

Annex C:

Festival of Ideas 2 workshops, Oct 2007
Summary of responses



Sustainable Community Strategy

Local Development Framework
Core Strategy

Workshop event
Friends Meeting House
Thursday 18th October
6:00-8:30

This workshop was one of a series of events run as part of the 'Festival of Ideas 2', to inform the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework. The aim of the following note is to broadly capture the diverse range of views and opinions of those who attended the event.

A comprehensive review of comments received from both Issues and Options stages (stage 1 took place during the summer of 2006) will follow once consultation on the LDF Core Strategy Issues and Options 2 is complete.

List of attendees

Jack Archer	York Older People's Assembly
Lu Batisman	Resident
John Bettridge	York Mental Health Forum
Sue Bradley	York CVS
John Cossham	LA21 Citizens Forum
David Field	Murton Parish Council
Ivana Jakuvkova	York Against Incineration / Friends of St Nicolas Field
Richard Lane	York Against Incineration
Barry Otley	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
Don Parlabeau	York Older People's Assembly
James Player	Age Concern
Guy Wallbanks	Friends of the Earth
Isobel Waddington	Murton Parish Council
Alan Wright	York Homeless Forum
John Yates	York Older People's Assembly
Colin Newbury	Arriva N Yorks
	York Womens Aid
Philip Crowe	York Tomorrow
Paul Hutchinson	Greenpeace

1. Location of Development

- 1.1 The groups were asked about where new development should go, and what key influences (opportunities or constraints) should determine future patterns of growth in York.

This workshop covered the following questions:

- Where should we focus new development?
- What issues should influence the location of development in York, such as land at risk of flooding, congested routes or York's special landscape or historic character areas?

- 1.2 Broadly, the groups were concerned that the emphasis should be on creating successful places for people to live, rather than just on building houses or providing jobs. There was an acknowledgement that to do this we needed to better understand what the positives and negatives of particular areas are (along the lines of the sustainability matrix, but looking at neighbourhoods in York too), and a question as to how we determine what the 'right' level of services are. When does a place reach its critical limit or saturation point? Also, places shouldn't be discounted from further growth just because they don't currently have access to a particular service (eg frequent public transport). For example, if Elvington's public transport connections were improved it could make this village as 'sustainable' as York itself.

- 1.3 It was suggested that if York continues to provide employment opportunities for a wider geographical area, surely this will result in some other parts of the region necessarily going in to decline. We need to properly consider the wider impact of York growing or becoming more 'successful'. How can this be managed? We were also prompted to think about ways in which we can encourage employers to pool their staff from the local area, eg through more job-focused training.

- 1.4 Some other growth options were proposed

- to only consider growth around or within York's main urban area, without any focused growth on the villages. Such growth could retain or reinforce York's historic strays and ings, and other areas of landscape or historic importance.
- to build an eco-town close to York, which could be self sufficient in its provision of services and employment opportunities. This concept was considered by some to be a preferable to increasing the size of villages.
- To build along the existing road network, making use of the most frequent public transport and cycling routes.

2. York's environment

2.1 The groups discussed 3 main issues in this workshop:

- What proportion of the energy used by major new developments should come from on-site renewables, and what types of RE would be most appropriate to York;
- In improving open space provision, should we prioritise the amount, quality or accessibility;
- What are our best approaches to better understanding York's historic character.

Open Space:

2.2 Most felt that the priority should be improving the quality of existing space, particularly with regard to maintenance, rather than increasing the overall amount of open space in York. However, some members of the groups did feel that York did not have enough open space. Others felt that we needed a better picture of how well used open spaces are, reflecting concerns that some spaces were underused because people do not know about them. A key way in which people thought open spaces could be improved was through involving the communities which surround them. It was felt that this would facilitate a greater feeling of 'ownership' over an open space, especially if it involves a broad cross section of the community, particularly young people.

Historic Environment:

2.3 A wide range of approaches were put forward or supported relating to historic areas as well as individual buildings. Discussions on areas ranged from support for York becoming a World Heritage Site, to identifying the need to focus more on the outskirts of York rather than always on the city centre. With regard to the latter support was given to local communities producing a statement about what they considered to be acceptable in their community, others felt that this could be in the form of Village Design Statements as these had been positive when produced elsewhere. In terms of conservation areas, it was felt that a detailed appraisal would help but that there also needs to be greater control over what is developed in conservation areas.

2.4 In terms of individual buildings, people supported the introduction of a local list and pushed for better design of new buildings within the historic environment. It was felt that new buildings should be modern but should complement what is already there, they should be different not built as 'pastiche', and they should be well made to ensure they are historic buildings of the future. Members of the groups also thought that more should be done to encourage the re-use of existing buildings and that this fitted better with concerns over conserving construction resources.

