

YORK

CITY OF YORK  
HERITAGE TOPIC PAPER UPDATE  
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## **Definitions:**

In the paper, the term City of York is used to denote the entire area which is administered by the City of York Council.

The terms historic city and historic core refer to the urban nucleus defined by the city walls, the approach roads to the city walls and the ancient Strays.

## 1: Purpose

1.1 The historic environment of the City of York is internationally, nationally, regionally and locally significant. This is recognised nationally through existing statutory designations that apply to heritage assets in the City of York and is evidenced locally through the formal bid by City of York Council to gain World Heritage Site status at the international level and a community-driven initiative to adopt a Local Heritage List of locally significant buildings, structures and spaces.

1.2 The historic environment of the City of York is a complex mixture of landscape, buried archaeological remains, buildings and structures representing almost 2000 years of urban growth that underpins the significance of the contemporary city. Past events, decisions and actions, some nationally significant have also helped shape the modern city. The events, decisions and actions that will occur as a consequence of implementing Local Plan policy will in part determine what the historic environment of the city will be in the future. The historic environment is a contested space. Different groups and individuals bring different concepts, analyses and value judgements to this space making it very difficult to clearly define York's special qualities in a way that helps investors, developers and others to determine how they may contribute to better revealing and enhancing them for the present and future.

1.3 However, it is vitally important that Local Plan policy is based on a shared understanding which can provide a view of the special character and significances of this contested domain.

1.4 This document therefore sets out to examine and assess existing evidence relating to the City of York's historic environment and how it can be used to develop a strategic understanding of the city's special qualities and its complex 2000 year history. This assessment has been used to propose six principal characteristics of the historic environment that help define the special qualities of York. The document is set out as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan.

## 2: Historical and Spatial Introduction

2.1 The historic city rises from and dominates the low-lying Vale of York, one of the great lowland plains of England. The setting is provided by the geological context of the Vale: the limestone ridge and Pennine foothills to the west; the Wolds and Howardian Hills to the east; the glacial moraine crossing the Vale breached by the Rivers Ouse and Foss; the Derwent valley to the east; and the post-glacial deposits accumulating within and between the courses of the river valleys and their tributaries.

2.2 This geological context provides the basis for the natural colonisation and development of the landscape and its subsequent transformation by human activity in the period since approximately 10000BC. The geological context also provides the raw materials which are used and visible in the historic buildings and structures of the City of York.

2.3 It also provides the basis for the important long-distance views both into and from the historic city which emphasise the special role and relationship of the historic city in the Vale of York, Yorkshire and beyond. The Minster can be seen from elevated viewpoints located as far away as Garrowby in the east, Sutton Bank to the north, Hazelwood Castle to the west and Alkborough, North Lincolnshire to the south. On clear days views from the Minster and from other elevated viewpoints within the City include the Pennines, the North York Moors and Wolds, Selby and the Humber estuary.

2.4 The historic city is an urban site, continuously occupied for almost 2000 years. It is characterised by a tightly knit, compact core defined by the City Walls, the visual and physical presence of York Minster, the historic street pattern, tenement plot boundaries, and the Rivers Foss and Ouse. Beyond the historic core the character is further defined by ancient arterial roads and commons (the green wedges formed by the Strays), the river valleys, and the pattern of villages set within a predominantly flat landscape of pasture, arable, woodland and wetland.

2.5 The City of York contains complex archaeological deposits from all periods, culminating in the deep (up to 10m), frequently waterlogged deposits that are preserved within the historic city.

2.6 The City of York exhibits layering, both vertical and horizontal, of all periods with no single period providing the dominant theme.

2.7 The spatial development of the historic core of the City of York can be seen as a series of chronological expansions from the historic core which annex surrounding settlements, patterned by the arterial roads (many with their origins in the Roman period), the ancient commons and Ings, and the natural topography. These chronological expansions can be read through spatial progressions from centre to periphery.

2.8 This chronological and spatial expansion of the historic city terminates in a clear frontier where the rural characteristics of farmland and woodland take over provide a buffer zone between the villages and the core. This urban edge sits clearly within the encirclement established in the late 20th century by the construction of the outer ring road.

2.9 A similar chronological and spatial progression from centre to periphery can be observed in most of the villages within the City of York.

