



Notice of meeting of

"Cultural Quarter" Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee

To: Councillors Taylor (Chair), Crisp, Funnell, Galvin, Hogg,
Hyman and
Sir Ron Cooke – Non voting Co-opted Member

Date: Thursday, 29 January 2009

Time: 4.30 pm

Venue: The Guildhall, York

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on this agenda.

2. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered their wish to speak regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the Committee's remit can do so. Anyone who wishes to register or requires further information is requested to contact the Democracy Officer on the contact details listed at the foot of this agenda. The deadline for registering is Wednesday 28 January 2009 at 5.00pm.

3. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 22)

To approve and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 16 December 2008.

4. 'Cultural Quarter' - Interim Report (Pages 23 - 34)

This Cultural Quarter Interim Report asks the Committee to approve the timetable for future meetings and formulate some draft recommendations for inclusion in the draft final report.

[Officers from City Strategy will be in attendance to provide information and answer questions in relation to the traffic proposals for the York Northwest site]

5. Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972

Democracy Officer:

Name: Jill Pickering

Contact Details:

- Telephone – (01904) 552061
- Email – jill.pickering@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details set out above

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The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

MEETING	"CULTURAL QUARTER" AD HOC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	16 DECEMBER 2008
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS TAYLOR (CHAIR), CRISP, FUNNELL, GALVIN, HOGG, HYMAN AND SIR RON COOKE (CO-OPTED MEMBER)

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor Taylor declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 ("Cultural Quarter" – Interim Report) as an employee of City Screen in York.

Councillor Crisp declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 ("Cultural Quarter" – Interim Report) as a member of the Board of York Theatre Royal.

Councillor Hogg declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 4 ("Cultural Quarter" – Interim Report) as an employee of the National Railway Museum, a member of the York Museum Trust and a member of the Visit York Board.

13. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were three registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

- Ewan Allinson, representative of the Minster Quarter, gave details of the launch of the Minster Quarter and how stakeholders representing attractions in the area, businesses and the retail sector were working together. This was linked to the City Centre Action Plan and was a new approach to urban governance. There had been a fantastic response and this initiative could be extended to create other quarters within the city. Yorkshire Forward were responsive to this approach and saw the potential for a number of quarters within the city working together to create urban renaissance.
- Christian Topman circulated information on the Arts Barge Project which was currently under development by a local community group. The intention was to provide a floating cultural centre on the River Ouse. The barge would provide flexible performance areas for fringe arts, including acoustic music. Work on the project had been ongoing

for nine months and considerable consultation was taking place as well as ongoing discussions with architects. Members welcomed the river being used in the development of arts provision. (Further information available on www.myspace.com/theartsbargeproject).

- Simon Newton urged that York St John University be included within the Cultural Quarter. He informed Members that 1800 students were involved in art and creative studies and that new courses were planned. The university also attracted international students. There had been considerable investment in the arts, and the new building provided a 21st century gateway to the city. The university had hosted arts events, including a UNESCO photographic exhibition, and had been heavily involved in York Festivals. York St John's University had been pleased to be involved in the consultation regarding the Cultural Quarter and felt strongly that it should be included. The city combined an outstanding heritage with a modern outlook and the Cultural Quarter would be a major asset to the city.

14. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the "Cultural Quarter" Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee held on 29 October 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

15. 'CULTURAL QUARTER' - INTERIM REPORT

Members considered the "Cultural Quarter" – Interim Report and discussed issues arising from the report:

- (i) City Centre Area Action Plan and the Boundary of the Cultural Quarter

Information was circulated updating Members on the Local Development Framework (LDF) – City Centre Area Action Plan (attached at Annex 1 to these minutes). Copies of the "LDF City Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options Report" dated July 2008 and "LDF City Centre Area Action Plan Sustainability Statement" dated July 2008 were also tabled.

Officers gave details of how the proposed Cultural Quarter sat within the LDF City Centre Area Action Plan. Extensive consultation had taken place regarding the Action Plan and 1700 comments had been received. A full report would be presented to the Local Development Framework Working Group in January. A summary of the comments relevant to the Cultural Quarter had been included in the information tabled. Officers went through the suggestions that had been put forward. Members noted that the comments largely mirrored those that had been received as part of their own consultation process.

Officers emphasised that for the Area Action Plan to include the Cultural Quarter as an Action Area, it would be necessary for a robust evidence base to be produced for the Cultural Quarter, setting out the proposed projects, delivery partners and funding sources. For this to be incorporated into the next stage of the Plan and subject to public consultation, the evidence would need to be produced by Summer 2009.

Members agreed on the importance of the objectives for the Cultural Quarter being embedded in both the City Centre Area Action Plan and the York Northwest Area Action Plan. This would ensure that the proposals were co-ordinated with the plans for the wider area. It was also noted that, although the boundary of the Cultural Quarter could cover an area of more than one Area Action Plan, the Government Office had advised that Action Plan boundaries could not themselves overlap. Discussion took place regarding the need to define specific areas of the city for the purposes of economic development, whilst in terms of cultural provision, there was a need to be as inclusive as possible.

Consideration was given to a diagram, prepared by Sir Ron Cooke, which offered a model as to how both the cultural and the economic development elements could be encompassed (attached at Annex 2 to these minutes).

Members agreed on the importance of a model that was inclusive and non-competitive and one in which all organisations were encouraged to offer cultural contributions. There must be benefits to citizens in all parts of the city as well as to visitors to the area.

Findings: That, whilst it was acknowledged that for the purposes of obtaining investment it was necessary for there to be a border designating the buildings and space within the Cultural Quarter, the Committee did not envisage the Cultural Quarter as being exclusive. The institutions and organisations that were based outside of the border would be part of the wider cultural agenda and would contribute to activities and events within the Quarter and benefit from its success. For this reason the Committee did not propose any amendments to the proposed border.

(ii) Naming and Branding

Members expressed their regret that the term "Cultural Quarter" had been seen by some residents to be elitist and divisive and this had resulted in some negative comments being made about the proposals. Suggestions were put forward regarding possible names for the area, including the use of established historical names. It was noted that "Cultural Quarter" was a term recognised by Government and hence it could act as a trigger in accessing funding streams. As the proposals evolved it was likely that a more appropriate name would be adopted.

Findings: That, whilst it was acknowledged that “Cultural Quarter” was a nationally recognised term and may support organisations in accessing funding streams, the Committee recommended that a more appropriate name be given to the area for the purposes of attracting and engaging visitors with the facilities on offer.

