

Report of the Director of City Strategy

**YORK CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND  
FORMER BRITISH SUGAR/ MANOR SCHOOL  
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**Update on Preferred Transport and Access Approach**

**Summary**

1. This report sets out the findings of work undertaken to establish a transport approach, including site access strategy, on the York Central (YC) and former British Sugar/ Manor School (fBS/MS) development sites. Members are asked to note the findings of the work, and to endorse the proposed approaches to taking these findings forward, as outlined in the report.

**Background**

2. The YC & fBS/MS sites are strategic allocations in the September 2011 publication draft Core Strategy, accommodating significant levels of housing, and in the case of YC, employment and retail growth through the plan period.
3. In 2007, work began on an Area Action Plan (AAP) to guide the development of the two sites, which together form the York Northwest (YNW) development corridor (see plan at appendix 1). It was realised in 2010, however, that work needed to be progressed on the sites at different rates, and at a meeting of the executive on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010 it was agreed by Members that the detailed planning of the sites

would be taken forward through the preparation of separate LDF documents. It was subsequently resolved that these would take the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the FBS/MS site, and a development framework for the YC site.

4. Whilst it was agreed that the detailed planning of these two strategic sites could be undertaken independently, the need for an overarching approach to transport, which captured the synergies, conflicts and cumulative impacts of the two sites, was also recognised. Initial transport modelling work undertaken by the Council identified that development would have significant impacts on the local and strategic network, particularly focussed around the A1237 Outer Ring Road, and the A59-A19 corridor, within which both sites sit. The results of this initial phase of modelling were termed a 'Reference Case', against which a 'Sustainable Case' was prepared, which sought to effect modal shift and mitigate impacts. The Publication Draft Core Strategy sets out at policy CS18 the need for a YNW transport masterplan to be prepared to explore and resolve these issues in more detail.

### **York Northwest Transport Masterplan**

5. The Council has taken the approach of developing a Transport Masterplan to enable the incremental development of the York Northwest Corridor (YNW) within a framework that allows the management and mitigation of cumulative transport impacts and ensures delivery of the transport infrastructure necessary for the development of York. A draft of the Masterplan is available in the Members library and in electronic format on request, and a plan indicating York Northwest in its immediate context at appendix 1.
6. This Masterplan will sit alongside the Local Development Framework's emerging Core Strategy and site-specific supplementary planning documents. The Council will use the Masterplan to assess the Transport Assessment, framework Travel Plan and other documents submitted by developers for the sites within YNW. The technical work, including transport modelling and engineering feasibility studies, which have been undertaken in preparing this Masterplan, build on a transport study undertaken for York Central in 2005 (Faber

Maunsell's Transport Masterplan) and reported to members in January 2006.

7. Without mitigation, the development of this corridor has the potential to have a harmful effect on the local and strategic highway network and therefore other networks, such as local buses and cycle routes. This was illustrated by the outcomes of previous modelling work, outlined in the YNW Transport Topic Paper (August 2010), which looked at a 'Reference Case', and showed the congestion and delay impacts associated with the additional traffic generated by development of the sites to be significant. Ultimately, this is contrary to the objective of reducing the impact of travel on the environment.
8. YNW is to be developed in a highly sustainable manner, where the need to travel will be minimised and travel by sustainable modes will be encouraged through design, active promotion and, where necessary, support for new services.
9. The draft master plan sets out the transport infrastructure and other transport improvements required to mitigate the impacts of the 'reference case' and further improvements within a 'sustainable case' to further reduce the traffic impacts of developments in YNW. Some of these, such as improving the junctions on the A1237 outer ring road are large cost items, whereas some of the other measures, such as smarter choices measures are much lower cost.
10. The draft Masterplan also identifies those items that have a direct impact on the local transport network, for which developer contributions will be sought through obligations as part of the planning process. Other strategic transport infrastructure for which new sources of funding may be pursued (such as the Community Infrastructure Levy, if adopted by the Council) have also been included in the draft Masterplan
11. The draft Masterplan has been informed by transport modelling and access feasibility work undertaken on behalf of the Council. The latest stage of access feasibility work, also reported in this paper, looks at options for forming

vehicular accesses to YC, and pedestrian/ cycle links from the fBSMS site, more work will be required in respect of new access options at Chancery Rise (York central) to fully understand transport implications. Member are asked to endorse the approach outlined in the draft masterplan and its ultimate use in assessing the Transport Assessment, framework Travel Plan and other documents submitted by developers.