Renewable Energy:

2.5 With regard to scale of RE facilities, diverse views were expressed, with some stating that installations must be undertaken on a large scale, such as wind farms, whilst others felt that more could be done at a medium or

smaller scale. On the latter some participants thought that large developments should be encouraged to implement renewable energy schemes and others advocated that small scale individual schemes can make a difference.

- 2.6 There was also discussion around the different types of renewable energy, with some people supporting anaerobic digestion, biomass and ground source heat pumps (GSHP). With regard to GSHPs it was suggested that these can also be used for air conditioning and that the river could be utilised as a source for GSHPs. A number of people thought that some types of renewable energy were not appropriate, questioning whether York is windy enough for wind turbines. A view was also put forward that biomass (in terms of burning trees) could not be classed as renewable energy as its source was not instantly replenished.
- 2.7 Overall, it was considered that the situation could only really be improved through a comprehensive approach including involving the community in schemes, increasing education, and even advocating changes in diet. One respondent suggested that we should consider becoming a 'Transition Town', by reducing energy consumption to prepare for an oil reduced future.
- 2.8 With regard to design and construction, respondents supported introducing minimum standards which developers must achieve, such as the Code for Sustainable Homes. Views were expressed that developers should consider everything when designing buildings such as lighting, reducing consumption and energy use. Others were concerned about introducing a particular target such as the 10% Merton rule as this would become a 'tick-box' exercise and developers would not be encouraged to do more than the minimum. It was suggested that to respond to concerns that it would affect the financial viability of schemes, the longer term benefits should be emphasised, and that whilst it may not be financially beneficial in the short term, it would be in the long term.

3. York's housing and employment supply

3.1 This workshop dealt with more detailed issues of employment and housing growth, covering the following:

- **The interrelationship between housing and employment growth;**
- **What level of housing growth should be supported annually?**
- **How can planning support the delivery of affordable housing?**
- **What types of business growth should York support?**

Housing Types

3.2 People felt very strongly that current house prices make it very hard for people to buy suitable homes in York. Several people said that many people who work in York have to live outside and commute to work in order to buy the type of house they would like. It was agreed that what people want and what people can afford are very different. There was a shared feeling among the group that the Council was not providing enough affordable housing for the people who need it and furthermore, the type of affordable housing is not suitable in terms of being too many flats. Several people thought that more council housing should be built.

3.3 On the whole, people were happy living in York and like the sense of community that their areas have. It was thought however that older people occupying large family homes are not willing to move out as there is often no suitable "downsizing home" within the community, therefore their large houses remain as an untapped housing potential. Older single people often prefer homes with adjacent gardens/open space and two bedrooms to enable carers/visitors to stay. It was also noted that people preferred the idea of living in mixed communities with a range of well-designed houses and flats with the elderly, families and young people all living there.

3.4 People recognised the importance of building eco-homes and also homes that are adaptable for different residents; lifetime homes. The reuse of vacant buildings and also homes over shops were identified as more sustainable forms of housing development which should be encouraged. Along the same lines, people thought that live-work units and working from home should be encouraged to minimise the amount of travel made between home and work.

Housing Needs

3.5 Generally, it was thought that some groups were not adequately catered for when it came to housing need; this included people with support needs such as those with mental health problems. These types of groups want to live in the community, but one where they feel safe and can afford a home.

3.6 It was thought that although York does not have particularly high immigration levels, there is increasing pressure on local education, health and other public services as well as affordable housing that needs to be

addressed. It was felt however that local people should be prioritised for affordable housing.

- 3.7 People had strong views on the high concentration of students living in certain areas, for example Badger Hill. It is thought that their presence can damage the appearance of an area in terms of properties not being maintained to the level of privately owned homes. A solution to this was thought to be more on-campus student accommodation being built.

Housing Numbers

- 3.8 Generally, it was thought that the type and quality of housing was of far greater importance than the number of houses built. However, some interesting points were raised in terms of the impact of high levels of housing on the existing infrastructure and how that large scale growth may affect the character of York with possible implications for the tourist industry.
- 3.9 It was suggested that house prices are unlikely to fall unless a massive amount of additional housing is provided and also that market forces will ultimately determine building rates regardless of what housing figures we identify through the planning process.
- 3.10 A steady housing growth was seen as the most appropriate rate of increase and with a greater emphasis being placed on the need to reflect the character of an area, for example, villages should be protected from rapid growth rates.

