement.
- In Museum Gardens, interpretation and accessibility could be improved. Improved access would also help to solve problems of under-use of buildings at the southern end of the area including the Hospitium and the engine house complex of the old Lendal Waterworks. Also at the southern end of Museum Gardens, the toilets and the University's clubhouse for rowers are of poor quality. Movement patterns in and around the area need to be reassessed to further reveal the cultural assets of this sector.

## 5. ALDWARD



### Summary

Aldward is now a quiet residential area within the city walls close to the Minster and the city centre.

- The area was the site of housing immediately outside the walls of the Roman fortress. Archaeology also suggests that between the C7 and C10 the Northumbrian royal palace was located in the area. Bedern Hall and Bedern Chapel are structures surviving from collegiate buildings related to the Minster.



- The principal street layout is mediaeval in origin, with most streets being narrow, winding and irregular. This was an area of mixed uses, dense residential development, workshops and industry. Large scale backyard industries were introduced in the C19th and it further went into decline in the C20.
- Some early buildings survive including the Merchant Taylors' Hall, an important Guildhall dating from the C14th and occupying its own grounds close to the city walls, and St Anthony's Hall a two storey timber framed building with stone base and later brick infill. This building terminates St Saviour's Place where it forms a courtyard with the C19th century buildings of the former Bluecoats School.
- Most of the buildings in the area are recent residential buildings, built in the York Vernacular style of the late-C20, of 2-3 storeys in red brick and pantiles. They form enclosed courtyards and there are glimpsed views through to these areas.
- There are few open spaces which break away from the narrow street pattern. The grassed banks of the Bar Walls provide valuable areas of greenery on the north-eastern edge and the small garden of Bedern Hall provides a break in the housing area. The mature trees around St Saviour's churchyard and trees in the forecourt of the Unitarian Chapel are of great amenity value.
- This southern edge contains a collection of characterful mediaeval, Georgian and C19 buildings on Aldwark, St Saviour's Place and St Saviourgate
- Prevalent materials are magnesian limestone for the Bar Walls and mediaeval buildings; red brick, clay roof tiles and Georgian details for the C18 houses; classical designs in stone and brick for the C18 and C19 places of worship; and a variety of brick types and detailing and slate roofs for the C19 houses and functional buildings.
- Although the area is outside the pedestrianised footstreets of the retail centre, the public realm is generally of good quality using a limited range of traditional and more modern materials to suit immediate circumstances.
- St Saviourgate is blighted by two mid-C20 buildings – Stonebow House and the Hilary Building. They are incongruous in height. Hilary House has no architectural merit.
- Aldwark is bounded on three sides by other areas in the Conservation Area. Its fourth side is blighted by the poor environment of the Peaseholme Green and Hungate area.
- Great improvements have occurred within the area since the designation of the Conservation Area 40 years ago.
- The proposed redevelopment of the Hungate site is both an opportunity and a threat. For this reason it is recommended that the adjacent area be included within the Conservation Area.

## 6. WALMGATE

### Summary



The Walmgate character area is that part of the city contained by the River Foss and the Bar Walls on both sides of Walmgate Bar, together with Fossgate - which links it to the city centre. It is bisected by the early mediaeval street of Walmgate, and contains industrial and commercial sites along the Foss riverbank and a large area of C20 municipal housing.



- Walmgate and Fossgate follow the original route into the Roman fortress from the east.
- The area was contained by the Bar Walls between the C11 and C14. The area contains other buildings from this period including the Merchant Adventurers Hall which is set in its own grounds adjacent to the Foss and behind frontage buildings onto Fossgate.
- In the C19 a new wide street, Piccadilly, was created into the city centre. In the same period, the Foss was canalised to make it navigable, and industrial uses along the river intensified. Wormald's Cut and Leetham's Mill were constructed. The land on either side of Walmgate was developed for the first time with terraced houses for the new working population drawn to the city's new industries. Many of these were demolished and replaced in the mid-C20.
- Today, Fossgate and Walmgate's north-western end retain some medieval character but as they continued to evolve during the C17, C18 and C19 centuries, they assimilated new buildings creating the mixture of buildings which exists today. There remains a network of alleyways and private courtyards in this area.
- Walmgate's south-eastern end is bounded by a large swathe of low-density post-war municipal housing, which forms a wide band along the inner side of the Bar Walls.
- Ground floor uses are predominantly retail on Fossgate, turning to a mix of retail and commercial on the western end of Walmgate. These fade out and give way to residential use further away from the city centre and close to the Bar Walls.
- Along the area's northern edge, old industrial uses lining the Foss are being redeveloped as new residential development.
- Walmgate Bar, St Denys' Church, St Margaret's Church (The Centre for Early Music) and St Michael's Church and the later Leetham's Mill, are all landmarks in the area.
- The banks of the Bar Walls provide an extensive green strip at the edge of the area which is enlarged by the lawns and grounds of the municipal housing which lines it. Within the area, St Margaret's churchyard provides a quiet green enclave behind the Walmgate frontages.
- The Walmgate area has the largest area of sites and buildings which detract from the conservation area's special character and appearance. They include most of Piccadilly, most of the municipal housing, sites between the northern side of Walmgate and the Foss, together with the fringes of the former Navigation Road bus depot site.