### **York central access feasibility.**

12. On 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010, members were advised that the Leeds City region, and as a result the Council, had been successful in securing funding from a national Urban Eco-Settlement (UES) development fund. The Councils share of this totalled £130,000, the allocation was revenue funding to be used for masterplanning and feasibility work. This was utilised in part to establish a detailed understanding of site access options, in order to recommend a preferred approach. This work was undertaken for the Council by framework consultants Halcrow, and is available from the Members library or an electronic version available on request.
13. Establishing appropriate site access is key to the regeneration of the York Central site. This is due to the site being bounded by live rail lines, and currently accessible only via Leeman Road, with limited vertical clearances and poor strategic network links (See Appendix 1: York Northwest Site & Context Plan). Work was undertaken by Faber Maunsell in 2006 to allow the Council to understand options related to accessing the site. This work, reported to Members in January 2007, led to public consultation on 6 vehicular access options as part of the York Northwest Area Action Plan Issues and Options Consultation. Feedback from this consultation was given to Members of the LDF Working Group on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008, and is summarised in respect of York Central access options at appendix 2.
14. Part of the UES funding allocation was utilised to build on this earlier work. This was done for a variety of reasons: Firstly a greater level of detail was required than the high level options looked at by Faber Maunsell (which did not, for

instance, incorporate detailed designs for bridges or junctions with the highway). Secondly, a late additional access option required testing (Chancery Rise). Thirdly, the assumptions relating to operational rail retentions and subsequent availability of land for access and/ or development had also evolved. Finally, an updated and accurate cost base was deemed important in pursuing funding opportunities associated with the site. Reappraising the access approach has also allowed for greater influence in terms of environmental considerations, with, for example access from Water End impacting far less on the Leeman Road Millennium Green.

15. Previous modelling work indicated that given the scale of development envisaged at York Central, two new all-mode accesses would be required to the site, alongside some use of the existing Leeman Road accesses and new or improved pedestrian and cyclist routes. Given the configuration of the local road network, and the constraints surrounding the development site, it was determined through modelling work that a new point of all-mode access should be created from the A59 Poppleton/ Holgate Road, and a second from Water End. The option of having a direct link from the A1237 Outer Ring Road to YC, through the fBS/MS site, was considered in early stages of modelling. Cost benefit analysis revealed that the high engineering costs associated with provision outweighed benefits. Modelling found that the link road would be used mainly by existing road users, rather than traffic generated by the YNW development; more detailed discussion of this option is provided in the YNW transport masterplan. This option was discounted from further consideration on these basis of these issues.
  
16. The more recent work undertaken by Halcrow has been structured so as to be flexible in order to respond to future circumstances in terms of development or operational rail context. Each access option is broken down into three key segments:
  - A Junction with existing road network
  - B Carriageway and bridge design
  - C Descent into development site

Each 'segment' has interchangeable design options outlined, capable of responding to alternative land availability, and with different characteristics.

17. Report findings include assessment of engineering feasibility/buildability, detailed bridge designs, current delivery costs, land-take requirements and commentary on land-ownership and environmental considerations. Network performance of alternative junction options is also assessed, though it should be noted that this relates just to the technical capacity of the immediate junction being considered and not the wider capacity of the network to absorb any impact.
18. The report considers four main approaches in terms of the A59 Poppleton/ Holgate Road access; three from the Holgate Business Park area, and one from Chancery Rise. One main access route alignment is considered from Water End, with a range of highway junction and site descent options. The report also advises on formation of more local or temporary access points from the existing Leeman Road, and provides a cost and phasing plan for the demolition of the existing Queen Street Bridge and reinstatement of inner ring road. A plan of access corridors is given at appendix 3.
19. It should be noted that access options discussed in the section relate only to all-mode (including vehicular) access to York Central, and will need to be underpinned by a range of high quality pedestrian and cycle links and improvements, particularly between the site and the City Centre. These are discussed in more detail in the York Northwest transport masterplan.

#### A59 Poppleton/ Holgate Road Access

20. In terms of access from the A59 Road, the report finds that recommended highway gradient standards are such that any access over the 5 Acre site (options B1 and B2) would be unable to achieve the height required to clear rail lines positioned any further south than existing lines serving the adjacent Carriageworks Building. These access options would therefore be incompatible with Network Rails aspirations to improve the functionality of the Carriageworks building by providing a fan of new rail lines over the 5-Acre

site into the building. On this basis, without deviating from adopted Highway Standards these options could be ruled out.

