

Appendix Nine

Make it York: UNESCO World Heritage Site Status in the York Culture Strategy

The York Culture Strategy 2020 – 25, *York's Creative Future*, has the vision that by 2025, York is known as a city where outstanding, renowned heritage comes together with a cutting-edge contemporary approach to creativity. York is one of just twelve UK cities in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and the UK's only UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts. This UNESCO designation has helped to galvanise citywide support to bid for a second UNESCO designation to demonstrate York's outstanding universal value as a World Heritage Site.

Make It York fully supports the city's application for UNESCO World Heritage Site status, as it aligns with the key priorities of the York Culture Strategy 2020 – 25, *York's Creative Future*, which MIY leads on the implementation of, alongside City of York Council and the York Culture Forum. The York Culture Strategy focuses on inclusion, participation, and wellbeing, alongside the importance of placemaking and of raising the city's profile both nationally and internationally.

Central to the strategy is York's National and International Profile Priority – the ambition of this Priority is that York's outstanding arts, culture and heritage are championed and celebrated, raising the city's profile nationally and internationally. A recommended action within this strategic priority is to secure citywide support in developing York's application for UNESCO World Heritage Status designation – with the key outcome that the city will secure UNESCO World Heritage Site status, further raising its international profile.

York has been the most important location for much of the North of England since the time of the Romans. York's history is founded on the creative genius of the city's people and their pioneering efforts in making, shaping and protecting its assets for the benefit of all. Today, York is a city renowned for the significance of its historic environment, with York Minster and City Walls two outstanding examples of this; celebrated for its rail and confectionery heritage; and admired for its scientific and cultural innovation, and social reform. Applying for and securing World UNESCO World Heritage Site status recognises this importance, puts heritage and the city's cultural offer at the forefront of recovery post-covid, and will further build the city's reputation worldwide.

UNESCO World Heritage Site status would provide economic benefits to our city and bring with it significant international prestige. It would integrate and maximise the profile of the arts and heritage as part of York's brand, raising its national profile as a cultural destination – supporting the city to attract high-value cultural tourists and supporting the city's forthcoming York Tourism Strategy. It would also work alongside and augment the York Narrative's core value of 'making history everyday': that history is what makes York the place it is today and that we have learnt from our past to build our future. In addition, the status would support the city to build strong international relationships and opportunities, already much strengthened by our UNESCO Creative City status, enabling these to grow and flourish.

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