## 7. CASTLE



### Summary

The area is based around the C13 remains of York Castle and the C18 courthouse, prison buildings and open space within its grounds known as the Eye of York. It also includes the adjacent streets which link the area to the city centre to the north of Ousegate.

- The area was outside the walls of the Roman fortress, but it is known to have been built on from the late-C7. The distinctive character of the area derives from the C13 remains of York Castle, and the collection of C18 classical civic buildings within its grounds. Clifford's Tower and the Castle remains are designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. All the surviving C18 buildings and structures in this formal cluster are Listed Grade 1.
- The green banks of the castle walls, the open space of the Eye of York and Tower Gardens provide this collection of structures and buildings with a spacious green setting.
- To the north of the Castle the area consists of streets lined by a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 storey Georgian and Victorian buildings, more like the city centre in its character. The construction of the Coppergate Shopping Centre in the mid-1980s extended the city centre retail area south of Ousegate. Its interface with the Castle area is poor



- The river frontage south of the Ouse Bridge, is accessible and is well used by the pubs and bars that line King's Staith.
- There are good quality views into the area along Tower Street on its southern boundary. The view across the Ouse is also of good quality. Clifford's Tower provides a vantage point from which the city's roofscape can be viewed. The Minster and church spires and a few 1960s slab blocks rise above an otherwise consistent scale of building with varied roofscape. From the western edge of the area there are good views out to the river and Skeldergate beyond.
- Apart from the buildings around the Eye of York other landmark buildings are St Mary's Church, Castlegate (now St Mary's Arts Centre) and All Saints' Church, Pavement
- The mediaeval buildings are of magnesian limestone. The Georgian civic buildings lining 3 sides of the eye of York – the courts and prisons – are classical buildings in sandstone.
- The character of Castlegate and Friargate is largely Georgian. These include the large houses along Castlegate associated with York's foremost Georgian architect, John Carr. The prevalent material is orange-red brick with stone details. Clifford Street, which houses many late C19th Institutional buildings, is predominantly Victorian in character using darker red brick with white brick and ornamental stone details.
- Culture, heritage, leisure, retail and residential uses combine to give the area an air of vitality. The buildings are well used and generally well-maintained. There are good areas of public realm on King's Staith and around St Mary's Castlegate, with stone pavements, cobbles and setts.
- At the base of Clifford's Tower the presence of car parking and the access road to it intrudes on the quality of the environment. The car-park also disconnects the former prison buildings (now housing the castle Museum and Crown Court) from the city centre. The views of poor quality buildings on the opposite side of the Foss also detract from the quality of the environment and the character of the Castle area.

## 8. BOOTHAM



### Summary

The Bootham character area is based around the street of the same name, the main route into the city centre from the north-west. Its origins are Roman, and there is evidence of houses being here in the Middle Ages, none now remaining earlier than C17th. This approach was mainly developed in the C18th and, as a result of the fine buildings from this period, the street has a strong Georgian character. Elsewhere in the area, mediaeval structures mark the boundaries with the city centre, whilst the side streets are of C19th housing.

- The early street of Marygate runs outside the abbey walls down to the river with all but one house cleared adjacent to the Abbey walls, whilst Gillygate runs north-westwards along the outside of the Bar Walls enclosing Dean's park.
- Bootham's north-east side is graced by one of the most distinguished groups of Georgian Houses in the City. Houses are a generous 3 storeys with varied frontages up to 7 bays. They are mostly in warm brick with stone dressings, quoins, string courses, heavily modelled cornices and fine doorcases.
- Bootham Park Hospital by John Carr, set back in extensive grounds, was built at what was then edge of the city.



