

Public Consultation Summary

Overview

1. Detailed designs (**Annex B**), including a full size mock-up of a contemporary wayfinding totem formed part of the full public consultation which ran from, 1 September to 13 October 2014. Comments were invited through a questionnaire based around nine exhibition boards. The questionnaire contained seven yes/no/don't know questions and four opportunities for free text including general comments.
2. A total of 174 individuals completed the questionnaire. 81 on paper and 93 on-line. Many of the paper returns were collected at two manned city centre exhibition events using the Mobile Exhibition Unit (Saturday 20 September and Saturday 4 October).
3. Specific discussions were held with dementia sufferers and dementia consultants working for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation; People with Learning Difficulties through York People First, and Blind and Partially sighted through Guide Dogs for the Blind.
4. Presentations were given to: the Conservation Area Advisory Committee (7 October 2014); Micklegate Ward Committee (2 October 2014); Micklegate Resident's Committee (8 October 2014) and Guildhall Resident's Forum (15 September 2014); the Equalities Advisory Group (3 September 2014); and, York @ Large (2 September 2014).
5. Three public drop-in sessions were held in the foyer of West Offices running from 11:00 until 19:00 (10 and 23 September 2014 and 8 October 2014). These were poorly attended despite social media alerts and press releases.
6. There were three separate written responses from the York Civic Trust; English Heritage; and, Elizabeth Smith of the Dringhouses Local History Society. There are recorded minutes of the Conservation Area Advisory Group meeting. See Annex C for the full consultation report.

Summary results

Responses to the consultation questions.

- 7. Question one - Do you agree that York needs a new wayfinding system for residents and visitors?**
8. The majority of respondents (73%) agree that York needs a new wayfinding system.
- 9. Question two - From the four wayfinding options which one is your preferred choice in terms of meeting the needs of residents and visitors?**
10. A significant majority are in favour of a contemporary wayfinding solution as represented by votes for Option 1 and Option 2 (in total, 69%) . Option 3, retrofitting the existing cast iron finger posts and map holders received little support (21%). A fourth option, do nothing, barely registered (10%).
- 11. Question three - Is the city centre map easy to understand? Respondents were split in their answers between yes (57%) and no/don't know (47%).**
12. The reasons for this are reflected in the written comments that the majority of respondents provided. The headlines are that the map is very cluttered and confusing. There is far too much information and far too many colours are used.
13. The dementia sufferers agreed with this assessment and found the map very challenging, in particular the mix of colours and clutter.
- 14. Question four - Are any key city centre features missing?**
15. The majority are either not sure (47%) or thought that there were missing features on the map (19%).
- 16. Question five - Are the symbols used on the maps easy to understand?**
17. There was a resounding yes (82%) to this question but when the written comments are taken into account, it is clear that many people found the symbol design and colours confusing and not particularly

legible. Several people felt that there were too many – adding clutter to the various maps.

18. Dementia sufferers quite liked most of the symbol designs but when asked whether a simple circle rather than the 'ragged' edge would be better they agreed. They also felt that clearer colours and larger size would be much better. Pictograms were generally liked however.

19. Question six - Is the detailed mapping easy to understand?

20. Interestingly, the majority of respondents (84%) clearly felt that the detailed mapping worked much better than the city wide map. The colours work better but design still came in for much comment similar to comments for the city wide mapping.

21. Question seven - Do you think the inclusion of local character is a good approach?

22. The majority of respondents (63%) were, in principle, very supportive of the idea but written comments were very varied. Several people commented that it added unnecessary visual clutter to the totems and seemed confused. 28% of respondents were uncomfortable with the representation of character.

General comments

23. These comments are quite mixed but only eleven people left significantly negative comment. The majority were supportive overall but specific in critiquing elements of the design not covered elsewhere. The headlines are:

- Map too cluttered.
- Colour pallet too complex and garish.
- Too much information.
- Walking time on map and finger posts very good.
- Clean modern design for the finger posts and totems generally liked.

Specific responses

English Heritage

24. English Heritage is fully supportive of a contemporary wayfinding system for York and specifically welcome Option one. They do not think it appropriate to retain all or some of the existing cast iron fingerposts.

York People First

25. Generally they felt that the map was confusing and the design of the totem was too busy and confusing. They felt that the colours made it very difficult to see information and the symbols were hard to identify.

Guide Dogs for the Blind

26. The parallel project in partnership with Placemarque and Guide Dogs for the Blind utilising a software package called way-fairer will be piloted early in 2015. Their general comments on the consultation designs were principally about colour contrast and legible fonts.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

27. Consultant's working for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation attended a meeting at West Offices with a group of dementia sufferers to examine the mock-up totem and to look in detail at the map design. They really liked the use of 3D and 2D representations of the Minster and the Bars but felt that the rest of the design was confusing and cluttered.

York Civic Trust

28. Not in favour of contemporary wayfinding signs and totems and feel that the designs will be significant detractors and the extra signage will add clutter.

Conservation Area Advisory Panel

29. The Panel felt that the designs and concept was appalling and unnecessary. The totems would be completely out of character for York and would add significant clutter to the city centre.

Final designs (Annex D)

30. Placemarque prepared final designs meeting all the substantive critique of the consultation proposals. They developed two final versions of the map, one with 'flags' as a visual aid to dementia sufferers and others with cognitive challenges. They also redesigned the totems making them smaller, less obtrusive with toned down character symbols. They also changed some of the fonts on the maps to improve legibility.
31. This redesign was tested at a second stakeholder workshop on 26 November 2014. All attendees agreed that the final design was a huge improvement on the consultation version and fully appreciated the steps taken by Placemarque to address the main issues and the scheme's legibility credentials. In particular the Joseph Rowntree Foundation were very supportive of the new design and felt that the version with location flags was particularly helpful to dementia sufferers.
32. The workshop felt that the number of proposed totems and fingerposts could be significantly rationalised. The group felt that phase one distribution could be informed by a detailed examination of the Station to Minster route in the company of dementia sufferers; partially sighted and others to determine exactly where maps and signs would be most appropriate. Implementation of this phase will inform the distribution of signs and maps in all subsequent phases.
33. The redesign was also discussed on 4 December 2014 with York People First who represent the views of people with learning difficulties. They felt that the map was now very clear and preferred the version with the flags which they felt gave very clear information.
34. Further minor changes will be made to the design taking account of this feedback.