(iii) Role of City of York Council in the Process of Developing a Cultural Quarter

Discussion took place as to the role that the Council should play in the development of a Cultural Quarter. The views put forward included:

- Providing leadership and encouragement
- Supporting organisations seeking to access funding by removing barriers to investment
- Ensuring that a pedestrian link was in place
- Ensuring that those buildings within the area that were owned by the Council, for example the library, contributed to the success of the Cultural Quarter.

(iv) Transport and Highways

The notes of “City Centre Transport Masterplan” workshop held on 15 July 2008 were circulated (attached at Annex 3 to the minutes).

Officers reported that a quality audit of the City Centre public realm was to be carried out, from which a series of area specific “Public Realm Key Principles” or guidelines would be developed. The key issue for the Area Action Plan in relation to the Cultural Quarter was the need to co-ordinate the public realm masterplanning of the wider city centre with the proposals for the public realm in the Cultural Quarter.

Members agreed that accessibility was a key factor in the success of the Cultural Quarter. It was noted that a review was to be carried out by the Transport Planning Unit which would consider the findings of a number of projects including the Footstreets Review, Cycling City Strategy, Coach Parking Strategy, various improvements to main routes into the city and an audit of the “Gateway Streets” to assess where road space could be reallocated to promote sustainable travel choices and improve the experience of visiting and navigating the city. The Cultural Quarter (incorporating St Leonard’s Place, Ouse Bridge, and Leeman Road), was one of the five areas that would be investigated for accessibility. The investigation was expected to commence in the New Year and be completed by July 2009. Discussion took place as to the various options that could be considered in respect of Gillygate, Exhibition Square, St Leonard’s Place and Leeman Road. It was noted that

the current uncertainty regarding this issue was causing anxiety for some residents

(v) Minster Quarter

Members had been updated under item 2 (Public Participation) on the launch of the Minster Quarter. They agreed that whilst there was an overlap between the Minster Quarter and the Cultural Quarter they did not believe this to be in any way detrimental. It was agreed that partnership working was crucial to the success of the project.

(vi) St Leonard's Hospital Site and Area Behind the Art Gallery

Discussion took place regarding possible improvements to the St Leonard's Hospital site and the area behind the Art Gallery. Suggestions put forward included a sculpture park and an information centre. It was agreed that the areas were underutilised and members of the public were often deterred from visiting them because of problems in respect of anti-social behaviour. Further consideration needed to be given as to ways of preserving the history of this area for future generations whilst encouraging visitors to benefit from what it had to offer.

Findings: That the Committee recommended that further consideration be given as to ways in which St Leonard's Hospital site and the area behind the Art Gallery could be preserved for future generations and made more accessible and attractive to the public.

(vii) Tourism

The Development and Support Officer for Visit York tabled a document "York: A Vision For Tourism". The document included a set of ambitions to deliver the vision for York tourism, in partnership with the community. Members noted that the ambition to develop York's position as a leading European cultural centre was closely linked to the vision for a Cultural Quarter within the city.

(viii) "Cultural Quarters – Principles and Practice"

Members gave their feedback on "Cultural Quarters – Principles and Practice" by Simon Roodhouse. Particular mention was made of the sections regarding Sheffield's Cultural Quarter. Members commented that many of the examples included within the book related to cities that had developed Cultural Quarters primarily to regenerate areas of a city as part of an economic redevelopment strategy. In the case of York this was not the driving factor.

It was noted that a representative of Sheffield City Council had been unable to attend the meeting and consideration was given as to whether it would be appropriate to invite them to attend the next meeting.

RESOLVED: (i) That the timetable be updated as follows:

Date	Event
29 January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sue Houghton (York Central Project Manager) and Tony Clarke (Capital Programme Manager) to be invited to attend the meeting to update Members on the York Northwest Area Action Plan and Access York.¹ • To receive an executive summary of the Draft Business Plan • To formulate draft recommendations for inclusion in the draft final report.
18 February 2009	To consider the draft final report
February/March 2009	Submit the final report to SMC

(ii) That, in view of the information already available to the Committee and the different circumstances in which Sheffield had established its cultural quarter, a representative from the city not be invited to attend the next meeting.

(iii) That, in analysing the feedback that had been given at the public drop in session that had taken place in York Minster on 4 November 2008 the following points be noted:

- The event had been well-attended and a very useful exercise
- The findings had been similar in content to those received as part of the consultation carried out by the City Strategy Department
- Members were encouraged by the many positive comments regarding the proposals, including suggestions as to what people would wish to see within the Cultural Quarter.

- It was agreed that the omission of the Archives in the list of establishments within the Cultural Quarter had been a regrettable error.

REASON: To ensure the progression of the review and compliance with scrutiny procedures, protocols and work plans.

Action Required

Invite Sue Houghton and Tony Clarke to attend meeting on 29 January 2009 GR

ANNEX 1 TO MINUTES - LDF CITY CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN

ANNEX 2 TO MINUTES - SUGGESTED MODEL

ANNEX 3 TO MINUTES - NOTES OF CITY CENTRE TRANSPORT MASTERPLAN WORKSHOP

Cllr Taylor, Chair

[The meeting started at 3.40 am and finished at 5.50 pm].

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ANNEX 1

Update on the Local Development Framework – City Centre Area Action Plan

The Local Development Framework

- New style of plan making introduced by the Planning Act in 2004.
- The York LDF will replace the Draft Local Plan.
- Local Development Framework (LDF) is a ‘folder’ of documents with different roles – a more flexible system.
- Role of public consultation and Sustainability Appraisal strengthened.
- Initially 4 Development Plan Documents (DPDs) are being produced for York.
- The Core Strategy provides the overarching strategic framework for development in the area over a 20-year period. It will identify the housing, employment, retail and leisure development etc needed along with community facilities, open space and the infrastructure required to support this growth and change.
- The Core Strategy sets the objectives for the LDF and the scope and purpose of the other DPDS. The Core Strategy is closely linked with the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- The Allocations DPD identifies the sites needed to deliver the development required by the Core Strategy.
- There are two Area Action Plans being produced: York Northwest Area Action Plan (YNW AAP) and the City Centre AAP. The York Northwest AAP will deliver the development of the York Central and British Sugar sites.
- All the DPDs go through 3 stages of consultation before Examination.
- The 4 DPDs have been through the 1st stage – Issues and Options.
- The Preferred Options of all 4 DPDs will be consulted on in 2009.
- All timetabled to be adopted by the end of 2010.