2.10 York therefore provides an exemplar of continuity within the natural and historic environment. This theme of continuity is punctuated by periodic transformational episodes:

- the establishment of the Legionary Fortress and urban centre from AD71 by the Romans;
- the establishment of regular tenement plot boundaries and streets in the 10th century within the historic city;
- the replanning of large tracts of the historic city through the creation of two castle precincts, a new Minster and St Mary's Abbey in the late 11th century;
- the reorganisation of the rural landscape through the creation of planned villages and moated and ecclesiastical sites in the 12th century
- the "opening up" of the historic city through the loss of ecclesiastical precinct boundaries in the 16th century;
- the cultural, social, aesthetic and architectural renewal in the 18th century
- the impact of the railways (townscape, landscape and communication) and associated industrial development (e.g., chocolate, cast-iron, railway, gas) in the 19th century; and,
- 20th century expansions:
  - ◆ suburban expansion from historic core in the 20th century;
  - ◆ expansion and development of villages post-World War II; and
  - ◆ creation of outer ring-road and out-of-town shopping and business centres in the late 20th century.

### 3: Methodology

3.1 This paper provides a qualitative and quantitative evidence base for the Local Plan. It is not intended to be, nor can it be a definitive work. However, it does set out those factors and themes which have influenced York's evolution as a city. It has been written by the Design Conservation and Sustainable Development team who provide a specialist advice service within City of York Council. Significant input has been provided by Integrated Strategy Unit Officers working on the Local Plan, the Built and Historic Environment sub-group of the Environment Partnership and the Conservation Areas Advisory Panel. In addition, valuable input has been provided by English Heritage.

3.2 The key part of this paper is the attempt to present in a linear narrative form a four dimensional framework for exploring the special historic character and significances of the City of York. The narrative unfolds through three broad categories: Factors (Section 4); Themes (Section 5); and Characteristics (Section 6). The Factors are large-scale, almost deterministic environmental elements with which humans have interacted within the City of York and produced the historic environment. The Themes provide a high-level categorisation which allows the narrative of human action to develop across chronological divisions. The special historic character of the City of York emerges as both the tangible and intangible expression of these themes in the City of York today. The characteristics provide both the means of describing this special historic character and of testing the potential impacts of policy statements.

3.3 It is clear from this linear narrative that the evidence base:

- is incomplete and that there is a requirement for further specific studies which will provide more detailed evidence for this exploration of the special historic character of the city; and
- it is subjective and that at any one moment the constituent parts of the categories can change and be redefined. The results of any further studies will demand a review of this paper and the process of review may challenge parts of the narrative.

3.4 This is a positive aspect of this methodology, for it acknowledges the dynamic nature of the historic environment and of the values and significances attached to it. There is, therefore, no specific point at which the special character can be determined definitively. The key is that there is a continuing process of observation, reflection, interpretation and action within strategic policy development and implementation.



## **4: The special character and significances of the City of York: Factors**

4.1 The following key factors have guided the way in which humans have interacted with the environment of the City of York and produced the historic environment whose special character is the subject of this paper

### *Geology*

4.2 The City of York lies within the Vale of York, a low-lying alluvial basin stretching for over 50 km from Northallerton in the north to the Humber estuary in the south. To the east lie the North York Moors, Hambleton Hills and Howardian Hills, which consist mainly of Jurassic sandstones and limestones, and the Yorkshire Wolds, largely comprising Cretaceous chalk. To the west, low foothills of Permian dolomitic limestones bound the vale, beyond which are the Carboniferous uplands of the Pennines. Triassic sandstones and 'marls' form bedrock beneath the vale, but Quaternary sediments, principally of glacial, lacustrine (lake sediments), aeolian (wind blown material) and riverine (river sediments) origin, largely conceal these rocks. Most of these sediments were deposited during the last cold stage (the Devensian) and the succeeding post-glacial Stage (the Holocene). The York and Escrick moraines mark the ice margin during the last glacial maximum and form two key geological and topographical features in the modern landscape.

### *Climate*

4.3 Natural climate change so far in the Holocene has seen the area move from cold sub-arctic conditions to the temperate climate enjoyed today.