21. A third option is provided in Access Corridor A; east of the Carriageworks building at Chancery Rise. This option provided the lowest cost approach to accessing the York Central site (£9.1m at 2011 prices) since local topography is advantageous, and the structure need only span limited existing rail lines on the sites southern boundary. However, the carriageway alignment proposed in the report results in loss of play facilities at Cleveland Street, and is sited in close proximity to residential properties. Subsequent to the completion of the study, it emerged that Network Rail would be willing and able to make land available at the Carriageworks Building through removal of rail traversers and potentially partial demolition of the building itself. This would allow the access to be aligned to protect the play area and residential properties, and work is progressing with Network Rail to pursue this approach.
22. The Halcrow report presents two highway junction options in respect of Chancery Rise access; a roundabout option and a signalised junction. Both perform well in network terms, though the roundabout option precludes the need for third party land acquisitions.
23. It should be noted, however, that the performance of this access option in terms of impact on, and relationship with the surrounding network, unlike other options, has not been tested in detail through transport modelling at this stage. Undertaking this work will be an essential next step in order to allow full assessment of performance and comparison with alternative access approaches. It is recommended that more detailed transport modelling is undertaken to understand the access option and junction option impacts in the context of the wider network and fox junction in particular.
24. A fourth access option is also currently being tested at Open Space at Holgate Business Park (see appendix 4). This option is being tested against two rail retention scenario's (see appendix 4). An indicative highway alignment, with

access from the existing Holgate Business Park junction, is also given at appendix 4, and engineering costs are currently estimated to range between £22.7m (land availability scenario 1) and £7.2m (land availability scenario 2). These options would also have some amenity impact on adjacent residential properties on Renshaw Gardens, and require re-provision of existing open space, but would almost certainly perform better in terms of network impact and traffic distribution.

25. It is recommended that Members endorse further exploration of options at Chancery Rise and Open Space North of Holgate Business Park in more detail, to include transport modelling of wider network impact, and that one of these two be selected as a preferred option on the basis of network impact, cost (influenced by rail retention approach), amenity/environmental impact, and place-making/ site arrival considerations, including the fact that different access locations suggest different dispositions of development parcels within York Central, with different inherent values.

#### Water End Access

26. The Halcrow report considers four junction options for a Water End access. Each of the options presented has a carriageway alignment that is constrained as far as is feasible to land owned by Network Rail, west of Leeman Road Millennium Green. Junctions are configured in this way in order to minimise impact on this important green asset, though would still result in the loss of some green space outwith Green which should be re-provided. Junction options are depicted with retaining structures, or in the case of option 4, an indicative extent of earthworks. In reality, each option could be constructed with a retaining structure, embankments, or a pier supported structure, potentially with community buildings beneath. Taking into account cost, environmental impact, and network performance, it is recommended that members endorse that junction option 4 (mini-roundabout) be taken forward in further work.
27. The report goes on to consider 5 access corridor options, with associated bridge designs. These 5 options relate to alternative rail retention scenario's, and vary widely in cost,



from £30.8m to £60.6m. Option 1 assumes very limited availability of land, and as a result, whilst technically feasible, is practicably unbuildable in its live rail context and has a prohibitive cost of £60.6m. It is recommended that this option be ruled out from further consideration, and that future decisions made around operational rail retentions reflect this. Option 4b has the second highest build costs at £41.5m, and passes at high level within around 30 metres of residential properties on Garfield Terrace: On the basis that option 4a provides a less costly and intrusive version, it is recommended that option 4b is also dropped from further consideration.

28. Option 5/6 and option 4a are similar in terms of environmental impacts, being located some distance away from the residential Garfield Terrace and from the Millennium Green SINC, and being similar in alignment and elevation. Since option 5/6 has a single rail crossing, its cost is significantly lower than options 4a, at £30.8m compared to £36.3, and on this basis it is recommended that Members endorse that option 5/6 be pursued in terms of development framework and future operational rail decisions, with option 4a as a reserve option should option 5/6 be prejudiced by rail retentions.