Purpose of the City Centre AAP

- The City Centre AAP is being produced for a number of reasons, the primary one being the sensitivity of the city centre to change and the need to ensure that new development reflects this sensitivity.
- A successful City Centre is crucial to a successful York. The city’s economy and cultural life depends on it. There is significant scope for the city centre to function better in terms of transport and movement and as a venue for festivals and events. A number of areas within the city centre are beginning to look tired.
- The AAP is a key vehicle in delivering a number of the strategic aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy. In particular the City of Culture aims for York to be a city of high quality spaces.
- The AAP is a major opportunity to improve the city centre and this is the first time a comprehensive Plan for the city centre has been produced.

- The AAP must (similar to all other aspects of the LDF) be evidence – based to be able to stand up to public examination.

The Issues and Options Report

- The Issues and Options aimed to gather as many views as possible about the current state of the city centre and people's aspirations for it's future.
- The report focussed on three key themes: Economic Vitality, Historic Environment and Community Life. The report also set out five 'opportunity areas' where the options in the three key themes could be delivered.
- One of these areas is the Cultural Quarter.

Consultation

- We consulted from 28 July to 22 September 2008 through a variety of mediums including press statements, leaflets, posters, targeted workshops, public exhibitions and stakeholder groups. Other consultations are ongoing and a partnership approach will be essential as the plan develops further.
- We received 1700 comments which have been logged and analysed. Main headlines to give a flavour. Full report to Local Development Framework Working Group in January.

Summary of Comments relevant to the Cultural Quarter - General Comments

- Revive York Festival and create an Edinburgh type festival annually.
- Co-ordination of bus stops near the railway station are confusing with a poor layout.
- Need to reduce traffic at St Leonard's Place as it increases the air pollution which is already very poor in that area.
- Museum Gardens feels isolated from the city centre and it is critical to address severance effects of St Leonard's Place.
- Improve green spaces where possible. Need areas of quiet to get away from traffic.
- Need more production/workspaces for artists to use.
- Improvements need to consider all of the community and residents as well as tourists.
- Build on what has been done already with sympathetic new improvements.
- A new green route (bridge) between the Station (arrival point for thousands of visitors) connecting Memorial Gardens over new footbridge to Museum Gardens, Art Gallery, Exhibition Square and the city centre is essential. Consider new access from riverside walk to National Railway Museum (NRM).
- Though the area would benefit from enhancement and co-ordination, this should not be to the detriment of the city as a place of work. The City centre is primarily a place for citizens and should not be an excessively sanitised museum.
- Homeless/beggars in NRM subway area and Museum Gardens puts people off using those areas especially at night.

- Support for riverside uses on the Ouse alongside the Museum Gardens and access improvements from the City Centre from the gardens would be welcomed.
- Museum Garden railings are listed and there was already a pair of double gates to the riverside (and the railings define both the Esplanade and white Rose Walk) and so further entrances were not supported but improved entrances were.
- Emphasise the Victorian aspects of the Cultural Quarter.
- Support for land above Scarborough Bridge being improved and brought into use in an artistic/culturally interesting way. Support for university students to develop arts facilities e.g. statue walk between the station and the Minster.
- Suggestion of pedestrian way from short term parking area between Platform 1 and Royal York Hotel northwards over eastern portal of Marble Arch tunnel using a narrow area of scrubland between footpath adjacent to Royal Mail sorting office and railway to provide a level link with the existing footway across Scarborough Bridge.
- St Leonard's Place redevelopment (mixed use) should help promote cultural and evening activity in the area as well as redesigning Exhibition Square.
- York needs investment in the tourism infrastructure. Existing and new attractions plus general investment in place. Community stadium at York Northwest.
- York must continue to be a walking city for tourists. This is part of its attracting and diffusing cultural provision into the British Sugar site will add to transport needs – thus subverting sustainability objectives.
- Encourage new quality attractions but priority is to invest in existing spaces/venues such as redundant churches and other buildings.
- Emphasis on quality needed. Develop informal café/culture areas to high standard.
- Potential for a “world class” tourist offer – NRM. St Mary's and the Minster, plus all the richness of the other facilities in our area, art gallery, Theatre Royal etc.
- Need to improve public wealth in the city – link NRM to city centre as a gateway.
- What facilities does the city lack that could be provided at YNW?
- More work is needed in the city centre in fostering a “cultural quarter”.
- A cultural quarter must develop organically to have any real chance of success.
- Support for extension of the footstreets and support to maximise what we already have to provide more activities in the evening such as open air concerts in the parks and late opening of museums and galleries etc.
- Need more for families and older people to attract them into the city in the evening.

Summary of Comments relevant to the Cultural Quarter - Boundary of Cultural Quarter

Include Gillygate, all of the Railway Station, British Rail building, access from the station, North Street Gardens, Clifford's Tower, St Helen's Square, St John's University and Blossom Street. YNW and CC plans need to link together in a more coherent way as very different areas at present. *Note: Government Office have advised that Action Plan boundaries cannot overlap.*

Summary of Comments relevant to the Cultural Quarter - Name of Cultural Quarter

- Many respondents felt that the term Cultural Quarter is unsuitable - what is Culture?
- The implied elitism of Cultural and geographical isolation of quarter needs to be overcome by a strong brand and a clear communication strategy.
- "Cultural Quarter" is not a concept that is understood – seems to be interpreted as exclusive – it has backfired – once it is explained people then support the concept and idea of connectivity.
- Cultural Quarter is wrong term. All of walled city is cultural quarter. Links across the river are essential for any development.
- The term is important but the quality and knowing what it means is more important. Area needs a strong identity to galvanise stakeholders and public interest, distinctive from the retail core, YNW etc. Need explanation of true intent of "cultural quarter", as a concept not a place.
- Quarters are a good idea as it stops the city centre merging onto one and if each area has a common theme it makes the city easier to navigate.
- 95% of respondents supported the issue of the development of a cultural quarter, 5% of respondents were in partial agreement with the issue in York Northwest workshop.

Accessibility within the Cultural Quarter and the impacts on other areas of the city

An important consideration for the Cultural Quarter is how access to it and other parts of the city can be maintained or improved in the most sustainable way. The eastern boundary of the Quarter skirts the 'Footstreets' area and extends into it at High Petergate and Minster Yard. Following the receipt of a petition to extend the Footstreets into Fossgate, work to investigate possible extensions to the Footstreets was initiated by the council. However, it became apparent that this review needed to be far more extensive to consider access to and within the city centre and its effects on economic viability in the future, as part of the Area Action Plan. This review, as part of 'the City Centre Accessibility Masterplan', is to be led by the council's Transport Planning Unit. It will consider the findings of a number of projects including the Footstreets Review, Cycling City Strategy, Coach Parking Strategy, various improvements to main routes into the city and an audit of the 'Gateway Streets', to assess where road space could be reallocated to promote sustainable transport choices and to improve the experience of visiting and navigating the city centre. It will, ultimately, form part of the evidence base for the AAP.