Employment

- 3.11 It was agreed that all types of employment are important to ensure that a mixed economy is maintained and so that there is effectively a job for everyone.
- 3.12 Concerns were raised that the manufacturing base in York has long been in decline and has been replaced by low waged service sector jobs. This was linked to concerns that people with low paid jobs can not afford to live in York.
- 3.13 Small workshops providing crafts/skills which could be marketed locally may redress the balance whilst providing vocational work for a younger workforce not wanting to pursue an academic career path.
- 3.14 It was thought that the importance of the retail industry should be recognised. However, rather than providing high rent units for high street chains, new retail development should encourage locally owned businesses. This, in turn, is linked to the importance of providing affordable premises for local industries that can produce local products that can be sold locally.

4. The role of York's city centre

4.1 This workshop dealt with the current and future role of the city centre, including:

- The role of retail and tourism in York's economy;
- The importance of York's historic core;

Conservation and Design

4.2 It was generally thought that conserving York's heritage assets should be the starting point in thinking about the city centre's future role. We need to encourage the highest quality new design and contemporary architecture. Some people thought that York city centre should be a World Heritage Site.

Navigating York

4.3 On the whole people thought that York has a good compact centre where people are never too far from anywhere else they need to be. There were several issues to pick up on:

- In general there was support for the Park and Ride Scheme, although bus travel in general was considered expensive. Leeds, for example, has a free bus that continually circles the city centre, which would be good to replicate.
- Dealing with traffic congestion is paramount – some thought we should consider congestion charging, others that a tram train from the outskirts could help
- Some of the entrances to the city centre feel threatening or unpleasant to people, eg George Hudson Street.
- There is an urgent need for a bus station in the City Centre.
- We should consider making some pedestrian areas traffic free all day long, and extending the pedestrian-only network.
- People were concerned that a tourist city like York should have such poor toilet facilities.

Tourism and Cultural Economy

4.4 To make the city more enjoyable for residents and tourists the attractions and key features of York need to be joined up in some way to tell the story of York instead of a jigsaw of disjointed places.

4.5 Maps with bus and visitor information should be clearly provided. Modern technology could provide good audio visual facilities.

4.6 Tourism can be unsustainable as visitors travelling from long distances can generate a high carbon footprint. York should encourage visitors to use the train prioritising UK residents over overseas visitors.

Retail

4.7 Some thought that York already has an excellent shopping centre equal to other close cities, and its future should not be retail-led. Several people felt that a large department store is not needed as many people

come to York for the smaller niche shops that make York unique. Food retail provision in the city centre was welcomed, but better solutions to transporting shopping home are needed.

- 4.8 There was a view that not enough is made of the daily Newgate Market, and that traders lose out to food festivals and continental markets on Parliament Street. The council should support home grown shops not large out-of-town multinationals.
- 4.9 Means of delivery goods to stores should be properly considered - commercial cycles/load bikes are a sensible way to deliver to city centre shops instead of vans delivering a few racks of clothes etc.

Evening Economy

- 4.10 Some people had the perception that York closes down after 5 p.m. and that little is provided in the way of cultural or music venues. Some thought that York's existing venues are underused, e.g. Tempest Anderson Hall at the Art Gallery and the Museum Gardens at night could be used for music and drama. York should be more than just a venue for stag and hen nights in an evening.



Sustainable Community Strategy

Local Development Framework
Core Strategy

Workshop event
Merchant Taylors Hall
Tuesday 30th October 2007
6:00-8:30pm

This workshop was one of a series of events run as part of the 'Festival of Ideas 2', to inform the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework. The aim of the following note is to broadly capture the diverse range of views and opinions of those who attended the event.

A comprehensive review of comments received from both Issues and Options stages (stage 1 took place during the summer of 2006) will follow once consultation on the LDF Core Strategy Issues and Options 2 is complete.

List of Attendees

Mr	Paul	Culkin
Mr	Simon	Dixon
Ms	Christine	Elliott
Mr	Patrick	Gallagher
Mrs	Jean	Hart
Mr	William	Moore
Mr	Stephen	Pottage
Ms	Hayley	Dyson-Smith
Mrs	Shirley	Woolhouse
Mrs	Jacqui	Archer
Mr	Paul	Batchelor
Mr	Yannick	Berland
Miss	Victoria	Coop
Mrs	Colette	Craven
Ms	Rebecca	Craven
Mr	Clive	Dodds
Mr	Noel	Feather
Mr	Ken	Hall
Ms	Lynne	Lacock
Mr	David	McLaughlin
Miss	Beena	Patel
Mr	John	Ramsden
Mrs	Margaret	Richardson
Mr	John	Rodwell
Mr	Donald	Sellers
Mr	Martine	Somerville
Mrs	Vinda	Spence
Miss	Caroline	Watson

1. Location of Development

- 1.1 The groups were asked about where new development should go, and what key influences (opportunities or constraints) should determine future patterns of growth in York.