#### Phasing of Site Access

29. Having set out the most appropriate options for providing principal points of all-mode access to the York central site, the phasing of this provision must now be considered. Three principal factors will influence this; the spatial disposition and phasing of site development and development finance/ risk.
30. In terms of spatial considerations, it is likely that the site will be developed from its most accessible areas around the station and Leeman Road, where development will relate to an existing built context and higher value city centre type uses are more likely to be appropriate. These areas of the site would be most efficiently served by an A59 access. This access also happens to be considerably less costly than the Water End option, and consequently, its up-front provision will result in much lower finance costs within the development as a whole, allowing more monies to be used

to deliver a high quality development, that meets the cities aspirations. The lower costs are also a reflection of the fact that this access is simpler to deliver, and could be seen as a lower risk option than Water End to any potential site investor or public funding body. On this basis, it is recommended that Members endorse a phased approach to all mode access provision, which prioritises provision of an A59 access, to be augmented by a Water end access provided at a stage when development quanta/ type and associated vehicular trip generation warrant this.

### Leeman Road and Queen Street

31. The Halcrow report considers at section 7, potential options for providing localised accesses to the York Central site from Leeman Road. The report discusses these in the context of a Leeman Road Closure; a longstanding place-making and traffic management aspiration associated with York central, which would require more detailed modelling/ design, and public consultation. The proposed local accesses are minor in nature, and in terms of associated cost and impact. Members are asked to note these elements of the report
32. The report also considers at section 8 the network implications and costs of demolishing the Queen Street Bridge, and the nature of reinstatement of the highway: Again this is a longstanding place-making aspiration associated with development of the York Central site. The report finds that the works would cost in the region of £5.5m and would be phased over a period of 52 weeks. Members are asked to note these elements of the report and endorse the continued inclusion of the works in the York Central development, subject to site viability.

### **British Sugar Pedestrian and Cycle Access Feasibility**

33. A second portion of the York Northwest Urban Eco Settlement funding allocation was attributed to feasibility/ exploratory work around access to Green Infrastructure. These funds have been utilised to explore the feasibility of forming new pedestrian and cycle linkages from the fBS/MS site to nearby green infrastructure corridors and hence to the City Centre.

34. Work was undertaken by CYC engineering consultancy and explored options to form new links to the regional green corridor formed by Poppleton and Acomb Ings around the River Ouse (hereafter referred to as 'the Ings')- referred to in the study as access corridor 1, as well as links towards the city centre to influence the sites modal share profile, referred to in the study as access corridor 2. A plan of the corridors is given at appendix 5, with the full report available in the Members library and electronically on request. The work reported on the relative attractiveness of different options in terms of optimal location, engineering feasibility and buildability, land requirements, environmental considerations and cost.

#### Access Corridor 1

35. The access study outlines benefits of providing an access to open space and to employment opportunities at York Business Park and any potential future rail Halt on the Harrogate Rail Line through bridging the Harrogate line. The study recommended two alternative approaches to providing this access through bridge structures over the Harrogate Rail Line. Option 1 provided a direct tripartite link between the fBS/MS site and both York Business Park and the Ings. Option 2 provided just a link to York Business Park (from where one can access the Ings by a more circuitous route). The engineering costs of providing these two accesses are estimated at £500k and £320k respectively.
36. Given the objective of increasing accessibility to green infrastructure, and the fact that option 2 would incur an additional journey of around 1100m over option 1 in reaching the Ings from the centre of the fBS/MS site (against Yorks PPG17 study accessibility standards of 240m to 960m dependent on open space typology), it is proposed that the more direct option 1 approach be pursued to enhance the fBS/MS site development.
37. In terms of how the option is pursued, it is considered unreasonable to make provision of the access a prerequisite of the development itself, rather it is an improvement that the Council would be keen to deliver in order to improve the

overall redevelopment. The redevelopment should, however, respond spatially to this opportunity and some level of financial contribution from the development may be appropriate.

### Access Corridor 2

38. The study also outlined the critical nature of providing high quality and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes to the city centre from the fBS/MS site in order to influence travel patterns. The study outlined four potential options for providing new dedicated off-road links to or beyond the orbital cycle route and off-road city-bound routes from water End. The study advised on the engineering feasibility, environmental consideration and engineering cost for each option, as well as giving some narrative on land ownership issues.
39. Subsequent to the main study, more detailed engineering feasibility work has been undertaken on these four options by Halcrow, this work provides an updated cost base of between £750k and £1.49m based on the approach taken, and is also available in electronic format on request, with a hard copy in the Members library.
40. Given the importance of providing attractive city bound pedestrian/ cycle links as an alternative to using the car, it is recommended that provision of the new link be pursued as part of the package of transport contributions to be made by the fBS/MS development site. Since uncertainties exist around land ownership issues, it is recommended that additional work be undertaken to engage with landowners and establish certainty as to a whether this can be taken forward.