Following an officer workshop, in July 2008, to consider the issues (see attached) five specific areas to be investigated for accessibility and impacts of access changes, as discrete areas and in combination, were proposed:

- **Gateway Streets** Micklegate / Blossom Street, Fossgate / Walmgate, Goodramgate, Piccadilly, Stonebow / Peasholme Green and Bootham / Gillygate
- **Other potential Shopping Streets** Museum Street, Lendal, Duncombe Place, High Petergate and Castlegate
- **Cultural Quarter** St Leonard's Place, Ouse Bridge and Leeman Road
- **Castle Piccadilly** Piccadilly, Castlegate, Coppergate/Pavement and Clifford Street/Tower Street
- **York Central/York Northwest** (subject of separate Area Action Plan)

These investigations are expected to commence early in the New Year, with an anticipated completion date of July 2009, so as to keep on-track with the AAP timetable. Initially this work is due to be undertaken by officers, but may require the use of additional resource (i.e. external consultants) in order to complete it within the timescale available.

Next Steps

The immediate next steps in producing the AAP include:

- Report to LDF Working Group in January 2009 with information on the Issues and Options consultation and the comments received.
- Report to LDF Working Group again in March 2009 with recommendations on which options should be the Preferred Options with an analysis of the consultation findings, justification for any options not being progressed, the conclusions of the Sustainability Statement and any emerging evidence.
- We will also begin commissioning and undertaking a range of evidence base documents to support the AAP, with input from Yorkshire Forward.
- Form a Steering Group, which could include community input.
- Commence Accessibility studies.
- Undertake ongoing Stakeholder involvement.

Enhancing the public realm is key to much of the AAP and the idea has generated a high level of support from the public consultation. At the next stage of the plan we will undertake a quality audit of the City Centre public realm, from which the AAP will develop a series of area specific 'Public Realm Key Principles' or guidelines. Once adopted the AAP will act as the design brief for detailed design commissions.

There is no set date for the Preferred Options consultation, however we are aiming for September 2009. For Cultural Quarter public realm and development proposals to be consulted on as part of this process, we will need to have the broad concept and principals, with sketch illustrations, by Summer 2009.

The publication of and consultation on the Submission AAP is timetabled for February 2010. The document will be Submitted in May 2010, the Examination in June 2010. The aim to have the AAP Adopted by the Council in December 2010. The timetable is set in the Council's adopted Local Development Scheme.

The AAP and the Cultural Quarter

The key issue for the AAP in relation to the Cultural Quarter is the need to co-ordinate the public realm masterplanning of the wider city centre with the proposals for the public realm in the Cultural Quarter. For the AAP we intend to undertake a comprehensive public realm audit to assess the current condition of the public realm and to identify opportunities for enhancement. The findings will form the basis of the Preferred Options consultation. A public realm masterplan for the city centre will be produced for the submission AAP.

It is important that the agreed objectives for the Cultural Quarter are imbedded in both the City Centre AAP and the York Northwest AAP. This will ensure that the proposals are co-ordinated with the plans for the wider area.

The AAP Issues and Options also consulted on how to grow and diversify York's Cultural offer as well as the evening economy, including later opening of museums and galleries. There was support for these options including providing additional facilities for cultural activities.

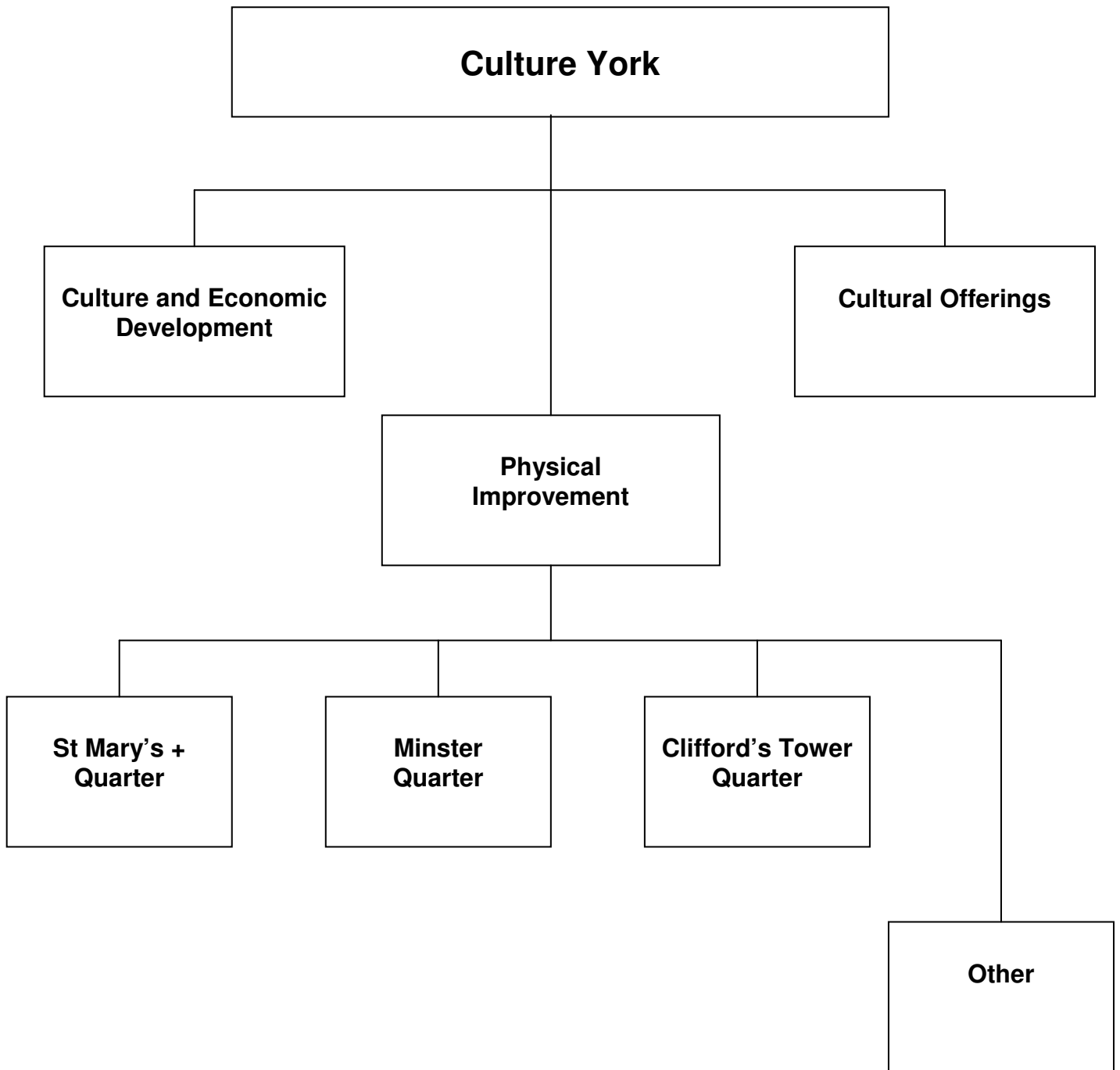
It is important for funding of the Cultural Quarter, that the proposals can be shown to be consistent with, and part of, an adopted statutory plan for the city. If the proposals, costs and partners were set out in the Delivery Strategies for both AAPs, this would create the potential for funding to be drawn from developer contributions, linked to policies in the AAPs, and highlight opportunities for other partner contributions and grant funding avenues.

