

Drivers Jonas Deloitte.

Economic and Retail Growth
Analysis and Vision Work
City Conversations
Consultation Feedback



The City Conversations

Consultation Feedback

This report has been compiled to record the process and feedback from the consultation process. This report forms part of the evidence base for the development of the York Economic and Retail Vision and the Local development Framework.

Strategic Aim for the City conversations

- To engage with members, business and the residential community.
- To encourage meaningful and structured debate regarding the next 15 years of economic growth and change in York.

Members Briefing

Presentation to Members

A presentation and feedback session was held with Members on the 26th November.

The presentation included:

- Details of the scope of the Economic Analysis and Visioning exercise
- City Conversation methodology
- City conversation summary – key thoughts and themes

Members were also invited to comment on the suggested Vision, and feedback has been recorded within this report.

Business Conversations

Face to face conversations with key business representatives and stakeholder groups have been held to stimulate debate and generate feedback

Focused stakeholder meetings have been held in 'round table' discussion format. Including the following meetings:

- **Local Plan Visioning session** on the 5th November with approximately 25 guests from the business community. DJD gave a short presentation and facilitated a discussion.
- **City Team** session on the 23rd November which included 25 guests from the retail and commercial business community. DJD gave a short presentation and facilitated a discussion, including a presentation of the economic forecasting.
- **Science meeting on the 23rd November which included 10** stakeholders from the Bioscience and health sector community; and
- 1-2-1 interviews with City Centre retailers to understand their issues and the dynamics of their trading.

Social Media Conversations

Engagement with the City's residential community and the remaining business community through the use of social media.

The residential and remaining business community have been given the opportunity to engage with the 'City Conversations' through the following media:

- **Facebook**- a 'City Conversations' Facebook page, using the existing CYC Facebook page, detailed the purpose of the consultation exercise. Participants have been able to post comments on the page and DJD/CYC have monitored and fed into this. Access to this page is through a 'google' search, through CYC's website or through the Facebook network.
- **Twitter**- A 'City Conversations' twitter account has posted regular 'tweets' to provoke conversations.
- **Press**- New articles in The Press issued by CYC.
- The consultation period was open between 7th November and 7th December
- The CYC hosted the Twitter live feed.
- The CYC website hosted a link to the 'City Conversations' Facebook page.
- The CYC to sent out a mailshot to tie in with press release on the 7th November.

Feedback Responses

The various responses from the City Conversations exercise have been recorded and are contained within the following pages. The comments have been organised according to the following themes that have emerged:

- Identified sector strengths;
- The City Centre environment;
- Infrastructure and accessibility.
- York's business locations;
- Retailing;
- Attracting staff and growing the business;
- Planning and growth;
- Supply chain; and
- Marketing.

The following key indicates the source of each of the comments that are detailed in the following pages:



Identified sector strengths

York has an European Centre of excellence in diagnostics- this is an opportunity

The digital sector is strong

The bio-science sector has unrealised potential

Where we are more successful should be built upon eg Universities, financial services, research.

In a recession manufacturing in China is becoming more expensive and as such businesses are choosing to relocate back to York

Less focus on tourism.

Bio-renewables has potential for growth using York College

Science Park – Have fantastic facilities and opportunities to rent out offices but not fully occupied. Why are there vacancies?

There should be more investment in bio renewable chemicals and feed

Bio-renewables has potential as a sector in York e.g. biologically based feedstocks

Proposed project called the Smart Space Specification – the universities and research businesses meet on a sub-regional level and decide on specialisms

There is a growth in the number of jobs in the care sector- a symptom of the aging population

Diagnostics has good prospects

In terms of regenerative medicine, links exist with Leeds general Infirmary but not York

Manufacturing find it hard to find suitable sites

Smart specialisation is the key. This involves defining the sector strengths

Retail will account for less that 20% of jobs growth

Focus on agri-food and tourism,. Then market and sell to the wider world

Bio-sciences and digital media are sectors that are most important.