### **Next Steps**

41. It is recommended that the approach outlined in the York Northwest transport masterplan be used to inform pre-application and planning discussions and decision making within York Northwest, including assessing the Transport Assessment, framework Travel Plan and other documents submitted as part of the planning application process

42. It is recommended that the York Central Chancery Rise or 'Holgate Business Park Open Space' access option be explored in more detail, informed by detailed transport modelling work, and that a preferred option will be taken forward on the basis of outlined criteria alongside the preferred Water End access options as part of a suite of transport improvements at York central. This will be used to inform the development framework being produced by the Council, which will be subject to community consultation and sustainability appraisal in due course. This access approach will also be used in any relevant public funding bid work that is undertaken, and inform any planning discussions or decisions on the site.
43. It is recommended that the proposed approach to forming new pedestrian and cyclist links at the fBS/MS site be developed in more detail (including full environment assessment), and inform pre-application negotiations and subsequent planning submissions from landowners/developers at the site.

## **Options**

44. There are two options available in respect of this report:

**Option 1:** To proceed with the Transport and Access Approach and next steps as outlined;

**Option 2:** To request that changes are made and revisions brought back to a future meeting of the LDF Working Group.

## **Corporate Priorities**

45. The York Northwest area provides large brownfield development opportunities adjacent to the city centre. Development of this area will help to protect and enhance York's existing built and green environment and provides an opportunity for a flagship sustainable development. The

regeneration of this area will support the following corporate priorities:

**Create Jobs and grow the economy** by bringing forward land to meet business needs and attracting investment

**Get York Moving** by improving city centre circulation and encouraging less reliance on the car.

**Protect the Environment** by managing green space and improving the quality of York's streets and public spaces

## Implications

46. Implications are as listed below:

Financial	None at this stage.
Human Resources (HR)	None
Equalities	None at this stage
Legal	None at this stage
Crime and Disorder	None
Information Technology (IT)	None
Property	None at this stage
Other	None

## Risk Management

47. Failure to adopt an appropriate transport approach for the sites in a timely manner could mean that either development of these strategic sites is either stalled or terminated, or that it does not fully mitigate its transport impacts, to the detriment of the City's environmental quality and economic prosperity.

## Recommendations:

48. That Members recommend to Cabinet that it::

- I. Notes and endorses the approach outlined in the draft York Northwest Transport Masterplan, and its use in pre planning enquiries, and planning applications within the York Northwest corridor.

Reason: To ensure that development in the corridor responds appropriately to its transport related context in promoting sustainable travel and mitigating residual impacts

- II. Notes and endorses the proposed approach to accessing the York central site, the next steps to arriving at a preferred option, including detailed modelling work, and appraisal against outlined criteria, and the ultimate use of a preferred access approach to inform ongoing plan preparation, development enquiries and public funding bids.

Reason: To ensure that this strategic regeneration site is re-developed and appropriately serviced.

- III. Notes and endorses the proposed approach to providing pedestrian and cycle links from the former British Sugar/ Manor School site, and its use to inform the planning of the site and public funding bids

Reason: To maximise sustainable travel to and from this strategic development site, and make best use of existing open space.

## Contact Details

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### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Derek Gauld  
Head of MDPI

Report Approved

Date 25.11.2011

**Specialist Implications Officer(s):** None

**Wards Affected:**

All

For further information please contact the authors of the report

### Appendices

- Appendix 1 York Northwest Site and Context Plan
- Appendix 2 York Central Vehicular Access: Issues and Options Consultation Feedback Summary.
- Appendix 3 Halcrow Access and Feasibility Study – Plan of Key Access Corridors
- Appendix 4 Additional York central access Option at open Space at Holgate Business Park
- Appendix 5 British Sugar Access Feasibility Study – Plan of Key Access Corridors