Wendy Taylor and Ewan Taylor
City Development, City Strategy

Ian Stokes
Transport Planning, City Strategy

Annex 2

Culture York – Suggested Model



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**Notes of “City Centre Transport Masterplan” Workshop
15 July 2008**

Present	Bryn Jones	EDU
	Ian Tempest	Visit York
	Dave Carter	Network Management
	Martin Grainger	City Development
	Derek Gauld	City Development
	Alistair Briggs	Network Management
	Paul Brand	TPU (Facilitator, solutions)
	Ian Stokes	TPU (Facilitator, issues)
	Andy Vose (from 12:30)	TPU

Purpose

To identify the broad range of issues to consider (e.g. economic, historical/heritage, environmental and social, such as accessibility) for the potential expansion of the city centre economic area to ensure its continued vitality in the face of competition from other cities in the region and postulate potential solutions to address any issues identified.

Introduction

A large scale map was displayed with the inner ring road highlighted to represent the defined border of the city centre. The group agreed with this definition, although it was noted that the border could be extended to incorporate the National Railway Museum within the city centre. Group discussion of the map led to the following:

- Slight modifications to highlighting of the inner ring road to incorporate loops such as Fishergate, Fossbank and Station Rise;
- Marking-up of radial routes into the city centre;
- Marking up of James Street Link Road
- Marking up of main through-city centre bus and cycle routes
- Marking positions of main car parks (council owned and private)
- Marking up of coach parks and rendezvous points;
- Marking up committed, ongoing or recently completed developments (e.g. Hungate, Arclight, St John University and Morrisons/Homebase)
- Marking up potential major development sites such as York Northwest and Castle Piccadilly.

Once these had been marked on discussion commenced on the following topics:

Identify issues
Set objectives
Identify barriers
Potential solutions

These are shown in tables 1 to 4 respectively

Table 1 - Issues

<p>Defining the city centre</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="108 376 288 555">What is the City Centre Boundary? Extend to NRM?</td> <td data-bbox="309 376 489 555">Where is the current city centre boundary and is it severed?</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="108 589 288 757">Will city walls negate any other definition of city centre?</td> <td data-bbox="309 589 489 757">What is the minimum / maximum increase in Footstreets</td> </tr> </table>	What is the City Centre Boundary? Extend to NRM?	Where is the current city centre boundary and is it severed?	Will city walls negate any other definition of city centre?	What is the minimum / maximum increase in Footstreets	<p>City Centre Characteristics</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 376 917 555">City centre is the economic powerhouse</td> <td data-bbox="938 376 1118 555">33,000 jobs in the city centre</td> <td data-bbox="1139 376 1319 555">4million+ visitors/yr</td> <td data-bbox="1340 376 1520 555">NRM York's biggest visitor attractor</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 566 917 734">1 million+ visitors by train</td> <td data-bbox="938 566 1118 734">59% (falling) visitors by car (50% of which use P&R)</td> <td data-bbox="1139 566 1319 734">City centre residents = 6457 (3638 households)</td> <td data-bbox="1340 566 1520 734">Understand the economy, its linkages and functionality</td> </tr> </table>	City centre is the economic powerhouse	33,000 jobs in the city centre	4million+ visitors/yr	NRM York's biggest visitor attractor	1 million+ visitors by train	59% (falling) visitors by car (50% of which use P&R)	City centre residents = 6457 (3638 households)	Understand the economy, its linkages and functionality															
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Table 3 - Barriers


<p>Make up of streets determines whether pedestrianisation is possible</p>	<p>Marble Arch / other access to York Northwest</p>	<p>Does the network have the right functionality?</p>	<p>Cross-city bus routes</p>	<p>Lendal Bridge</p>	
		<p>Lack of capacity of inner ring road & outer ring road</p>	<p>Lack of suitable / adequate evening P. T.</p>	<p>What is the City Centre Boundary? Extend to NRM?</p>	
		<p>Physical constraints preventing highway capacity improvements</p>	<p>Capacity of bus priority measures</p>		
		<p>Maximising benefits of city centre parking (information)</p>			
		<p>Lack of enforcement of traffic restrictions</p>			
		<p>Emergency vehicle access</p>			
		<p>Management of servicing</p>			
		<p>Access needs to be maintained for residents</p>			
<p>The priorities themselves could be the barriers</p>	<p>Knowledge, expertise & capacity</p>	<p>Heritage, Flooding, conservation & Ecology</p>	<p>Travel Behaviour</p>	<p>Timing of proposals in the political arena</p>	

Table 4 – Potential Solutions

Policy, Planning & Leadership				
Utilise the CCAAP	Strategy but with incremental growth (phased)	Use of private sector funding (planning gain etc.)	Better use of green infrastructure	Strong leadership (Member & Officer) & strong vision
Simplify hours of operation & take account of 7-day economy	Deliverable solutions	Utilise parking outside of office hours	Desire line research (utilise)	Extend pedestrian - isation to Castle Piccadilly
Link Footstreets • Hungate • Castle Piccadilly	Review of street furniture • Standardise • minimise			

Transport				
Allow buses but more awareness of pedestrians	Bus interchange / bus stops (review of)	Tram-train (city centre extension)	City centre electric shuttle	Coach strategy (drop-off points)
Out of hours should still be access only	Access restrictions	Close Ouse Bridge to (some) traffic	Review servicing / transhipment	Technology-based enforcement
Cross-city route (cycle)	New cycle bridge near Scarborough Bridge	Use City Wall Moats as corridors		

Additional notes

- There is a perception that road traffic flow along Coppergate/Pavement (less so Piccadilly) is a real barrier that severs the southeastern section of the city centre from the main area, i.e. buses rule rather than pedestrians. From Paul Brand's experience, the traffic lights around this junction don't have a very long pedestrian phase (unlike the St Leonard's/Museum Street junction). The general feeling from the meeting was that buses should continue to use this route but that the balance/priority should be shifted towards pedestrians. For example, buses need to slow down/give way to pedestrians/shared space.