4.4 The Vale lies in the rain shadow of the Pennines so has lower rainfall than areas to the west. It is prone to fog, frosts and cold winds in winter, spring and autumn. In summer the average maximum temperature is 22°C (72°F). The average daytime temperature in winter is 7°C (45°F) and 2°C (36°F) at night. Snow can fall in winter from December onwards to as late as April but quickly melts. The wettest months are November, December and January. From May to July York experiences the most sunshine with an average of six hours per day.

4.5 Climate change will see an increase in average maximum temperatures, increased frequency of hot and cold extreme weather events, and a reduction in average annual rainfall accompanied by an increase in extreme rainfall events and an increase in the number of dry spell events. Increases in extreme rainfall are likely to lead to increased flooding in the City.

### *Topography*

4.6 The City of York occupies a low lying, mainly flat landscape, with the glacial moraines providing subtle, locally noticeable topographic variations, such as The Mount and Holgate. The floodplains and courses of the Ouse, the Derwent, and the Foss create much of this flat landscape and are key topographic features. There are frequent streams and drainage channels which link with the main rivers which cross the vale.

4.7 The landscape has a generally large-scale, open, well tended character where production is the main emphasis of land management. The historic city has a dominant influence - the tower of the Minster is visible for miles around. Beyond the historic city there are villages of varying scale and character with brick farmsteads scattered in between.

### *Landscape*

4.8 The landscape of the York area can be broadly characterised as being relatively flat and low lying agricultural land dominated by the wide flood plain of the River Ouse, rising slightly to the east. The Rivers Ouse, Foss and Derwent are important green corridors as well as important determining factors for the location of the historic city. The ancient strays and ings (the “green wedges”) extend from the open countryside into the heart of the main urban area and have provided and will continue to provide spatial constraints for development.

4.9 York’s green infrastructure also includes eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) two of which (Strensall Common and Derwent Ings, the latter also a RAMSAR site) are also of international importance. There are also numerous designated Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation and recreational open space.

### *Resources/Materials*

4.10 Local and regionally sourced natural and manufactured materials form the majority of materials used in the City of York up to the 20th century. The 20th century has witnessed the proliferation of non-local, non-regional natural materials.

4.11 In the prehistoric period, construction was almost totally in timber augmented by vegetable and animal derived materials. The use of timber in prehistoric structures is evidenced only by post-holes and other features recorded through archaeological interventions.

4.12 Timber framing characterises the domestic structures of the medieval city. Brickwork exists from at least the fourteenth century with bricks coming from tileries in Walmgate and from around Drax. This tile manufacture is the clue to the shape of bricks,

originally thin and broad and long, becoming larger with advances in kiln technology from the eighteenth century onwards. The advent of railway transportation brought in bricks of grey/buff hue or deeper red/browns in the nineteenth century compared with the warmer local hand-made clamps. These developments can be traced through roofing materials too with flat plain clay tiles or curved pantiles characterising York up to the late eighteenth century when greenish Lake District slates were introduced. With the advent of the railway, grey Welsh slates began to be used.

4.13 From the Roman period through to the 18th century there was use of stone for the grander buildings: churches, the city walls, guildhalls, courts and prisons. From around Tadcaster, good Magnesian Limestone was available from which the Minster is built. Few other buildings after the medieval period used this stone although some monastic sites were plundered and materials reused and recycled. Small amounts of the less durable calcareous sandstone from East Yorkshire, but greater quantities of the West Riding sandstones were utilised on buildings as well as pavements - the large examples often employed to span pavement cellars. Millstone Grit is generally characteristic of the Roman period and 19th century only.

4.14 Brick and tile was a characteristic material in the Roman settlement and can be seen in the upstanding remains of the legionary fortress defences in the Museum Gardens and at the rear of the Library. Archaeological evidence for Roman tileries exists at Peaseholme Green.

4.15 Craft specialisation and expertise associated with the use of these materials can be seen in all chronological periods. Of particular note are the innovations employed by the master masons in construction of the minster, the craft and art of the glaziers who produced stained and painted glass in the medieval period and the expression of emerging architectural style and form in the 18th century.

## **5: The Special Character and Significances of the City of York: Themes**

5.1 The special historic character of the City of York is expressed through the themes set out in this section. The visible and hidden spatial and physical expression of activities within these themes form the individual and group assets, which together make up the historic and natural environment.