### Background Papers

York Northwest Transport masterplan

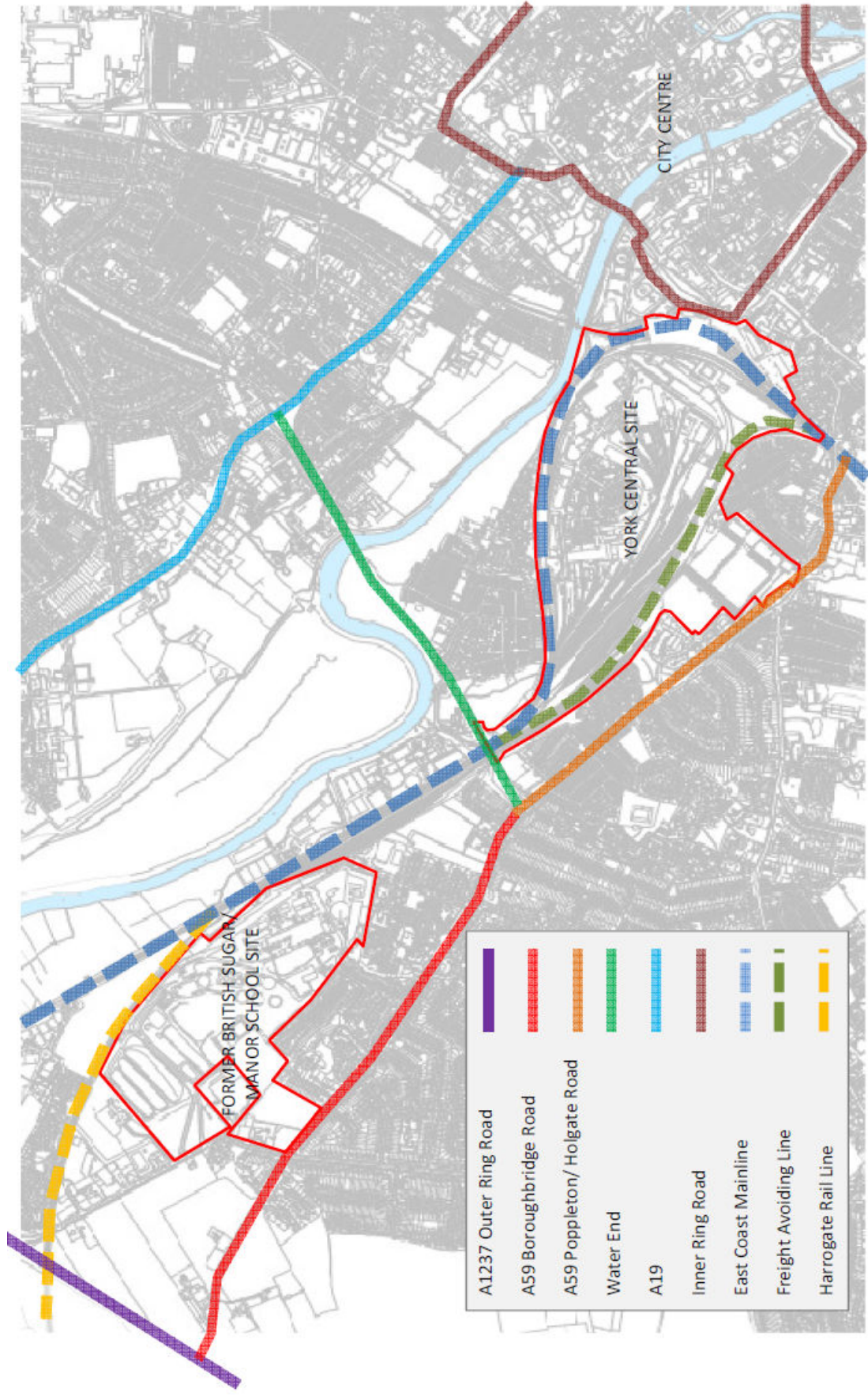
Halcrow Engineering Feasibility Study

CYC British Sugar Engineering Feasibility Study

Halcrow Pedestrian and Cycle Access Assessment Report (British Sugar)



**Appendix 1: York Northwest Development Sites and Context Plan**



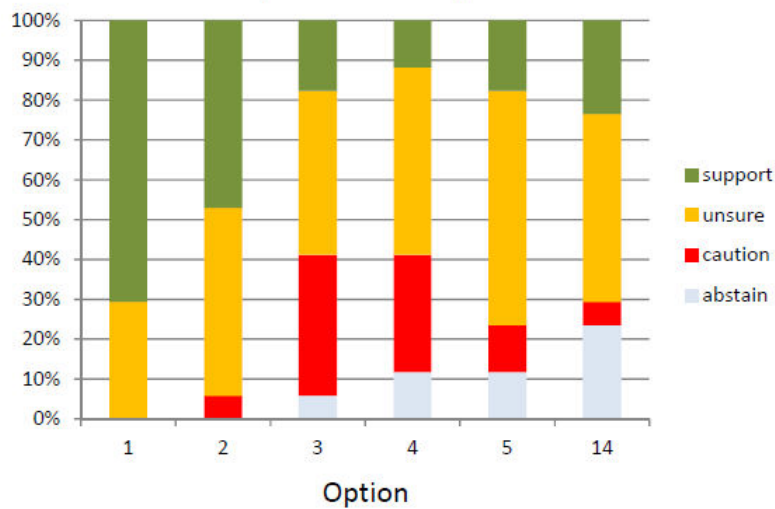
**Appendix 2: York Central Vehicular Access: Issues and Options Consultation Feedback Summary.**