- It would be helpful to have a strategy in place to allow future expansion of the footstreets as and when necessary, without the need for a full review each time, e.g. a 'reserve list' of streets or a zone on a map or a set of criteria for deciding whether a street should be pedestrianised.

Next Steps

This document will be circulated to relevant officers for their perusal and comment. Once these officers have had the opportunity to examine the document they shall, as far as possible, suggest a suitable strategy that meets the objectives with due regard to the issues raised and suggested solutions put forward. These suggestions shall be returned to Ian Stokes by the end of August 2008, for TPU to collate and coordinate, in order to produce a series of strategy options (scenarios) with a varying degree of expansion of the Footstreets area between a minima and maxima. This shall be produced by October 2008 for subsequent deliberation by officers before being presented to either EMAP on 8th December 2008, or Executive on 23 December 2008, for a decision on whether a more detailed assessment of the impacts (e.g. traffic modelling outputs) is required before the scenarios are released for consultation.



‘Cultural Quarter’ Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee 29th January 2009

‘Cultural Quarter’– Interim Report

Background

1. This topic was originally registered in early 2008 by Councillor Hogg to examine the ‘Vision’ developed in 2007 for a Cultural Quarter for York, linking the city centre with development sites in York North West. He suggested using the 2007 ‘Vision’ document to explore the relationship between the six areas of the quarter (area 1 to include the Railway Station), including pedestrian and vehicular movement, design, open spaces, a river crossing, performance areas, lighting, landscaping, cultural production, promotion and public art.
2. The aim of the vision is to generate substantially more external funding than that which is currently being achieved through an ad-hoc approach. The ‘Vision’ recognises that getting the link between the city centre and York North West right, will support and guide future city centre development.
3. In coming to a decision to review this topic, the Scrutiny Management Committee recognised certain key objectives and the following remit was agreed:

Aim

4. To contribute towards achieving a long-term direction for the area between the National Railway Museum (NRM), York Railway Station and the Minster, and to consider any positive and/or adverse effects on the city in doing so.

Objectives

- i. To understand the Council’s strategic approach, and that of its key partners, to the cultural design for the area.
- ii. To contribute to a business plan for achieving the required funding for developing the area into a ‘Cultural Quarter’.
- iii. To develop and establish some key principles, for guiding a collaborative approach to cultural development in the future, including connectivity to other areas of the city.

Consultation

5. This review, has so far, been carried out in consultation with the following:
 - Head of Arts & Culture at City of York Council
 - External Relations Manager at Visit York
 - The Chief Executive & the Director of Finance and Business Development at the York Museums Trust
 - Officers and Elected Members at Gateshead Council
 - Officers at Newcastle City Council
 - York Theatre Royal
 - Head of Libraries & Heritage – City of York Council
 - Representatives of the National Railway Museum
 - Dean of York Minster
 - Representatives of York St John University
 - Representative of Rushbond PLC
 - Various Officers in City Strategy Directorate at City of York Council
 - Members of the public at a public drop in session held on 4th November 2008
 - Public Affairs & Stakeholder Manager and the Head of Property at National Express

Information Gathered

6. At the last formal meeting on 16 December 2008 Members had discussions in relation to:

City Centre Area Action Plan & the Boundary of the Cultural Quarter

7. Officers attended the meeting and provided details on how the proposed Cultural Quarter sat within the Local Development Framework (LDF) and with the City Centre Area Action Plan (CCAAP). They informed Members that extensive consultations had taken place regarding the CCAAP and 1700 comments had been received. A full report regarding this consultation was due to be presented to the LDF Working Group in January 2009. Further information regarding the above and a summary of the comments received is attached at Annex 1 to the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2008.
8. In response to the Officers' information Members agreed that the comments received largely mirrored those that were received at the public drop in session held on 4th November 2008.

Issues Arising

9. The following issues were highlighted in discussions relating to the above:
 - It would be necessary for a robust evidence base to be produced for the Cultural Quarter in order that it could be included as an Action Area. This would need to set out the proposed projects, delivery partners and funding

sources. If this were to be incorporated into the next stage of the CCAAP and subject to public consultation then the evidence would need to be produced by Summer 2009.

- It was important to embed the objectives for the Cultural Quarter into both the CCAAP and the York Northwest Area Action Plan. This would ensure that any proposals were co-ordinated with the wider area.
- Although the boundary of the Cultural Quarter could cover an area of more than on Area Action Plan, the Government Office has advised that Action Plan boundaries could not themselves overlap.
- There was a need to define specific areas of the city for the purposes of economic development, whilst in terms of cultural provision; there was a need to be as inclusive as possible. The institutions and organisations based outside of the proposed boundary would be part of the wider cultural agenda and would contribute to activities and events within the Cultural Quarter and benefit from its success.
- It was important to have a model that was inclusive and non-competitive and one in which all organisations were encouraged to offer cultural contributions. There must be benefits to citizens in all parts of the city as well as to visitors to the area. Sir Ron Cooke had produced such a model and this was attached as Annex 2 to the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2008.

Naming & Branding

10. Discussions were had regarding the term 'Cultural Quarter' and how some residents had seen the term as elitist and divisive. This had resulted in some negative comments being made about the proposals for the Cultural Quarter. Suggestions for an alternative name had been put forward and were listed as part of the findings from the public drop in session (Annex A to the report presented to the Committee on 16 December 2008).

Issues arising

- 'Cultural Quarter' was a term recognised by Government and could act as a trigger in accessing funding streams.
- As the proposals evolved it was likely that a more appropriate name would be adopted.

Role of City of York Council in the Process of Developing a Cultural Quarter

11. Discussions were had regarding the role York Council should play in the development of a Cultural Quarter.

Issues arising

- The Council would need to provide leadership and encouragement
- The Council would need to support organisations seeking to access funding by removing barriers to investment
- The Council would need to ensure that a pedestrian link across the river was in place

- The Council would need to ensure that Council owned buildings within the area, for example the library, contributed to the success of the Cultural Quarter

Transport & Highways

12. Officers attended the meeting and provided information on the City Centre Transport Masterplan Workshop, which had been held on 15th July 2008. (The notes of this meeting are attached at Annex 3 to the minutes of the Cultural Quarter meeting held on 16th December 2008.)
13. The Transport Planning Unit would be undertaking a review which would consider the findings of a number of projects including the Footstreets Review, Cycling City Strategy, Coach Parking Strategy, various improvements to main routes into the city and an audit of the 'Gateway Streets' to assess where road space could be reallocated to promote sustainable travel choices and improve the experience of visiting and navigating the city. The Cultural Quarter (incorporating St Leonard's Place and Leeman Road) was one of the five areas that would be investigated for accessibility. It was expected that this review would be completed in the summer of 2009.