### *Economy (Farming, Trade, Industry, Tourism)*

5.2 This theme groups together human interactions with the environment that have produced economic activity ranging from prehistoric subsistence activities to modern retail and industrial activity.

5.3 Apart from finds of Mesolithic flint artefacts in later contexts, there is no evidence for human activity in the area between c.10000BC and c.4000BC.

5.4 The emergence of landscape divisions and an agricultural, settled landscape begins in the 4th millennia BC and continues today. The late-prehistoric economy is dominated by agricultural activity.

5.5 The introduction by the Romans of an organised, semi-industrial, economy witnessed an expansion of international, regional and local trade. Locally, pottery and tile manufacture is important.

5.6 This period also saw increased communication links. More extensive use of the rivers and the new road system facilitated an increased scale and pace of change.

5.7 There is a lack of evidence for the nature and extent of economic activity in the immediate post-Roman. However, from the 8th century onwards there is a reassertion of economic activity evidenced in urban/ rural relationships. Local regional and international merchant trading links emerge. There is increased trade and craft specialisation which sees the emergence of social and organisational structures (e.g. guilds), spatial grouping of trades in discrete localities. Significantly, traditional craft skills remain important in the City today.

5.8 Common land (e.g. the Strays), the Ings land, and open fields (many subsequently divided and enclosed) provided the framework for contemporary agricultural activity. The importance of open field agriculture can be seen in the pattern of strips evidenced through the characteristic reversed-S ridge and furrow earthworks and field boundaries and hedges. Where ridge and furrow survives it is often associated with unimproved grassland, an important ecological habitat.

5.9 York has been an important centre for regular markets and fairs in all periods. This role has left significant traces in the historic environment of the City of York.

5.10 The late 18th and early 19th centuries saw the advent of relatively large-scale industrial development. This is characterised by the importation of raw materials, the emergence of tanning, iron-working, gas production. These are strongly associated with the development of water-borne and railway links.

5.11 The manufacture of rolling stock, chocolate and confectionery manufacturing and the growth of industrial-scale flax and flour milling, and brewing characterises the economy of the late 19th and 20th centuries. The development of highly skilled instrument manufacturing emerges in the 19th century.

5.12 The 20th century witnessed the rise and fall of sugar manufacturing in the City and a move from manufacturing in general to a service and retail based economy. Insurance, retail, tourism and public sector employment characterise the late 20th century early 21st century economy.

5.13 The emergence of international and large-scale tourism is a 20th century phenomenon, culminating in the current estimate of 7m visitors to the city each year. Tourism forms a key part of the economy of the modern city. However, York's role as a focus for visitors occupied by leisure and curiosity can be traced back to 17th century. Today, tourism also provides a significant driver for the conservation and interpretation of the historic environment.

#### *Administration (Government, Education, Health)*

5.14 It is difficult if not impossible to characterise the nature of tribal "administration" in the City of York in the prehistoric period. Administrative roles did not arise prior to the Roman period. York has been a centre of civil administration since the creation of Eboracum, the Roman legionary fortress in 71AD, and the subsequent emergence of the civilian town. Roman York achieved the status of colonia the highest legal status that could be conferred on a Roman town, probably by c 200AD.

5.15 York has subsequently performed national, regional and local administrative roles across almost 2000 years.

5.16 In the Anglian period (c 400AD to c 866AD) York was certainly a Royal centre. King Edwin of Northumbria was baptised here in 627. By the 8th century the city had a reputation for learning and scholarship, epitomised by the career of Alcuin: educated at the cathedral school in York and destined to be head of the palace school at Aachen and advisor to Charlemagne from 781AD.

5.17 In 866AD, York was captured by the Viking army; in 876AD, the Vikings returned and settled in Northumbria. For nearly 100 years, York was the centre of a Viking kingdom. There were two palaces in the historic city.

5.18 The demise of the Viking kingdom in the 950s AD, the emergence of a unified English kingdom saw the transition of York from a royal and capital centre to an important regional and at times national centre for administration. The emerging role of York as a self-governing polity was recognised through a series of royal charters from AD1154 onwards. These both recognised and anticipated the roles of the York Corporation and the guilds. The disputes in the 13th century concerning the authority of the York Corporation in the Ainsty (a large rural area defined by the Nidd, the Ouse and the Wharfe) anticipate the subsequent extension of local administration in the late 20th century.

