

Local Plan Scoping

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Housing and Specialist Accommodation Needs

Challenges for the Local Plan

The key challenges our new Local Plan will need to deal with are:

- Meeting the standard housing requirement while reflecting local constraints.
- Maintaining a deliverable housing land supply, including a robust five-year supply and longer-term pipeline.
- Identifying sufficient and suitable sites, including a mix of small, medium, large-scale and strategic allocations.
- Balancing development distribution, including provision for neighbourhood areas and rural locations.
- Meeting a wide range of housing needs, including different sizes, types and tenures.
- Delivering sufficient affordable housing, including setting viable contribution and tenure requirements.
- Ensuring scheme viability, including when and how viability review mechanisms are applied.
- Providing for specialist housing needs, including older people, students, self-build and traveller accommodation.
- Maximising use of previously developed (brownfield) land while recognising capacity limits.
- Achieving accessible and adaptable homes, including meeting M4(2) and M4(3) standards.
- Planning for large-scale development opportunities, such as urban extensions or new communities.
- Coordinating housing delivery with wider strategic planning (e.g. SDS, cross-boundary needs).

Consultation Questions

General questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges facing York in terms of housing? Are there any other locally specific issues that should be addressed with policies in York's new local plan?
2. Is there any further evidence needed to inform our approach to housing?

Specific questions

3. Which types of development would you prefer was prioritised in order to meet our housing needs? Please rank from most to least preferred:

- New towns and villages on large greenfield sites, often centred around existing or newly proposed train stations
 - Large scale urban extensions on the edge of the existing built-up area
 - Urban and suburban intensification (upwards extensions, replacing houses with flats, redeveloping individual houses on larger plots for multiple homes, small infill sites in existing residential areas)
 - Large brownfield regeneration sites (such as York Central)
 - Conversions of existing offices or other non-residential uses to flats
4. Do you think York should meet all of its identified housing need within the city, or are there constraints that should limit growth? If so, what are they?
 5. What types of homes are most needed in York (e.g. affordable homes, family housing, smaller homes, accessible homes), and how can these best be delivered?
 6. How important is it that new homes are built to higher accessibility standards (e.g. wheelchair accessible or adaptable), why and in what circumstances?
 7. What types of housing and locations are most suitable for older people, and how can downsizing be better supported?
 8. What should developers be expected to provide as part of new housing (e.g. affordable housing, infrastructure, accessible homes), and how can we ensure development remains viable?
 9. How should the Local Plan balance the need for permanent housing with other uses such as student accommodation, short-term lets, and hotels?
 10. Do you have any other comments on housing and accommodation in York to influence how we approach future policy and decision-taking?
 11. How can the local plan help support the delivery of all forms of affordable housing?

Economy, Jobs and Investment

Challenges for the Local Plan

The key challenges our new Local Plan will need to deal with are:

- Supporting delivery of a vibrant, resilient, inclusive and diversified economy that works for all.
- Delivery of the YNYCA Local Growth Plan objectives, supporting businesses to grow and prosper.
- Retaining talent trained and nurtured in the city to support our industries, providing opportunities for young and old.
- Delivery of land to support a mix of different sectors and businesses, which is sufficient, flexible and well-located to meet the needs of a wide range of sectors and business types.
- Balancing demand for employment land and the economy with competing pressures for housing and environmental constraints.
- Consider how planning could address barriers to economic participation, including infrastructure requirements (digital connectivity), affordability of housing and transport, to positively influence access to jobs and workforce mobility
- Managing the long-term transformation of the city centre, maintaining vitality while adapting to reduced retail demand and evolving visitor behaviour.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach for placemaking York's economy?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. Are there any job or industry sectors we concentrate on supporting through the Local Plan?
4. Are there any barriers to employment growth in York?
5. How can we create healthier workplaces?

Education and Skills

Challenges for the Local Plan

The key challenges our new Local Plan will need to deal with are:

- How to facilitate Higher and Further Education growth ambitions within the city, remaining an attractive place to study.
- Retaining talent trained and nurtured in the city to support our industries, providing opportunities for young and old, including the cost of accommodation preventing graduates remaining in the city.
- Ensuring we identify opportunities to support, uplift and retain the correct skills in the city to support future growth.
- How to tackle unequal access to opportunities to avoid reinforcing spatial inequality and limiting inclusive growth.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach to education and skills?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. Does our current approach support our higher and further educational establishments?
4. How should the Local Plan respond to the future growth of York's universities and colleges, both in terms of student accommodation needs and other land requirements?
5. How can we support the education and skills sector through Local Plan policies?