York Central Vehicular Access Options Consulted on Nov 2007 – Jan 2008



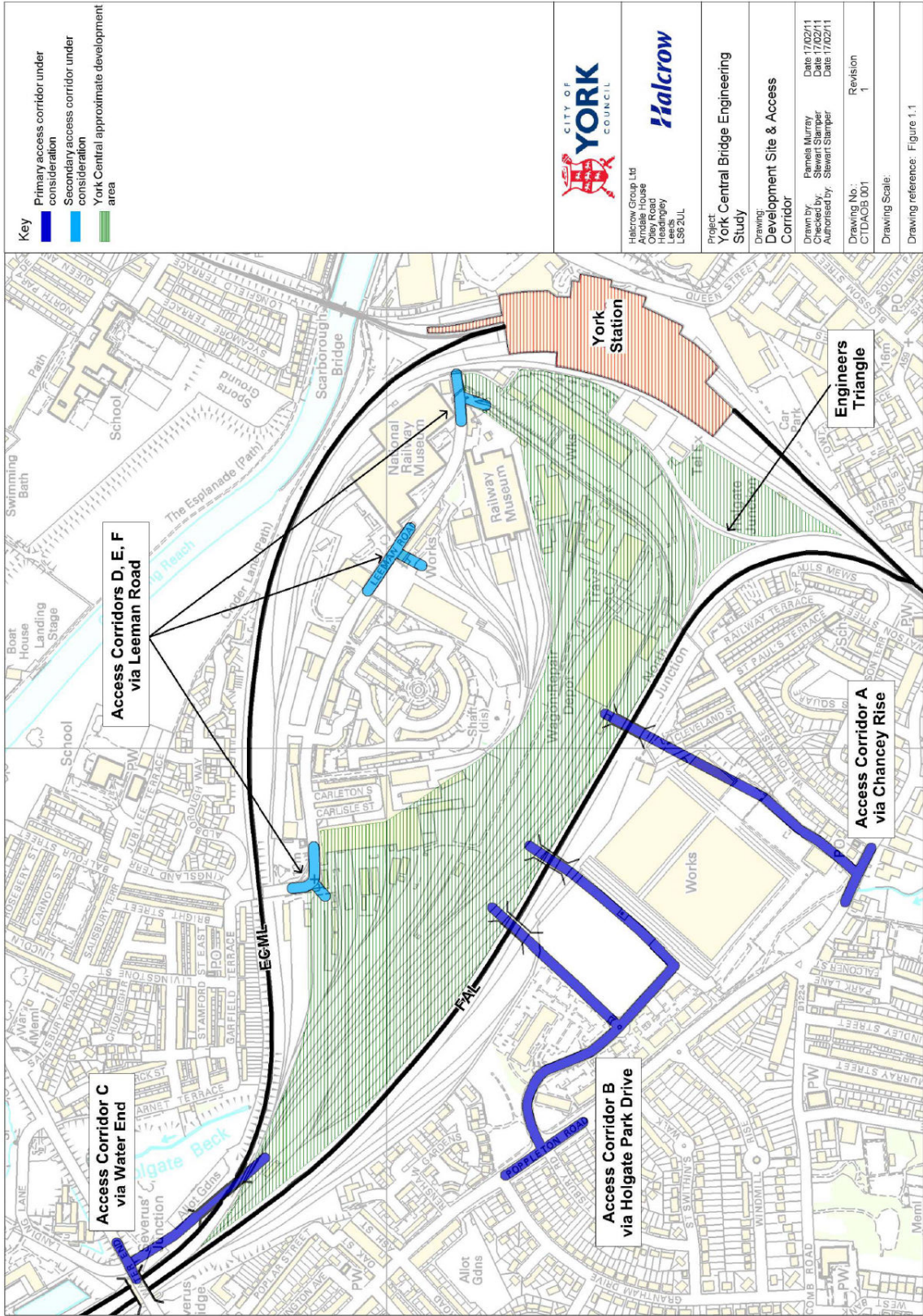
- 1: Water End
- 2: Holgate Business Park
- 3: Queen Street
- 4: Holgate Road/ Acomb Road
- 5: Leeman Road (severed for through traffic)
- 6: Marble Arch