Diagnostics in a clear strength for York

We need to move towards sectors with better quality jobs e.g. science and technology

Bio-renewables are a key strength

The care sector will be enormous – reacting to the needs of a future aging population.

York's strength in science is its ability to help ideas grow and get to a certain size

Tourism is an important sector but little opportunity of growth potential. Tourism is the bed rock of York's economy.

Medical and Bio-Science . The Universities play a big role in these sectors.

The biggest growth sector in the job sector is the care sector.

USP is heritage. York is performing well because of heritage, not shops.

For the bio-science companies, clustering is useful but not essential

The City Centre Environment



Infrastructure and accessibility

A trans-shipment site is needed

Invest in Science Infrastructure in city centre for internal growing business

Proposed duelling of the North ring road is unlikely. There may well be some junction improvements.

Get the public transport right and businesses will accept other restrictions as ease of travel is important for employees.

York is cycle friendly but there are more improvements that can be made.

The City should be a place with modern environmentally friendly transport links

The carparking signage needs to be improved

The cycle lanes cause congestion and the bike racks look a mess

Getting into and out of the City Centre presents a serious problem

People using the train from Scarborough to York, there needs to be smaller stations, such as Haxby.

We must not forget how connected we are by rail.

Clifton Moor is difficult to access at peak times.

Reducing cars into the city centre, improving coach park links and improving car park systems will add to the city

Park and rides close too early. It needs to be made easy for people to stay in the city centre.

There are different parking charges or residents and visitors. This needs to stop.

In terms of air travel improvements needed to the connection to Leeds Bradford and Manchester Airports.

Transport links prove a challenge for industry in peripheral locations

There is a perception that it is hard and expensive to park in York

The challenge is making it easier to get into the city centre

Public transport focussed improvements are required

The connections need improving for the pedestrians.

Train infrastructure – high speed 2 Leeds and improvements made on East Coast Main Line North.

Heslington East is considered to be an opportunity site for the bio-science sector.

There should be more provision of live and work spaces

Public sector support is needed for a new science park to emerge

The Science Park is not in an ideal location to travel to and from

North Minster Business Park is a suitable location for more bioscience space- it's the right side of Leeds

Clifton moor is approximately 30% empty. Why is this?

A central business hub is needed.

Incubating space in the centre generates 10-15 business start ups a year. People in this space tend to go back into their home once their space expires.

The ideal space for bio-science companies is a sophisticated shed with a smart front door.

Poppleton Business Park- York needs to make developers re-think how to bring back into use.

York Science Park is not suitable for larger companies as they have to locate over two floors

Digital companies have a preference for a city centre location

The Digital sector has £2.5m on the table for a new location- perhaps near the train station or in the Guildhall

There's not enough decent office space within 10 mins walk of the train station

Creative arts/digital media don't have standard office needs. Now the city has a scheme to provide an appropriate suite in the next 12 months.

Opening a small independent shop in the city is becoming cost prohibitive because of business rates

Shops shut too early and makes the environment hostile.

The competition for the retail is the internet and the out of town shopping areas

The evidence I have is that multichannel customers spend more in store, so we need to work with the opportunity rather than try to combat it.

There is only 20% overlap in customers between the City Centre and Monks Cross

Reinvigorating late night shopping through Christmas will drive revenue for retailers

We need to create a sustainable environment for quality retailers

Shops will soon become showrooms

The strength of the cultural and visitor economy in York is a key driver for retail

It would be good to have lots of small independent retailers & businesses that aren't directly linked to the tourist industry.

How can we better use the space above the retail?

There is very little home ware offer in the City Centre

Opening a charity shop, a coffee shop, a restaurant and a betting shop is cheap, easy and uncontrolled. These are not the kind of shops that are going to provide growth.

National brand shops are not big enough to carry full ranges. The city centre needs to be distinctive enough to attract – not the size of the shops.

Attracting staff and growing the business

Start-ups are good and strong in this city

There are few large bio-science companies- most are medium. Is there room to grow?