- In the early C19, the south-west side of Bootham was developed with more large villas. The railway line and further, more modest housing followed.
- There is little public green space in the area, but the avenues of trees lining the widest part of Bootham, and set in wide margins of cobbles, are an important part of the townscape. The frontage of Bootham Park Hospital with foliage behind the boundary railings signals the large open space behind.
- Views into the area are limited to vistas down two streets – Bootham and Gillygate. There are also incidental views into the area from the opposite bank of the river and from the Bar Walls north of Bootham Bar.
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- Bootham Park Hospital is the key landmark building within the area, though not prominent from the street. The mediaeval Circular Tower at the corner with Marygate is also a landmark.
- Marygate is a quiet residential street, with a variety of domestic buildings dating from the C17th onwards. Frontages display a mixture features, materials and details. On the east side of the street the walls of St Mary's Abbey precinct are exposed behind a green threshold, with St Mary's Lodge and St Olave's Church providing architecturally rich intervening structures.
- Gillygate is largely late C18 in character with a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 storey buildings with a rich variety of window and doorcase types and other details. Materials are a mix of brick and render with moulded brick, terracotta and stucco. There are also good C19 shopfronts, some with faience work. It is a busy highly trafficked street lined with small shops and businesses.
- The NE edge is Victorian in character. Grosvenor Terrace and Bootham Terrace are substantial Victorian Terraces facing the cutting which carries the Scarborough railway line. The more varied houses of Bootham Terrace are listed for group value. St Mary's is a mid C19th street of large Victorian terraced housing and villas
- Negative factors in the area include the heavy traffic on Bootham and Gillygate – its impact on the latter is acute because of the narrow pavements. The two car park sites within the area are of low visual quality.

## 9. MONKGATE AND LORD MAYOR'S WALK



### Summary

Monkgate and Lord Mayor's Walk, St Maurice's Road and Jewbury provide the setting for the Bar Walls along the north-eastern edge of the city centre.

- Monkgate, leading from Monkgate Bar north-eastwards was established as the main route to the north-east in mediaeval period. It is now lined by development from the late C18 and C19.
- Jewbury was the site of York's Jewish cemetery. St Maurice's Road is named after a mediaeval church which stood on what is now a prominent open green space on the junction with Monkgate. Lord Mayor's Walk was created in 1718 and was lined by development in the C19.
- The River Foss on the area's south-eastern boundary was canalised in 1792. Layerthorpe Bridge, Foss Bank and Foss Island Road are all C19. The buildings lining both are mostly C20.
- Monkgate serves as the high street for the adjacent streets. The buildings lining it accommodate a mix of small hotels, residential uses, local services, small businesses and shops together with a school, church and community medical centre.



- The main part of Monkgate between St Maurice's Road and its northern end is a wide straight street with trees typical of several of the main routes into the city. Its character is mixed late C18th & C19th with brickwork walls and slate roofs being prevalent.
- Lord Mayor's Walk and St Maurice's Road start similarly to Monkgate, lined with Victorian terraces. After this they become wide, leafy streets carrying traffic around the edge of the walls.
- The College of York St John at the northern end is a landmark - it is mid-C19 buildings in a Tudor style set back behind a boundary wall and landscaped courtyard.
- The character of the south eastern boundary along Foss Bank is poor – it is lined with large scale C20 buildings of little architectural merit and there is a loss of enclosure.
- Key views into the area are from the footpath on the Bar Walls, from the ends of Lord Mayor's Walk and Monkgate and along Foss Bank. The later views are of poor quality. Within the area key views are towards Monkbar and the City Walls. Relief is also provided by the set-back of the County Hospital and the green fore-court of the medical centre. Good quality views out of the area are limited to the view through Monkgate. The views out of the area's northern boundaries are not of merit, though the trees lining the Foss improve the vista.
- Trinity Methodist Church, Monkgate – a Victorian of dark red brick - and The University of York St John, are landmark buildings on their respective streets. The County Hospital also rises above the area.
- Greenery on Monkgate has been supplemented by trees in large tubs but there is scope for improvement. There is also no open space, except for the cleared site of St Maurice's Church near the Bar. The banks and trees along the Bar Walls give the streets that line it a spacious and verdant quality.
- The sites lining Foss Bank on the south-east of the area are of poor quality. They create an unwelcoming environment for pedestrians. They impact on the backs of buildings on the eastern side of Monkgate.

## 10. BLOSSOM STREET



### Summary

Blossom Street and The Mount form the main approach to the city from the south by road, entering the city at Micklegate Bar. They extend out towards Knavesmire, forming part of the Great North Road. They and the other side streets within the area are lined with development from the C18 and C19.

- Blossom Street is lined with development from the C18 and C19. The east side of the street has a strong Georgian character close to the Bar with the Convent of St Mary on the corner with Nunnery lane.
- The Mount is wide and lined with trees and large C19 villas of mainly Italianate style with classical details. It is signalled by a sharp rise from Mount Vale which is the former site of the Civil war fortifications. Dalton Terrace and Driffeld Terrace have a similar large scale and character with large gardens. Brick gives way here to stucco and ashlar as the prevalent materials.