Issues arising

- The key issue for the Area Action Plan in relation to the Cultural Quarter was the need to co-ordinate the public realm masterplanning of the wider city centre with the proposals for the public realm within the boundaries of the Cultural Quarter.
- Accessibility was a key factor in the success of the Cultural Quarter.
- The current uncertainty regarding transport issues, especially in the Leeman Road area, was causing anxiety for some residents.

St Leonard's Hospital Site & Area Behind the Art Gallery

14. Discussions took place regarding possible improvements to the St Leonard's Hospital site and the area behind the Art Gallery.

Issues arising

- Suggestions for using these areas included a sculpture park and an information centre.
- The areas were under-utilised at the moment.
- The public were often deterred from visiting them because of problems with anti-social behaviour.
- Further consideration needed to be given as to ways of preserving the history of this area for future generations whilst encouraging visitors to benefit from what it had to offer.

Other

15. A representative of the already established Minster Quarter came to the meeting on 16th December and addressed Members. He gave details of the launch of the Minster Quarter and how stakeholders representing attractions in the area, businesses and the retail sector were working together. This was linked to the CCAAP and was a new approach to urban governance.
16. A representative of York St John University attended to further urge Members to include their establishment within the boundaries of the proposed Cultural Quarter.
17. A representative of the Arts Barge Project attended to inform Members that they were intending to provide a floating cultural centre on the River Ouse. Members welcomed this project but noted that this project would not be within the boundaries of the Cultural Quarter as they were presently drawn.
18. In relation to the document 'York: A Vision for Tourism' which was circulated at the meeting Members noted that the ambition to develop York as a leading European cultural centre was closely linked to the vision for a Cultural Quarter within the city.

Issues arising

- Whilst there was an overlap between the Minster Quarter and the Cultural Quarter it was not in any way detrimental as partnership working was crucial to the success of both the Minster Quarter and the proposed Cultural Quarter.

Information Gathered Outside of the Formal Meeting

19. In an e-mail discussion between Members that took place after the last formal meeting it was agreed that it would be useful to meet with National Express to discuss their future plans for York Railway Station. A main principle of the Cultural Quarter is to increase accessibility for foot traffic within the area and to that effect it had been presumed that access through the station would remain the same as it is now or be improved. It has, however, recently been announced that National Express intend to 'gate' the station buildings as part of their franchise commitment.
20. Members, therefore, met with National Express informally on 13th January 2009 to discuss their future plans for the station. Members asked whether public access across the footbridge to the NRM would still be possible once gates had been installed. National Express confirmed that this route would be for ticket holding rail passengers only and would therefore, no longer be a public thoroughfare.
21. Discussions were also had regarding the possibility of a new bridge across the river. National Express were keen to discuss the possibilities of this further whilst acknowledging that this was still very much in its early stages. The possibility of building a bridge from the end of platform 4 across the river

was discussed as the land at this point was at the same level on both sides of the river. National Express were keen to be involved in any further discussions regarding these ambitions.

Other

22. One further consultation form had been received in relation to the public consultation event. The points from this had been added into the collated responses presented in Annex A to the interim report to the Committee dated 16 December 2008. It was expected that this would be produced in evidence and form part of the Committee’s final report.

23. A letter dated 11th December 2008 had been received from the Yorkshire Gardens Trust. The letter encourages the Committee to consider a horticultural feature within the Museum Gardens. Ideas for this feature included glasshouses and a facility to stage temporary exhibitions connected to garden history and botanical art. The Chair agreed to respond to this letter.

Further Information Requested

24. At a meeting of the Committee held on 29th October 2008 Members requested that Officers report back with an Executive Summary of the Business Plan. This is attached at Annex A to this report.

25. At the meeting held on 16th December 2008 Members requested that they receive more information in relation to the transport proposals for the York Northwest site. To that effect, Sue Houghton, Tony Clarke and Ruth Egan from the City Strategy Directorate at York Council have agreed to attend the meeting to answer any questions Members might have.

Timetable

26. The timetable for the remainder of the review is therefore as follows:

Date	Event
29.01.2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive an Executive Summary of the Draft Business Plan • To receive further information regarding the transport proposals for the York Northwest site • To formulate some draft recommendations for inclusion in the draft final report.
18.02.2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the draft final report

Options

27. Having regard to the aims and objectives of this topic remit, and having considered the information provided in this report Members may choose to:
- i. Agree the timetable as set out in paragraph 26 of this report
 - ii. Consider whether they require further information and if not to,
 - iii. Consider formulating some recommendations for inclusion in the draft final report.

Implications

28. **Human Resources** – The Head of Arts & Culture is already leading on this within her service and has indicated that this review would only incur minimal additional administrative work, which could be retained within her team.
29. **Legal** – There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations within this report.
30. **Financial** – There are minimal funds allocated from within the scrutiny budget for research relating to ongoing reviews, therefore there are no financial implications associated with the recommendations within this report.
31. There are no Equalities, Property, Crime & Disorder, or other implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

Corporate Strategy – Priorities & Direction

32. This review related to the following corporate priority for improvement of this Council:
- ‘Improve the actual and perceived condition and appearance of the City’s streets, housing estates and publicly accessible spaces.’

Risk Management

33. In compliance with the Council’s risk management strategy, there are no known risks associated with the recommendations of this report other than the focus of the review and the progress of the Scrutiny work plan would be adversely affected if the review did not keep within the agreed timescale.

Recommendation

34. It is recommended that Members consider:
- i. Approving the timetable as set out in paragraph 26 of this report
 - ii. Formulating some draft recommendations for inclusion in the draft final report.

Reason: To ensure the progression of this review and compliance with scrutiny procedures, protocols and work plans.

Contact Details

Author:

Tracy Wallis
Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Services
Tel: 01904 551714

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Quentin Baker
Head of Civic, Legal & Democratic Services
Tel No: 01904 551004

**Interim
Approved**

Report

Date 15-01-09

Specialist Implications Officers

Wards Affected: Guildhall, Holgate & Micklegate

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annexes

Annex A – Executive Summary of the Business Plan

CULTURAL QUARTER (SCRUTINY SUMMARY)

Where is the Cultural Quarter?