This workshop covered the following questions:

- Where should we focus new development?
- What issues should influence the location of development in York, such as land at risk of flooding, congested routes or York's special landscape or historic character areas?

- 1.2 Broadly, the groups were concerned that the emphasis should be on creating successful places for people to live, rather than just on building houses or providing jobs. There was an acknowledgement that to do this we needed to better understand what the positives and negatives of particular areas are (along the lines of the sustainability matrix, but looking at neighbourhoods in York too) and also consider the role of cultural, religious and leisure facilities along with access to secondary as well as primary schools.
- 1.3 People felt that it was important to prioritise previously developed (or 'brownfield') land for development before considering greenfield sites. There was a commonly held view that York's green spaces should be protected for both their nature conservation value and their wider role as open space for leisure use. Some saw the ings and strays as being more important to protect than the outer green belt, because they maintain the character of the city and bring green space right into the heart of York. Others felt that without properly protecting the green belt York's suburbs could sprawl, which could ruin the city's 'feel'. For some, the green belt also provides rural employment opportunities.
- 1.4 One of the main issues raised by all groups was the importance of maintaining reliable, accessible and affordable public transport services. In effect, public transport can make anywhere accessible. Dealing with congestion is paramount- because York has few 'bus only' routes people felt they have little incentive to travel by public transport rather than private car since both would have to sit in the same queues of traffic. Congested routes are also off putting to cyclists. Several suggestions were put forward as ways in which to improve York's congested road network. These included: making more use of the river, possibly by developing a river taxi scheme; creating more park and ride routes; congestion charging (supported by additional bus routes through York's suburbs).
- 1.5 Some felt that certain villages may have already reached their 'critical limit' and that we need to establish what level of service (shops, schools, bus routes) can be supported by a particular number of households. In fact, some villages could already be underprovided. One of the concerns was that affordable housing is particularly scarce

in York's villages, and some people felt that it could be appropriate to allow development in smaller villages if affordable rather than market housing was being provided.

- 1.6 There were different views put forward towards the ways in which we provide land for new employment opportunities. While some people felt that we should do more to make jobs available to people locally, others felt strongly that people no longer expect to live and work in the same village, or even the same city.
- 1.7 Generally it was felt that we should avoid building on land that floods, and that even the zones in the city where flooding happens less frequently should only be considered as a last resort. Because of changes in climate, some felt that we should plan for instances of flooding to become more frequent, and give over some of York's farmland to flood pools as flood water has to go somewhere, and if we don't deal with it, the knock on effect would be to other towns or villages.
- 1.8 A couple of other growth options were proposed by the groups:
 - to only consider growth around or within York's main urban area, without focusing any growth on the villages. Such growth could retain or reinforce York's historic strays and ings, and other areas of landscape or historic importance.
 - to build an eco-town close to York, which could be self sufficient in providing services and employment opportunities. This concept was considered by some to be preferable to increasing the size of York's existing villages.

2. York's environment

2.1 The groups discussed 3 main issues in this workshop:

- **What proportion of the energy used by major new developments should come from on-site renewables, and what types of RE would be most appropriate to York;**
- **In improving open space provision, should we prioritise the amount, quality or accessibility;**
- **What are our best approaches to better understanding York's historic character.**

Natural Environment:

2.2 It was thought by some participants that York may lose its character if development continues at the current rate. There was fear that development would spread outwards to surrounding villages such as Wheldrake which would create extended suburbs.

2.3 People thought the emphasis should be on improving the quality rather than quantity of green space. Two main points were raised: firstly, since children and teenagers are some of the main users of parks and open spaces, more should be done to meet their needs; secondly, that allotments are essential to York's natural areas, and to helping create a healthy city, so more should be done to maintain existing plots and make space for new sites. The city centre was noted as one key area which offers opportunities to add green cover, particularly on the large development sites like Hungate.

Historic Environment:

2.4 Generally, comments broached the need to respect York's historic environment, to maintain what currently exists in good order and to allow new development only where it reinforces the city's character. Specific reference was made to the Coppergate site by way of example. Participants also picked up on the need to place tighter restrictions on shop fascias and signage in the historic core of York.

