

City of York Local Plan – Publication Draft (February 2018)

Policy SS5: Castle Gateway

Castle Gateway (ST20) is allocated as an Area of Opportunity, as indicated on the Proposals Map. The York Castle Gateway ('Castle Gateway') has been identified as a major regeneration area of the city centre. The area is home to major high quality cultural, river and heritage assets that form part of York's unique character, but suffer from a poor quality setting amongst car parking and neglected buildings. There is significant potential to revitalise the area, reinterpreting and reasserting the varied history of the site, and creating a better connection with the city centre through improved pedestrian and cycle access.

The purpose of the regeneration is to:

- Radically enhance the setting of Clifford's Tower and other features within the Eye of York to recognise the significance of these historic assets and interpret their importance in York's history.
- Improve the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the area.
- Integrate the area with the broader city centre.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle flow throughout the area and improve connections with the wider city.
- Bring forward new commercial and other development that improve the area and complements and facilitates the implementation of the public realm enhancements.

To achieve these aims development in the Castle Gateway will be delivered through the following:

- Removing the Castle Car Park to create potential new public space and high quality development opportunities.
- Provision of a replacement car park within the Castle Gateway area.
- The addition of a new landmark River Foss pedestrian cycle bridge.
- Where possible, the opening up of frontages of the River Foss with riverside walkways.
- Engagement with stakeholders in the development of masterplan and public realm proposals.
- Securing public realm transport and infrastructure investment as a catalyst for wider social and economic improvement,
- Funding the implementation of public space, transport improvements and infrastructure through developer contributions and commercial uplift from development sites across the area.

Development within the five Castle Gateway sub-areas will be delivered in accordance with the following principles:

King's Staith /Coppergate

- i. Improve the physical fabric, permeability and appearance of the Coppergate Centre including the possibility of a modest extension, to optimise the retail and cultural offer and to present an appropriate and well designed aspect when viewed from Clifford's Tower (see also Castle and Eye of York below).

- ii. Create new, and improve existing, pedestrian connections between the central shopping area and the Castle Gateway.
- iii. Improve the permeability of Coppergate as a key gateway into the area for pedestrians and cyclists.
- iv. Improve the Castlegate streetscape by reducing vehicle dominance and creating a pedestrian friendly environment.

Piccadilly

- v. Reduce the size of the vehicular carriageway on Piccadilly and improve the size and quality of the pedestrian foot streets, including tree planting.
- vi. Ensure active ground floor frontages to new developments fronting Piccadilly.
- vii. Provide active river frontages to any new development on sites adjoining the River Foss.
- viii. Seek developer contributions in the form of land and/or funding to contribute to delivering the masterplan and highways improvements.
- ix. Consider the opportunity to provide a new multi-storey car park on the site of existing surface level parking at Castle Mills to replace existing parking at Castle Car Park.
- x. Improve the Fossgate streetscape by reducing vehicle dominance and creating a pedestrian friendly environment.

Castle and the Eye of York

- xi. Create a public realm scheme for the Castle and Eye of York which celebrates the significance of historic assets and the setting of the historic Castle and prison.
- xii. Consider the opportunity to create a development opportunity for a contemporary new building of exemplary architecture alongside the western bank of the River Foss on the site of the existing Castle Car Park.
- xiii. Consider the opportunity to provide a new building to improve the southern aspect of the Coppergate Centre and service yard and enhance the setting of Clifford's Tower and the Eye of York.
- xiv. Provide a new landmark bridge for pedestrians and cyclists across the River Foss linking the Castle and Eye of York with Piccadilly with funding augmented from developer contributions and commercial uplift from new development sites.
- xv. Improve Tower Street to make it easier and safer to move between the Eye of York, Tower Gardens and St George's Field, by reducing vehicle dominance and creating a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- xvi. Consider important sightlines across the Castle Gateway area.

St. George's Field

- xvii. Consider the opportunity to provide a new multi-storey car park on the site of existing surface level parking at St. George's Field to replace the existing parking at Castle Car Park.
- xviii. Improve existing and create new connections for pedestrians and cyclists between St. George's Field and the Foss Basin and the wider Castle Gateway area.
- xix. Maximise the development potential of the Foss Basin and St George's Field as a key economic, cultural and social asset for the city.
- xx. Consider the potential for flood improvement work as part of any new development.

The River Corridors

- xxi. Encourage new public access, with varied treatment along one, or both sides of the River Foss, with new and improved connections linking to the wider pedestrian and cycle network.
- xxii. Enhance the existing public realm and consider new facilities at Tower Gardens to encourage better use of the space.
- xxiii. Improve the environment of the Foss and Ouse riversides and promote waterborne activities.
- xxiv. Consider the potential for flood alleviation work as part of any new development.