As it is currently proposed the Cultural Quarter runs from the National Railway Museum and Railway Station end of the York North West development area, the Memorial Gardens, the riverside walks, across the river Ouse, through Museum Gardens (incorporating the Yorkshire Museums, Kings Manor, the Library, the Roman Multangular Tower, St Mary's Abbey, St Leonard's Hospital, the Hospitium and Observatory), into Exhibition Square (incorporating the York Art Gallery, City Archives and the Theatre Royal) Duncombe Place, St Leonard's Place and running up to the Minster and its environs, including Deans Park.

The term 'Cultural Quarter' is borrowed from European urban planning terminology and is used to denote an urban zone distinguished by a number of related and located cultural institutions.

What are the distinctive features of the Cultural Quarter for York?

- It forms a coherent area including York's two most visited visitor attractions (the NRM and the Minster) along with four other destinations among the city's leading cultural destinations – York Art Gallery, Yorkshire Museum, City Library and Theatre Royal.
- Within the city centre it includes the largest area of green open space covering the riverbank walks, Memorial Gardens, Museum Gardens and Deans Park, and the proposed green area for the York Northwest site
- The area is a geographically a compact area which encompass a scheduled ancient monument site and an especially high number of Grade 1 and 2* listed buildings
- The area forms a clear opportunity to link the key development area of York Northwest with the city centre over the next few years. The Cultural Quarter creates a direct link to this major 21st century development area and the historic city centre.
- Exhibition Square axis has the potential for a large civic outdoor performance space
- St Leonard's Place - high quality city centre private retail, hotel and leisure redevelopment.
- That albeit compact, there is a perception that the cultural attractions are at some distance from each other and could be better connected

What are the opportunities?

Many of the businesses and organisations in the area are producing significant investment plans at the moment but without a co-ordinated approach they run the risk of being seen as competitive plans rather than collaborative. This is especially significant when it comes to funding applications. Given the level of ambition and leadership which is being demonstrated by these organisations, there is value in working with them on initiatives that will improve connectivity and the public realm within the Cultural Quarter – and from the Cultural Quarter to the rest of the city centre, and to the York Northwest development area behind the station. We would also aim to foster a hub of creativity and cross working of cultural production that will have benefits for the cultural life of the whole city and region.

The outcomes of collective level of investment by all the key stakeholders in this area of the will include:

- Refreshing the image of York and building its cultural profile nationally and internationally
- Stimulating a pride of place for workers, residents, businesses and visitors

- Building new confidence in the whole of the cultural offer for both residents and visitors in the City
- Developing access and connectivity to the green spaces and cultural institutions in the city through a new network of green leisure routes and pathways
- Improving our understanding of the history of the city through improved interpretation and access
- Improving the way that the city looks and feels through investment in high quality design elements within the public spaces and street environment
- Contributing to a refreshed tourism offer through investment in and upgrading of current cultural facilities
- Building a partnership between key stakeholders that will see collaborations and cross working on shows, events, exhibitions and education work
- Contributing to a reduction in health inequalities by encouraging walking and cycling within the city centre
- Encouraging inward investment in a phased and collaborative programme
- Provision of new retail, leisure facilities and hotel space in the city centre
- Promoting York as a desirable place to live work and visit.

Other benefits:

Cultural/social: social history/heritage (archive services are proposed to remain in this area), green space, improving routes to, from and through for pedestrians and cyclists. Enhanced learning about the city and its history through interpretation

Economic: jobs can be created through the various investments, especially the support of the city's evening economy and events opportunities

Tourism: opportunities to expand York's visitor offer (NB also the new Visitor Information Centre at Museum Street will be in a gateway location to the Cultural Quarter)

Educational: Both Universities have a city centre presence and partnerships that encourage creative cultural product and employment opportunities. Partnership working on developing learning outcomes for schools to contribute to cultural entitlement for all children.

Suggestions on how to get the most from the Cultural Quarter?

- Commission a Design Masterplan for the public realm (e.g. The River, Riverside footpaths, Other footpaths throughout the area, The Memorial Gardens, Roads (e.g. St Leonard's Place, Museum Street, Leeman Road), The City Walls, Exhibition Square, Duncombe Place, Street furniture – lighting, signs, litterbins, general services.
- Consider opportunities for a new pedestrian/ cycle crossing of the Ouse as part of the York Northwest development plans
- Specifically look at the open space, riverfronts etc as opportunities for events, festivals etc and link this work closely to the transport plans and city centre area action plans for the city
- Commission an in depth Business Feasibility Plan required for the agreed Cultural Quarter area.
- Coordinate all the individual plans and ambitions to create a Master plan for the area

ANNEX – THE PRINCIPAL PROPOSALS

This is a very short summary for the main proposed projects. Some of which (the Hospitium redevelopment, the Minster East front works) have already started, most of which depend on external funding bids to various bodies and council support for the suggestions above.

Development	Main features
York Minster	Improved access to South Transept – piazza – ticket operation relocated to shops in Minster Gates – improvements to disabled access (e.g. lift to Undercroft) – continuing restoration of stone/glass at East front window
Kings Manor	Discussions about the lane next to the Kings Manor being open more widely for access top/from Museum Gardens. Security implications are being explored
YMT – Art Gallery	Expand the art gallery – create a mezzanine gallery above the existing main gallery, extend gallery into the Gardens at the rear, Exhibition Square as event space
York Theatre Royal	Possible connecting building between the Theatre and De Grey House (where Theatre intend to do a lot more). De Grey Rooms will be refurbished, foyer to be enlarged, café bar area could be moved forward – even moved onto the pavement
Rushbond (1-9 St Leonard's Place)	Mixed use development envisaged, high quality luxury hotel, restaurant, retail and office space and residential
York Central Library	Will be transformed into an Explore Centre. Creation of a suite of learning rooms, new café, possible relocation of the Archives into the Library, possible additional wing upstairs
YMT – St Mary's Abbey Precinct	4 phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitium (done) • Yorkshire Museum (major refurb – new galleries, and audio visual presentation on the History of York in the Tempest Anderson Hall) • Museum Gardens – gardens manager appointed – new planting, events programme, getting more volunteers, capital works on new pathways, routes and green spaces • Art gallery
National Railway Museum	First phase redevelopment of the Great Hall New signature entrance building Public plaza (NB pedestrianise Leeman Road) High quality eating and shopping Links to the centre of York across the river Business development Hotel/conference facilities Parkland/green spaces
St John's University	£Mns Investment in arts/creative media – Performance activities Postgrad/Business incubation space Development of many courses with a cultural/tourism slant (e.g. Tourism Management) Building works will include digital technologies a Design and technology Building etc
The new Visitor Information Centre	Redevelopment of corner of Blake Street as a gateway to the project

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