5.19 Throughout this time York functioned as a mint, a market centre, a centre for tax collection, and legal administration.

5.20 In the 16th century, the presence of the King's Council in the North established York as the capital of northern England; the government at York effectively prosecuted royal and judicial administration throughout the north of England.

5.21 The establishment of private charities, institutions and schools largely from the 17th century onwards to provide care, assistance and education in the City of York has created a significant footprint in the historic environment.

5.22 From the 17th century, one can trace the focus of local administration in detail through the records of York Corporation: election of civic office-holders; care of the finances and the raising of special rates; admissions to freedom and regulation of trade and industry; repair of such public property as walls, streets, bridges, and staiths; provision of public services as gaols, conduits, sewers, and common crane; and precautions against plague and relief of pauperism and distress. These roles expanded through the 19th and 20th centuries to include education (excluding the private schools and colleges within the City of York) and health.

5.23 York in the twentieth century grew as an industrial town, but not on the scale of its West Riding neighbours. In the later part of the century, it turned more to white-collar employment, in the insurance business, in tourism and in education. The founding of the University of York in 1963, the growth and development of St John's College from its origins as the Diocesan Training College for Schoolmasters opened in 1845 to the University of York St John, the opening of the College of Law in 1989 and the establishment of medical training at the Hull and York Medical School in 2002 has made York a major centre for higher education.

*Ecclesiastical/ belief*

5.24 The tangible and intangible expressions of belief systems, and in particular Christianity, have had a huge influence on the character and appearance of the City of York.

5.25 There is little evidence for prehistoric ritual sites, though individual finds (eg the Campus 3 Iron Age skull, complete with brain, deposited in a ditch) hint at spiritual beliefs tied in with spatial organisation. Prehistoric burial sites are rare and thus are of great significance when they are identified.

5.26 Roman religious beliefs and practices are much more clearly evidenced through archaeological finds and monuments. Cemeteries dating from the 1st to 5th centuries encircle the historic city; these are of international importance. Temples, evidenced by altar stones and dedication inscriptions, have been found throughout the City of York. Evidence for pre-Christian, Anglian worship and funerary sites is very rare.

5.27 Edwin, King of Northumbria, was baptised by Paulinus at York in 627AD. He was baptised in a wooden structure in which soon after his baptism, was replaced by a church of stone. These events are likely to have taken place within the former Roman principia building and established the site of York Minster. The expression of Christian belief in the City of York has produced a range of structures, artefacts and traditions and events that are of international, national regional and local significance. Most notable in the historic environment are the physical expressions of this tradition that survive from the medieval period: the Minster, St Mary's Abbey, and the parish churches throughout the City of York. The articulation of Christian belief through artistic work has produced an unrivalled collection medieval art expressed in stained glass, statuary, carvings and plays. It is difficult to overstate the physical, social and cultural domination of the medieval city by the practice and expression of Christianity. York Minster is still the pre-eminent structure in the City of York today and it continues to play a significant role in the religious, social and cultural life of the city.

5.28 The impact of the Dissolution in the City of York on this medieval legacy was transformational. The extensive medieval religious precincts were swept away; several parishes were also merged in the 16th century. The 17th and 18th centuries witnessed the development of Protestant Nonconformity in the City. The Society of Friends (Quakers) was established in the city following a visit by George Fox in 1651. This is notable because of the significant role and impact of Quaker families (e.g. Rowntree, Terry) in York in the 19th century.

5.29 Evidence for Roman Catholicism can be traced in the historic city in the 17th 18th and 19th centuries despite the persecutions until the Catholic Relief Acts in the late 18th century. The Bar Convent was founded in 1686. However, it is not until the Irish

immigration of the 1840's that there was a significant increase in the number of practicing Roman Catholics and new churches were built to accommodate them.

5.30 The only evidence for post-Roman, non-Christian belief in the City of York prior to the 20th century relates to the Jewish community. In the 12th century, the York Jewish community was one of the largest and most important in England. In March 1190, an infamous pogrom took place at York Castle; some 150 Jewish men women and children were massacred. This event is of international significance and continues to be important to the Jewish community today. After the expulsion of the Jews from England in the 13th century, there appears to have been no Jewish religious community in the City of York until modern times. The York Hebrew Congregation was formed in 1892 and a room at 9 Aldwark was rented for services that were still taking place there in 1956. Today, there is no synagogue in the City of York, a heavy and enduring legacy of the events of March 1190.