Issues and Options Workshop Feedback



**Appendix 3: Halcrow Access and Feasibility Study – Plan  
of Key Access Corridors**





**Key**

- Primary access corridor under consideration
- Secondary access corridor under consideration
- York Central approximate development area



Halcrow Group Ltd  
 Arncliffe House  
 100 Park Road  
 Headingley  
 Leeds  
 LS6 2UL

Project  
 York Central Bridge Engineering Study

Drawing:  
 Development Site & Access Corridor

Drawn by: Pamela Murray  
 Checked by: Stewart Stamer  
 Authorised by: Stewart Stamer

Date: 17/02/11  
 Date: 17/02/11  
 Date: 17/02/11

Drawing No.: C1DA0B 001  
 Revision: 1

Drawing Scale:  
 Drawing reference: Figure 1.1

**Appendix 4: Additional York Central Access Option at  
Holgate Business Park Open Space**



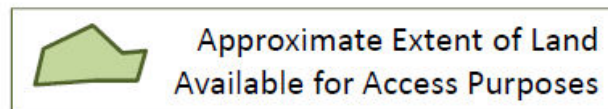
## York Central Access Option at Holgate Business Park Open Space: Rail Land Availability Options



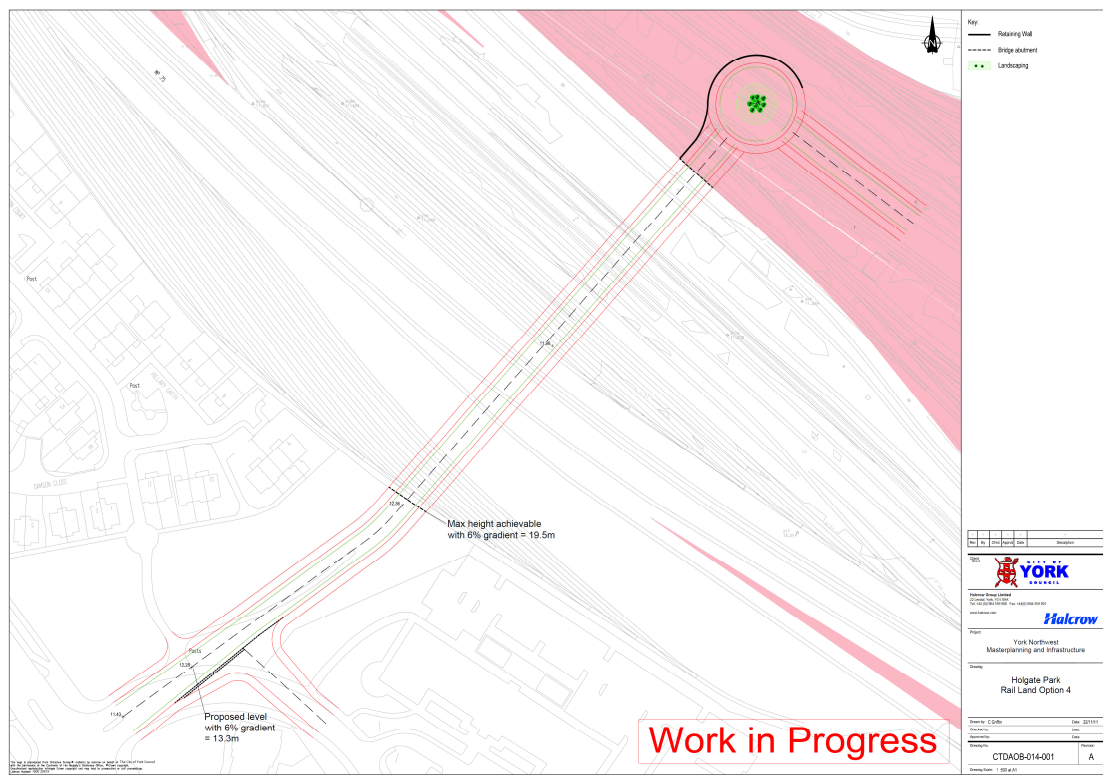
Land Availability Scenario 1



Land Availability Scenario 2



## York Central Access Option at Holgate Business Park Open Space: Draft Proposed Highway Alignment





**Appendix 5: British Sugar Access Feasibility Study – Plan of Key Access Corridors**

