

## **Executive meeting on Wednesday, 9 September 2026**

### **Written representation in relation to agenda item 10, Review of CYC community car park and on-street parking charges in response to petitions – The Groves statutory parking challenge**

#### **The below representation is submitted on behalf of the Groves Association**

Dear Executive Members,

In almost every regard, CYC ignored our comprehensive statutory parking challenge.

This report shockingly treats a different, much narrower exercise as completion of our challenge. It preserves CYC's existing policy, offers a limited Minster Badge concession and transfers all our unaddressed issues into "future work".

The only challenger from a deprived community, facing a uniquely restrictive parking regime, submitted the broadest statutory challenge and received the narrowest response, ignored almost entirely throughout the process by the Exec Members, management and consultants.

On 17 July 2025, we requested:

"a comprehensive review of all on-street and off-street car parking arrangements and charging in The Groves" expressly including Union Terrace and Monk Bar. More than 745 people supported it, including every business/ institution approached.

The other challengers raised price-focused letters/petitions. Contrary to the statutory process, CYC bundled them with our comprehensive challenge erasing almost everything we submitted.

Section 18 statutory guidance requires a collaborative, location-specific process and an "agreed understanding" between the Council and petitioner about the policies under challenge. It also requires a clear report and an opportunity for the petitioner to respond before councillors make the final decision. Needless to say that didn't happen either.

CYC instead controlled the scope. Despite repeated requests, it never supplied Arup's Terms of Reference or involved the lead petitioner, the Groves Association or ward councillors in defining the review. CYC never identified the excluded matters, explained its reasons or secured agreement to transfer them elsewhere.

CYC marginalised the Groves' entire democratic voice. No businesses or institutions received the December circulation. A very limited circulation followed in late January. CYC gave short notice of the 26 March meeting, attended by five people, three from the Groves Association. Meanwhile, officers and Executive members engaged directly with Bishopthorpe Road interests, the 'real' issue.

Paragraph 29(c) misdescribes our challenge as a request for "a complete TRO review". Yet paragraph 34 says CYC focused on charges because the 2025 increases "prompted the petitions".

That confuses the trigger with the scope. The increases prompted our challenge. Our (ignored) deposited document defined its scope. Almost fourteen months later, the central issues remain uninvestigated and unanswered.

The Groves contains 144 of the 258 identified shared-use spaces, 55.81 per cent of the total. Visitors using these bays remain limited to one hour until 20:00. The area has no community car park. Monk Bar and Union Terrace attract central car-park tariffs, despite being outside the walls. Lord Mayor's Walk attracts central on-street charges, yet Micklegate does not. Six places of worship lack free Sunday provision as Micklegate and other areas enjoy.

A customer using these bays cannot legally park for an ordinary early evening meal lasting more than one hour.

The Micklegate comparison exposes the inequality. Executive reduced Micklegate and Priory Street to the community rate to allow businesses time to adjust. They permit stays of up to three hours. The 'community car park' several hundred places is free all day every day.

Arup expressly identifies free Sunday morning parking on Micklegate and informal free parking around York Mosque as inconsistencies. This report offers no assessment or remedy for the six Groves places of worship.

The proposed Minster Badge discount leaves the one-hour restriction, operating hours, central tariffs and absence of a community car park intact. It also excludes non-resident customers and congregations.

Paragraph 71 extraordinarily nevertheless declares CYC's arrangements "fair and consistent". CYC's own evidence contradicts that conclusion.

Paragraph 75 confirms that the future parking strategy has not started. Future work cannot retrospectively satisfy a statutory challenge accepted in 2025.

The only proper course is for Executive to record that the Groves statutory challenge remains unresolved, apologise, recognise Arup's work solely as limited evidence about price impacts, require an immediate issue-by-issue review, disclose the Terms of Reference, and give the lead petitioner, the Groves Association and ward councillors a proper opportunity to respond before councillors determine the challenge.

This is a severe procedural and evidential failure with real consequences for a deprived community. CYC's statutory responsibilities carry the same force whether or not affected residents can afford litigation.

Tracy Ostle  
(Chair of the Groves Association)