5.31 There is no evidence for Islam or Muslims in medieval York, although Islamic artifacts (most notably coinage) have been recovered from archaeological contexts dating from as early as the 9th century. In 1982, the York Mosque and Islamic Centre was opened and today there is a mosque in Bull Lane.

#### *Military/Defence*

5.32 There is no evidence for prehistoric defensive enclosures. The earliest military evidence is provided by the arrival of the Roman Ninth Legion in 71AD. The defensive features of the legionary fortress evolved over the next three centuries. More than 50% of the line of the fortress defences either form or are preserved under the medieval defences between Museum Street, the Multangular Tower, Robin Hood's Tower and the Merchant Taylor's Hall. Significant elements are visible in the contemporary townscape. It is also possible that the Roman civil town on the south-east bank of the Ouse in the Bishophill area was also defended. Temporary Roman camps are located on Bootham Stray and Monks Cross.

5.33 In the post-Roman, pre-Viking period (c410 AD to c876 AD) there is no clear evidence for development or adaptation of the defences round the historic core.

5.34 During the 9th and 10th centuries it is probable that key extensions to the defences were made (a) between the legionary fortress and the River Ouse where Lendal Bridge now stands (b) between the north-east corner tower of the legionary fortress and the River Foss (Merchant Taylors Hall to Layerthorpe) and a possible extension at (c) in Walmgate.

5.35 The medieval defences of the historic city emerge in the form in which they exist in the modern townscape from the 11th century onwards. York Castle and the Old Baille are built by William the Conqueror in AD1067-68. The construction of York Castle is accompanied by the formation of a dam across the mouth of the Foss Valley. This



created an artificial lake which extended from what is now Castle Mills Bridge to Foss Islands Road, Osbaldwick Beck and Monk Bridge in the Foss Valley. This lake, the Kings Fishpool, meant that it was not necessary to construct defences between Red Tower and Layerthorpe (the modern Foss Islands Road). The main gateways into the historic core (apart from Monk Bar) are all constructed in stone by the early 12th century. During the 13th and 14th centuries the defences are completed with the addition of stone walls to the top of the rampart. York is the only place in the UK where town walls are constructed on the apex of the rampart. Chains were installed which could be raised and lowered between Lendal Tower and Barker Tower on the north and Davy Tower and Skeldergate Postern on the south side of the historic city. These controlled access to the city up and down the River Ouse.

5.36 In AD1266 St Mary's Abbey was granted a license to crenellate. The walls around the abbey date from the late 13th century and represent both an ecclesiastical precinct and an additional defensive feature on the north side of the historic city

5.37 During the medieval period, the walls were a physical expression of the importance and role of the city and its Corporation. They controlled access into the city; they allowed the collection of taxes and regulation of trade; they were the focus of ceremony and display. They stood as a secular counterpoint to the looming presence of the Minster, St Mary's Abbey and the other ecclesiastical precincts that dominated the medieval city. The City Walls were on occasion prepared for but rarely used for defence. It was not until AD 1644 and the Siege of York that the walls were properly utilised for their defensive qualities. The walls were hastily repaired, houses around the outside of the walls and on the arterial roads were demolished and defensive outworks were constructed. Many of these outworks were captured by the besieging Parliamentary armies and turned into siege works. With the exception of the lazily rebuilt Marygate Tower, very little evidence of the siege of York is visible in the townscape today.

5.38 Due to its administrative and strategic importance York has been the focus of large scale battles, from the difficult to locate 11th century battles of Fulford and Stamford Bridge, to Towton (AD 1461) and Marston Moor (AD 1644).

5.39 Military quarters in Fulford Road are thought to have been established on the site of the later barracks as early as 1720. Over the following centuries the area developed through acquisitions to include cavalry barracks, a military hospital, an ordnance factory and quay, and married quarters. Beyond Fulford Road, new buildings were constructed and existing buildings taken over (for instance, the De Grey Rooms, Tower House Fishergate, Fishergate House). Drill Halls exist in Colliergate and Tower Street. There has been a military barracks and training area since 1880's on Strensall Common.