Sustainable Design and Construction / Renewable Energy:

2.5 In the main, the groups felt they would be more comfortable supporting smaller, more localised, forms of renewable technology (such as solar panels on the roofs of houses or small turbines on schools or offices) rather than a large wind farm on the outskirts of the City. The message that predominantly came across was that everyone should be doing their bit not only to produce their own supply of energy but also to reduce the amount of energy used overall.

2.6 Supermarket packaging was also an issue which was raised. Some felt that supermarkets should be doing more to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, by reducing packaging. It was suggested that a major change in attitude was needed, and better education on the big issues to draw people's attention to how they can make a difference.

3. York's housing and employment supply

3.1 This workshop dealt with more detailed issues of employment and housing growth, covering the following:

- **The interrelationship between housing and employment growth;**
- **What level of housing growth should be supported annually?**
- **How can planning support the delivery of affordable housing?**
- **What types of business growth should York support?**

General housing issues:

3.2 The group felt strongly that house prices were a huge constraint for all, but especially for young people trying to enter the housing market, whether new to York or as the offspring of current residents. It was felt that people should not be forced to move away from York because they can't afford to buy here. Consequently, the provision of affordable housing should be a priority for the city. One way of helping to achieve housing which people could afford would be to increase opportunities to access shared ownership / joint ownership (eg Joseph Rowntree) and supported housing.

3.3 The group expressed great concern over 'studentification' of certain parts of the city, such as Badger Hill / Heslington and certain parts of Fulford – the number of family dwellings being purchased by landlords and converted to student flats, having a detrimental impact on the locality and also taking up the stock of family dwellings. The view was that the expansion of the University should account for the increase in student accommodation on campus.

Housing types / design:

3.4 There was a strong feeling that York needs more 'family homes', not flats – people felt that the number of flats is now at saturation point, and that many people, given the choice, would prefer to own a house.

3.5 Quality design and construction was seen as a key priority, given that what we build now will be our legacy into the future. Clearly, good design also helps promote the attractiveness of our city. Design should be relevant to York, and the techniques and styles of building which are representative of this area, not just 'off the peg'. Traditional 'village' housing designs should be used in village locations and design in the city centre should be appropriate to its surroundings (with due consideration to the historic importance of York). It was also suggested that homes should be built to 'lifetime' home standards, where they can be adapted to meet the needs of the owners / occupiers throughout their lifetime.

Employment:

- 3.6 People recognised that York was losing much of its manufacturing base and felt that more should be done to retrain or re-employ workers in different fields/industries.
- 3.7 In terms of other aspects of the economy, Tourism was seen as one of the main growth areas. Group members considered that tourism seemed too focussed on 'office hours' and felt it would be important for 'out of hours' facilities to support a vibrant cultural life in the city for residents as well as tourists.

4. Big Ideas for York's Future

4.1 Deciding how we progress as a city will involve making difficult choices as we need to balance environmental concerns with possible growth in York. This workshop dealt with the range of priorities which we should focus on for York's future.

What are the Big Ideas for 2030

Transport

- Be radical to reduce congestion e.g congestion charges, bus lanes etc.
- Parity between Park & Ride and city buses is needed, as well as balance of pricing between inner and outer York.
- More Park & Ride sites and routes.
- Trams and river taxis would ease congestion.
- Open up 'local' stations, ie those in the villages.

Economy

- There should be protected housing for key or low paid workers, teachers, police, carers etc.
- Keep York small and special
- What can we do to further promote York's key visitor attractions?

Community infrastructure and support

- More affordable sports facilities, particularly swimming.
- Criminal Justice, Housing and Health providers must work better in partnership in terms of addressing the needs of drug users. They need to be maintained otherwise they will commit crime.
- Affordable housing – our children won't be able to afford to live in York.
- Major drug problems need to be addressed – it's a big issue.
- York as a church 'power-house' for the North of England (building on its existing strength).
- Remember the residents as well as visitors when thinking about events and facilities, and more for families and young people in particular.
- We need more family accommodation and less flats.
- Create and understand the different roles of individual villages.
- More entertainment for young people – venues etc.
- Build more environmentally friendly housing

What do you want to know about 2030?

Transport

- How can reliability of buses be improved?
- What can we do to encourage people out of their cars?
- How can we improve public transport and make it more affordable?

Economy

- Are we encouraging jobs that pay a decent wage and relying too heavily on low paid jobs in tourism?
- Why don't we use the riverside more?

Community infrastructure and support

- How can my children afford to live in York?
- How can we teach people to drink responsibly - what is there to do in York if you take alcohol out of the equation?
- How will we pay for the energy we use with rising oil prices?