Digital businesses are struggling to recruit new staff due to lack of affordable housing

The is no suitable grow-on space. Medical companies have to occupy space with the right image.

The problems with unaffordable housing in York make it harder to attract highly skilled staff.

It is impossible to attract senior staff therefore we have to train from within.

If someone moves to York for a specialised job and the company goes under, there is no chance of re-employment

As important as job creation to grow economies is strengthening the workforce pipeline and nurturing talent

Jobs should fit people, but people need to fit jobs.

Need to address the skills agenda,. There are 3000 people unemployed, 550 of those are looking for sales assistant type jobs. 290 for warehouse jobs.

There is a huge skills base in York that flows out to Leeds

The spatial aspect of the vision needs to consider National Planning Policy – being viable and deliverable

York has a reputation as being closed for businesses

Alive after 5 is an interesting concept- we've tried similar but it keeps failing- do we need better marketing?

We need to build a resilient economy, with the right type of business. History of big monopolies that then go bust.

York is getting a reputation for not getting anything done. Terry's site, barbican, teardrop/York central, British sugar – all not developed.

Marketing the retail through the press is not working

Making the city more beautiful will secure economic growth.

Planning should not be too restrictive, showing a more strategic and flexible approach.

Marketing of the bio-sciences should be better. There are lots of positives that aren't known

Why do we need York to grow? Everything suggests that a large quantity of land is needed.

Rather than city growth, it should be sub-regional growth- looking to our neighbours for strength

It is ambitious to grow and be environmentally friendly.

There should be lots of small moves, not one big one. Big moves are risky. The city should evolve through smaller moves.

Planning is a problem

Planning and growth

Marketing

Supply chain

Supply chain leakage does exist e.g. Lawyers, accountants are often from Leeds or London

Lessons Learnt

The feedback responses have provided some valuable insight into the issues and opportunities relevant to York's economic future. The following conclusions have been drawn in relation to each of the identified themes arising from the 'City Conversations'.

- **Identified sector strengths:** Certain sectors of the economy are reported to show potential for growth including: the bio-sciences (with diagnostics being a specific identified strength), digital and bio-renewables. There is a desire to increase the quality of the jobs created, and this can be achieved through 'smart specialisation' in identified high productivity employment positions.
- **The City Centre environment:** The key messages include: a desire to extend opening hours of the whole city centre past 5pm- including retail, leisure, culture, car parking and park and ride; a need to improve the quality of the streetscape around the city centre; a focus on pedestrian movement and improving the experience of walking, including to and from key carparking sites; and maintaining the quality of the retailers, including encouraging independent retailers.
- **Infrastructure and accessibility:** Congestion is clearly an issue for the city and new development need to carefully consider the capacity of the existing network. Further investment in public transport into and out of the city will encourage less vehicle use- a key method for coping with capacity constraints. Restricting vehicle movement within the city centre in favour of the pedestrian is considered to be preferable, if partnered with appropriate improvements elsewhere e.g. parking and public transport.
- **York's business locations:** Sites in close proximity to the train station are necessary (possibly for digital?) and a new site for the bio-science sector is required as the existing science park is in an ideal location.
- **Retailing:** The strength of the York City Centre retail offer is in the quality it provides. The street environment needs to be maintained to reflect this and efforts need to be made to ensure quality independents are encouraged over non-A1 uses.
- **Attracting staff and growing the business:** Some highly specialised companies find it hard to recruit, and housing could be part of the problem. Training staff from within is one way to mitigate against this issue.
- **Skills:** York's residents are highly skilled and there is a good match between jobs and the skills set of its residents. This needs to be maintained as the population grows
- **Planning and growth:** Planning is often considered to be a restriction on growth but this could be appropriate given York's economic strengths in its physical environment.
- **Supply chain:** Some supply chain leakage is reported to exist.
- **Marketing.** There is opportunity to advertise York's achievements to enhance the investment potential e.g. strengths in bio-sciences

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