Retail, Tourism and Culture

Challenges for the Local Plan

The key challenges our new Local Plan will need to deal with are:

- How to support evolving trends in the retail sector to secure the viability of our centres following declining high street demand, online retail and changing consumer behaviour.
- How to protect and enhance primary retail areas while allowing diversification (to more experiential, leisure, residential).
- Safeguarding and expanding cultural infrastructure, supporting the spread of visitor activity spatially and seasonally beyond the historic core.
- Managing related activities such as accommodation, coach parking, day visitors, and footfall concentration.
- How to support sustainable tourism models (longer stays, higher value, lower impact).
- Balance requirements with York's extensive historic fabric constraints with any redevelopment and intensification.
- Ensuring a diverse evening offer and supporting York's positioning as a year-round cultural destination.
- Masterplanning in retail and cultural facilities into new strategic development.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach to addressing placemaking for retail, tourism and culture in York?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. How should York's city centre evolve over the next 10–20 years to remain vibrant, while responding to changes in shopping and leisure habits?
4. What do you think are the main benefits and challenges of tourism in York, and how should future growth be managed?
5. What cultural activities, venues, or experiences are most important to York's identity, and what is currently missing?
6. In what ways should the Local Plan spatially embed retail, tourism and culture?

Design

Challenges for the Local Plan

The key challenges our new local plan will need to address are:

- Balancing growth with heritage protection, ensuring new development enhances York's historic character while avoiding harm to its extensive heritage assets (e.g. conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeology).
- Responding sensitively to townscape constraints by working within York's fine urban grain, narrow streets and medieval morphology, which limit building scale, massing and materials.
- Protecting important views and skyline by safeguarding key views, particularly towards York Minster and other landmark features, while accommodating new development.
- Managing pressure for higher density development, delivering increased densities or urban intensification (especially in accessible locations) without compromising character, amenity or design quality.
- Addressing flood risk through integrating flood resilience into layouts, building types and public realm without undermining placemaking quality.
- Ensuring locally distinctive rather than generic design, avoiding formulaic development by requiring strong evidence-led understanding of York's character and identity ("what makes York special").
- Aligning local policy with national design frameworks while navigating tighter national control (NPPF/PPG, design codes) yet still expressing local distinctiveness where justified.
- Securing consistent design quality across all scales from strategic masterplanning to individual buildings and public spaces, maintaining a high and consistent design standard implementing design detail through design codes, guides and masterplans.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach for placemaking and design in York?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. What outcomes should good design deliver at a strategic level in York?
4. What design principles speak of 'Yorkness'?
5. Are there examples of places (locally or elsewhere) that you think demonstrate the kind of design quality the Local Plan should aim for? If yes, why?
6. Which parts of the authority area would benefit most from area-specific design guidance or codes, and why?
7. How should the Local Plan address design in areas expected to experience significant change, such as regeneration zones, growth corridors, or town centres?
8. Which areas of change are likely to generate the need for local design policy?

Heritage

Challenges for the Local Plan

The main challenges facing heritage in the context of the Local Plan are:

- Balancing growth with conservation managing development pressures while conserving and enhancing York's highly sensitive and extensive historic environment.
- Embedding heritage as a positive driver of growth, using York's "heritage capital" to support economic vitality, wellbeing and place identity, rather than treating it as a constraint.
- Responding to strengthened national policy requirements by integrating new NPPF expectations for proactive heritage strategies, including identifying key assets, risks and opportunities.
- Maintaining a robust and up-to-date evidence base, ensuring Conservation Area Appraisals, characterisation work and archaeological evidence remain current and effective.
- Managing change in Conservation Areas, addressing increasing development pressures in areas of high historic sensitivity and ensuring up-to-date boundaries and management plans.
- Protecting and recognising non-designated heritage assets, developing clear criteria and maintaining Local Lists to ensure locally valued assets are consistently identified and safeguarded.