5.40 In the 20th century military airfields were established in the City of York. A WWI airfield was created at Copmanthorpe. In WWII airfields were established at Clifton Moor,

Elvington, Acaster Malbis and Rufforth. Associated camps for airmen can be traced at Clifton Backies (now a significant SINC site) and at the rear of the City Art Gallery in the historic core. A Royal Observer Corps Observation Post now functions as sports changing room on Little Knavesmire. In addition, searchlight stations, a decoy site and air-raid shelters and bomb sites survive.

5.41 Formal War Memorials can be found throughout the City of York, and there are informal memorials such as the famous 'Betty's Mirror' in Betty's Tea Room in St Helens Square.

5.42 The Cold War Bunker in Acomb, in use between 1960 and 1990 is a scheduled ancient monument originally designed as a nerve-centre to monitor fall-out in the event of a nuclear attack.

### *Communication*

5.43 The City of York occupies a significant location within the Vale of York. It lies at the point where two rivers cut through the York Moraine and merge.

5.44 The moraine and the rivers will have provided convenient routes for local and regional communications from the prehistoric period onwards. Archaeological finds attest to communication across great distances. A good example is the greenstone Neolithic axes from the Great Langdale 'axe-factories' that have been found at Dringhouses. These objects may have been traded, exchanged or perhaps carried by an individual from the Lake District to the Vale of York. These long-distance routes would have been complimented by a network of local paths and trackways through the landscape.

5.45 In the Roman period, these existing communication routes were extended by the addition of engineered roads and bridges. Archaeological evidence points to the existence of metalled and unmetalled roads and to a bridge across the River Ouse between Wellington Row and Coney Street at this time. Land and water routes linked Eburacum to the wider Roman Empire. Isotopic analyses of Roman skeletal remains and epigraphic evidence demonstrate a diverse city populated by migrants to York from across and beyond the Empire. Raw materials and finished objects were transported to and from York along a complex network of local, regional and national routes.

5.46 In the period from the 5th to the 11th centuries it is reasonable to assume that the rivers continued to provide most effective means of transportation and communication. Archaeological evidence indicates extensive trading/ exchange contacts between York and the continent. The establishment of the Viking Kingdom of York with its extensive national and international links was inextricably tied in with water communication.

5.47 Some of the major Roman roads would have remained in use and to some repaired. The alignment of the main arterial roads (Bootham/ Clifton, Tadcaster Road/

The Mount/ Blossom Street, Heworth Green/ Stockton Lane, Lawrence Street/ Hull Road) follow the line of Roman roads; it is reasonable to infer that these roads were maintained. Certainly much later, in the 14th and 15th centuries, York merchants occasionally made gifts towards the improvement of roads and bridges around the city. In the medieval period, the corporation was responsible for the upkeep of roads as far as the boundary of the liberty of the city. However, systematic construction of paved highways did not resume until the building of turnpikes in the 18th century. The system of turnpikes facilitated an increase in local and national coach traffic. A service between London and York had been established by 1658, and several local services were inaugurated during the 18th century. However, the greatest increase took place in the early 19th century, when the number of services rose from 14 in 1796 to 36 in 1823. From the 19th century onwards there has been significant development of the road system leading to the present highway hierarchy.

5.48 By the 10th century the Roman bridge across the Ouse had fallen out of use and had been replaced by a new bridge on the site of the current Ouse Bridge. This bridge and its successors was the only bridge over the River Ouse between York and the Humber Estuary until the Scarborough Railway Bridge was built in 1845, followed by Skeldergate, Lendal and, in the early 21st century, the Millennium Bridge. Beyond the historic city, river crossings were affected largely by ferry or ford. Ferries are evidenced by place names at Bishopthorpe and Naburn. There was a ferry on the site of Lendal Bridge, at the site of the Millennium Bridge and at Water End in Clifton. By the end of the 18th century there were three bridges across the River Foss at Foss Bridge, Layerthorpe and Monk Bridge.

5.49 In the 14th century citizens described the River Ouse as a 'highway' of trade coming from all parts of Yorkshire and further afield. By the 17th century efforts were being made to deal with navigation problems caused by silting between York and the Humber Estuary. It was not until the construction of the weir and lock at Naburn in 1757 that a concerted effort was made to ameliorate navigation of the Ouse. Regular passenger services on the river appear to have started in the early 19th century; a steam packet had begun to ply between Hull and York as early as April 1816 but the service had disappeared by 1876.