- The area close to the city also includes the Bar Walls, and streets parallel to them, residential streets running from both sides of the principle roads. Of these South Parade is an exceptional Georgian Terrace of 3 storeys with stone pavement and setts and some good railings.
- Key views into the area are the view down The Mount towards the city, the view of Micklegate Bar from Blossom Street and views of Scarcroft Road School. The view up Queen Street towards the Railway Station is an important view out of the area. The key views within the area are those of the Bar Walls along Queen Street and Nunnery Lane and those of Scarcroft Road School from the residential streets to its north-west.
- The Bar Walls form a clear boundary at the northern edge. As elsewhere in the city, they provide mediaeval character and landscaping along this edge. Micklegate Bar is framed on the outside of the walls by a cluster of varied C18 and C19 buildings which give the Bar an intimate setting.
- Blossom Street is wide and straight with cobbled margins and trees. It once held a cattle and horse market. It now has stretches of tall buildings of Georgian character, with a diversity of other buildings of 2 & 3 storeys. It is a mixture of retail, commercial and hotel uses, together with the St Mary's Convent and Museum near the Bar. The 1937 Odeon Cinema provides a strong landmark.
- Scarcroft Road School of 1896 is a dramatic landmark building, the finest work of WH Brierley, who designed many of York's C19 schools. It has an open green setting provided by Scarcroft Green which was land belonging to Micklegate Stray.
- Holgate Road curves down to the SE through a mainly C19th residential street towards the railway bridge. The environment here is heavily polluted by large volumes of traffic. In contrast Mount Terrace is a quiet Regency enclave with good quality historic street furniture surfaces and boundary walls enclosing small gardens.
- Public open space is provided on the edge of the area in front of Scarcroft Road School. The Bar Walls on the northern edge also provide open space but this is marred by the extensive car-park lined with good mature trees.
- The area to the north-west near the railway is poor and blights the edge of the Conservation Area. There is justification for including the area within the Conservation Area in order to influence the quality of future development here.

## 11. THE STATION AND ENVIRONS



### Summary

The area is defined by the mid-C19 developments associated with the railway – the Railway Station buildings, the Station Hotel (now the Royal York Hotel) and the railway tracks. Between this grouping and the Bar Walls, Station Road, Leeman Road and the short roads linking them are laid out in an area of green open space and municipal gardens.

- The area was used as a cholera graveyard in the early 19 but otherwise was still open fields until the railway came to York in the mid-C19,
- The current York Station, The Royal Station Hotel (now the Royal York Hotel), Station Road and Leeman Road and Lendal Bridge were constructed in the late C19. The railway became an important factor in the expansion of the city beyond its pre-industrial boundary and in the establishment of new industries.
- Three very strong boundaries define the area – the railway tracks, the River Ouse and the Bar Walls.



- The view of the area on emerging from the Railway Station gives a first impression of the city for many. It also provides a distant view of the Minster to the north. There are views into the area from the Bar Walls and from the opposite side of the Ouse. The river-side footpath and Memorial Gardens provide views to the river and beyond.
- The distinctive character of the area relates to the Railway Station and Royal York Hotel and their juxtaposition with the mediaeval Bar Walls and the landscaped areas between.
- The scale of the hotel is grand, the style is Italianate and the main building material is yellow-buff brick. This complements the magnesian limestone of the Bar Walls on the opposite edge of the area.
- Open spaces in the area are extensive, consisting of the grassed banks of the Bar Walls, the site of the cholera graves, the hedge and trees of the Royal York Hotel's gardens and the hedges grassed lawns, trees and borders of the riverside gardens and nearby traffic island
- The soft landscape is well maintained. This gives a good first impression for the many tourists and visitors who come to the city by train; and a pleasant route for those who come into the city by train every day to work.
- The quality of environment north-west corner of the area, occupied by the Post Office Sorting Office and the railway bridge underpass is poor. The sorting office makes poor use of such a good quality site.
- The layout of the landscaped areas at the northern end of the area do not promote their use for pedestrians.
- The hard landscaping around the railway station and towards the city centre is un-co-ordinated and variable in quality for such an important gateway into the city.
- The character and condition of the riverside footpath/cyclepath on this side is not as good as the lengths on the opposite bank.
- The area to the south of the Railway Station and west of the adjacent Blossom Street character area is currently outside the Conservation Area. Its relationship with the Conservation Area, its history, current condition and future prospects suggest that it should be included in the Conservation Area.