- Addressing archaeological sensitivity and uncertainty by managing York's exceptional archaeological resource, including areas where significance is not yet fully understood.
- Integrating heritage into site allocations and design tools, through ensuring heritage informs masterplans, design codes and site-specific policies from the outset.
- Defining and applying local concepts of significance and harm, maintaining locally specific thresholds (e.g. for archaeological harm) alongside national policy requirements.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach to heritage in York?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. What 'main heritage features' should the Plan identify, and what issues do they face?
4. Is the current range of local evidence sources (e.g., Conservation Area Appraisals, Historic Environment Characterisation, Archaeology Study) sufficient to support plan-making and decision-making?
5. Are there particular Conservation Areas or parts of the city where pressures for change require updated or strengthened policy guidance? This could also relate to non-designated heritage assets.
6. How should neighbourhood plans support planning for heritage? Should they identify non-designated heritage assets (including local list)?
7. Are there areas of the city where archaeological significance is not currently well understood and where further study is needed?

Environment, Climate and Green Infrastructure

Challenges for the Local Plan

The key issues the plan will need to deal with are:

- Reducing climate emissions while planning for growth.
- Protect and enhance the natural environment by safeguarding important habitats and landscapes, improving biodiversity, and protecting air and water quality, ensuring developments work with nature and support health and wellbeing.
- Address impacts of climate change including water scarcity, increased flood risk, higher temperatures, and wildfire risk.
- Identifying opportunities to enhance green infrastructure.
- Support improvements to air quality and environmental quality.
- Reduce or minimise impacts of flooding and ensure this is a key consideration for development and design.
- Address the absence of a comprehensive Green Infrastructure (GI) strategy, to ensure we can plan in a coordinated and strategic way.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach for environment, climate, and green infrastructure within York?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. What should the Local Plan prioritise to reduce carbon emissions (for example, building design, renewable energy, or location of development)?
4. What types of green spaces are most important to you, such as parks, woodland, green corridors, play areas, allotments or spaces for nature?
5. Do you think managing flood risk and preparing for climate change impacts (such as heavier rainfall, wildfires and heatwaves) should be a key focus of the new Local Plan?
6. How can the Local Plan better support healthier environments, for example by improving air quality, access to nature and opportunities for outdoor recreation?

Health, Wellbeing and Inequalities

Challenges for the Local Plan

The main challenges facing health, wellbeing and inequalities in the context of the Local Plan are:

- Moving from “supporting health” to “planning for health outcomes by moving beyond “health as a theme” to systematically embedding health outcomes across all policies (housing, transport, economy, climate), with clear causal links.
- Ensuring the Local Plan actively reduces spatial inequalities, rather than inadvertently reinforcing them through land use, infrastructure provision, or housing distribution.
- Translating evidence into deliverable infrastructure via site allocations, CIL and S106.
- Scaling up healthy placemaking principles across all development, not just major sites.
- Ensuring consistent quality and enforceability, not just design aspirations.
- Aligning planned growth with health infrastructure capacity (including GP provision and potential rationalisation), avoiding geographic gaps in provision.
- Designing neighbourhoods that support independence, mobility, and social inclusion for all groups.
- Making Health Impact Assessment effective and embedded in the process, avoiding them being tick box exercise.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach for health, wellbeing and inequalities for York?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. Are we taking into account the right strategies and information sources to help build a picture of health and wellbeing for all sections of York’s communities?
4. Help us to build up a record of health infrastructure, community facilities, built sports facilities and their function. Where is there demand that isn’t being met?
5. How can we embed health and well-being further into our local planning policy?

Transport, Movement and Active Travel

Challenges for the Local Plan

The main challenges facing transport, movement and active travel in the context of the Local Plan are:

- Addressing congestion in response to persistent congestion issues contributing to poor air quality, noise and reduced connectivity across the city.
- Balancing a compact historic city with transport capacity constraints, where York's compact form and historic environment limit opportunities to expand highway infrastructure.
- Delivering a modal shift away from private car use, achieving a significant shift towards walking, cycling and public transport in line with local and national policy ambitions.
- Ensuring new development is located in highly accessible locations, aligning land use with sustainable transport networks to reduce reliance on cars.
- Accommodating growth without worsening transport issues, supporting housing and employment growth while avoiding increased congestion and pressure on infrastructure.
- Improving accessibility and inclusivity of the transport network, through ensuring movement works for all users, including those with mobility challenges, and addressing known accessibility issues.
- Delivering high-quality active travel infrastructure at scale by implementing comprehensive walking, wheeling and cycling networks that are safe, connected and attractive.
- Integrating transport with wider place-making objectives, supporting a shift to less car-dominated streets and creating healthier, more attractive public spaces.
- Aligning land use planning with a 'vision-led' transport approach, moving away from predict-and-provide to planning transport around desired place outcomes.
- Coordinating cross-boundary transport planning and infrastructure, managing impacts of growth across authority boundaries and working with the YNYCA.
- Securing and delivering transport infrastructure alongside development, ensuring funding, phasing and delivery mechanisms are in place (e.g. through development contributions).
- Responding to climate change and decarbonising transport, supporting the transition to low-emission travel (including EVs) while prioritising sustainable modes.

- Balancing car parking provision with objectives to reduce car dependency, particularly in accessible areas.
- Ensuring the evidence base and modelling supports spatial choices by updating transport modelling to reflect growth scenarios and test the impacts of development options.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach for transport, movement, and active travel for York?
2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. Do you agree that the new Local Plan should focus on making it easier and safer to walk, cycle and use public transport, rather than increasing road space for cars?
4. Do you think new homes and jobs should be located in places where people can easily travel without using a car?
5. Are there areas in York where transport access should be a key factor in deciding where development happens?
6. Should the new Local Plan limit the amount of car parking in areas with good public transport, walking and cycling links?
7. What transport improvements are most important to help people get around York (e.g. buses, cycling routes, walking routes, or road improvements) now and in the future?

Spatial Strategy

Challenges for the Local Plan

The main challenges for the development of spatial strategies in the context of the Local Plan are:

- Balancing growth with York's historic character and setting, managing development pressures while protecting the city's unique heritage, compact form and landscape setting.
- Reconciling development needs with significant environmental constraints, within a limited land supply due to Green Belt, historic character and setting, -flood risk areas and green infrastructure network.

- Accommodating housing and employment growth sustainably, by meeting objectively assessed need (housing and jobs) while ensuring delivery is viable and well-located.
- Determining the most appropriate spatial distribution of growth, balancing development between the main urban area, urban extensions and satellite settlements.
- Moving from a flexible site-based approach to a clearer hierarchy that guides density and growth distribution.
- Making more efficient use of land in a constrained city, through increasing densities in accessible locations (e.g. around stations and centres) without harming character or liveability.
- Managing pressure on the Green Belt while ensuring long-term defensible boundaries, balancing release of land for development with long-term permanence and protection of York's setting.
- Aligning growth with sustainable transport objectives through supporting a shift to walkable, transit-oriented development and reducing reliance on the private car.
- Coordinating cross-boundary growth and infrastructure planning, responding to emerging sub-regional Spatial Development Strategies, housing apportionment and infrastructure requirements.
- Ensuring infrastructure provision keeps pace with development, planning for transport, utilities and social infrastructure alongside growth.
- Developing robust "spatial portraits" to reflect differing roles, needs and constraints of neighbourhoods and settlements.
- Selecting sites that are deliverable, viable and sustainable, through balancing brownfield reuse with necessary greenfield release while ensuring delivery.
- Adapting to changes in national policy and plan-making system, by responding to emerging NPPF reforms, including strategic spatial planning at a wider geography.
- Establishing a clear, evidence-led basis for spatial choices, ensuring decisions on distribution of growth are transparent, justified and robust at examination.
- Monitoring and demonstrating effectiveness of the spatial strategy, evidencing delivery, defending decisions at appeal, and tracking whether the strategy is working in practice.

Consultation Questions

General Questions

1. Have we identified the correct challenges to inform our approach to the spatial strategy and delivery of development for York?

2. Do you have any further evidence which could help inform our approach?

Specific Questions

3. What spatial aspects do you think should be strategic (considered by the SDS) and what do you think should be considered local (informing the Local Plan)?
4. What evidence would help us to understand how different places in York work, their opportunities and constraints?
5. What should determine a 'settlement' (e.g. scale, access to services, openness)?
6. How should we seek to apportion housing requirements across neighbourhood plan areas?
7. What tests or measures should be used to compare options? Should any measures be prioritised?
8. How do we create self-sustaining settlements and neighbourhoods (including what range of facilities as important, and what size to ensure these are viable)?