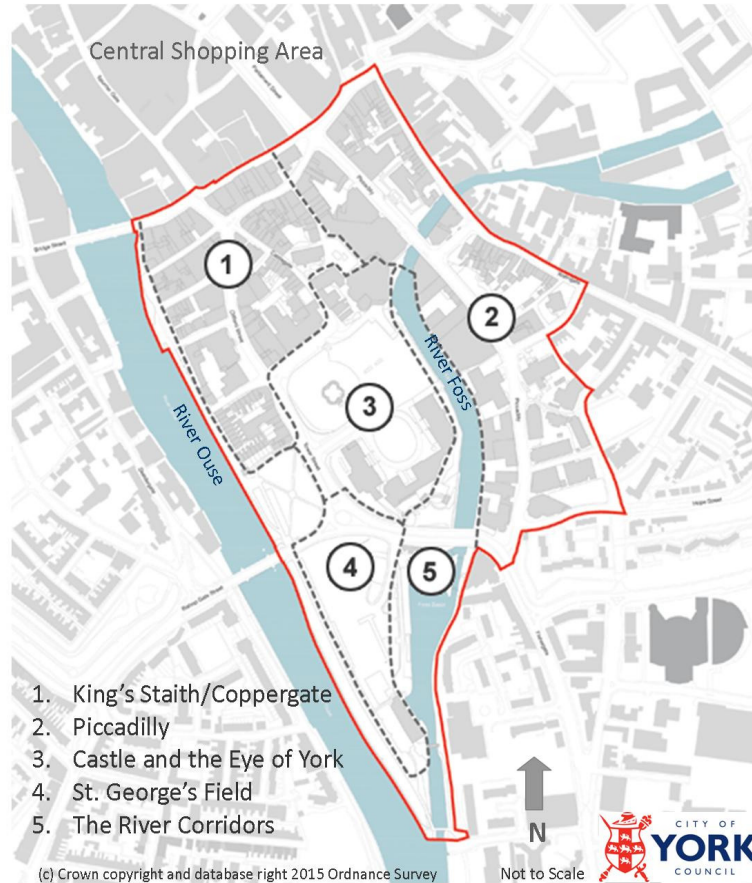
See also Policy SS3, R1,R2, D1, D4, D5, D6 and T5

Explanation

- 3.29 Located on the southern side of the city centre, the Castle Gateway area sits largely within the city walls and the Historic Core Conservation Area, at the confluence of the River Ouse and River Foss. The Castle Gateway area covers the length of Piccadilly, the Coppergate Shopping Centre and the Eye of York and runs through to St George’s Field and the Foss Basin. Much of the area is of low quality with significant dereliction and underdevelopment and yet the area has great potential in both its location and its historic and cultural assets.
- 3.30 Castle Gateway comprises five distinct, but inter-linked, sub-areas shown at Figure 3.4 overleaf: Castle-Piccadilly; the Foss Basin and Ouse Riverside; and the area around the Coppergate Centre and Fossgate. The area contains a mix of private land ownerships and a substantial amount of public estate with three museums/attractions (Castle Museum, Fairfax House and the Jorvik Viking Centre), three court buildings (Crown Court, County Court, Magistrates Court), many listed structures and a historic Scheduled Ancient Monument of international significance (Clifford’s Tower).
- 3.31 Delivery of joined-up regeneration across the wider Castle Gateway area by City of York Council and partners, land owners and developers, will improve the locality and maximise social, economic and cultural benefits for the city. The significance of heritage assets and the opportunities for improvement offered by regeneration are key priorities for this Area of Opportunity.
- 3.32 The York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2011) (the Appraisal) provides the key evidence base for the Local Plan and an important evidence base for any future plans for the Castle Gateway area. The proposed Castle Gateway Area of Opportunity broadly covers the areas defined in the Appraisal as the Kings Staith/Coppergate, Castle and Piccadilly areas, and several of the stated Castle Gateway development principles directly reference the Appraisal. The Castle-Piccadilly Planning Brief, which was agreed in 2006, also provides an important evidence base.
- 3.33 A key challenge is to ensure that this important historic environment is safeguarded whilst allowing stakeholders and land owners to make the most of heritage and commercial assets and the council to maximise planning gain to enable potential benefit for the city. Delivery of high quality mixed use

development of sites will enhance the vitality and viability of the area and ensure it is more effectively integrated into the city centre. Appropriate uses include retail, leisure, civic and open space, residential and employment, with active ground floor uses.

Figure 3.4: Castle Gateway Sub Areas



- 3.34 A conceptual masterplan and detailed design of the public realm and infrastructure will be prepared, focusing on conservation and urban design and including a Statement of Significance. The masterplan will shape the key elements of the development on Castle Car Park, including the bridge across the River Foss. The commercial development elements of the Castle Gateway will also need to meet the quality criteria and vision for the area.
- 3.35 St. George's Field has been identified within the Castle Gateway regeneration plans as an opportunity to provide enhanced car parking arrangements through the development of a multi-storey car park.
- 3.36 The site has an existing usage as a car park and this would not present a change in use or flood vulnerability. Car parks are not specifically identified within the National Planning Policy Framework flood risk vulnerability classification but due to its existing usage it could reasonably be considered as low risk. This continued usage as car parking should be supported where the design of the development maintains and preferably increases flood storage at this site.

- 3.37 The flood risk assessment for the site must ensure that the at grade parking area of any multi-storey car park continues to be floodable in the same frequency of flood events as present and delivers, through design, improvements in flood storage to ensure no increased risk to the site or others. All other levels of the car park should be designed with safe access and egress above the design flood levels. S104 of the National Planning Policy Framework identifies approaches to the Exception Test to determine safe placement of developments within flood risk areas which is pertinent to the design ideals at this site:
- It must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment where one has been prepared.
 - A site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.
- 3.38 The usage of undercroft car parking within the river corridor of York shows how well designed developments can continue to deliver flood storage benefits. Careful consideration within the flood risk assessment is required to achieve this, and any development on St. George's Field will need to consider similar approaches. There are many exemplars of this nationally.

Delivery

- Key Delivery Partners: City of York Council; York Museums Trust; English Heritage; Historic England; York Civic Trust; Environment Agency; developers; landowners; and infrastructure delivery partners.
- Implementation: Planning applications; developer contributions; commercial uplift from new development sites; and external funding opportunities.