5.50 An Act 'for making and maintaining a navigable communication from the junction of the Foss and Ouse to Stillington Mill' was passed in 1793. By November 1794 the Foss Navigation had been opened up to Monk Bridge and by June of the following year the line had been marked as far as Sheriff Hutton. However, the navigation never delivered significant profits and the subsequent failure of the navigation was due to mismanagement and over-expenditure. However, the construction of and competition from the York and Scarborough railway ruined it. By 1845 it was silted up and stagnant and the corporation was anxious to take it over and cleanse it. An Act authorizing them to do so was obtained in 1853. The Foss retained a commercial function between Castle Mills Bridge and Foss Islands Road until the last delivery of newsprint by barge was made to the Evening Press plant in 1997.

5.51 York has been an important centre not only of railway routes but of railway administration from almost the very start of the Railway era. It was, in particular, the headquarters of the North Eastern Railway throughout the company's existence (1854-1923). York has attracted many ancillary railway activities, from carriage-building to the National Railway Museum. The city's first railway connection was constructed by the York and North Midland from York to Normanton, where it connected with lines to London and Leeds; it was built in three stages, the first opened in May 1839, the second in May 1840, and the third in July 1840. The opening of the Hull & Selby Company's line, also in 1840, extended rail communication from York to Hull. A temporary station in Queen Street was used until the Old Railway Station was built inside the city walls near Tanner Row in 1839. In 1877 the current railway station was constructed.

5.52 In 1936 an airfield was opened on land purchased in 1934 by the York Corporation in Clifton Without and Rawcliffe parishes. An air taxi service was operated but no scheduled passenger flights were made. The airfield was requisitioned in 1939 by the War Department. The site of Clifton Airfield has now been developed as an out-of-town business and retail park, residential and industrial properties. Remains of WWII airfields survive to varying degrees at Acaster Malbis (poor survival) Rufforth (good survival) and Elvington (good survival). Elvington is the location for the Elvington Air Museum.

### *Residential*

5.53 The earliest evidence for housing comes in the form of post-holes and drip gullies representing Iron Age roundhouses from archaeological excavations on rural sites in the City of York. These houses were built from timber with wattle and daub walls and thatched roofs.

5.54 Evidence for housing in the Roman period comes from both urban and rural sites. Stone buildings appear for the first time, constructed from stone imported from the Tadcaster area and the North Yorkshire Moors. Mosaic floors, *hypocausts*, *opus signinum* floors, painted wall plaster, roof tiles, and masonry all demonstrate the sophistication of Roman domestic architecture in the city. No definite villa site has been identified within the City of York. However a range of structures have been excavated which represent buildings within rural farmsteads.

5.56 York has produced the best -preserved evidence for Viking period houses, storehouses and workshops in the UK. These were constructed of timber and wattle-and-daub construction. Houses often had cellars lined with plank-built walls with upright timber posts. Reed or straw thatch would be the usual roofing material.

5.57 Although part of a 12th century house built of stone survives at the rear of 48-50 Stonegate, the earliest, most complete surviving domestic building is the terrace of timber buildings in Goodramgate, Lady Row. Lady Row was built in 1316 and consists of nine one-up, one-down timber-framed tenements. Generally housing in the medieval city was

timber framed with either wattle and daub panels or tile panel infill. Buildings were of two three or four storeys, jettied, and roofed with either thatch, tiles or wooden shingles. Examples of such housing from the 14th to 17th centuries survive in the historic core in Stonegate, Petergate, Colliergate and the Shambles.

5.58 In the 18th century York witnessed a building boom at a time of a new architectural style. The adoption of brick allowed red-brick buildings to take the place of half-timbered houses and shops. New buildings such as the Mansion House, Fairfax House, Castlegate House, the Judge's Lodging, Mickelgate House, and 20 St Andrewgate represent some of the finest provincial 18th century housing in the country. Elsewhere in the city medieval timber-framed buildings were "modernised" through the addition of brick facades.

5.59 Interestingly, there are no medieval domestic buildings in the rural villages in the City of York. The earliest buildings all appear to date from the 18th century. The villages therefore form a stark contrast with the historic core: in the former there are earlier timber-framed structures and later brick buildings; in the latter there are only brick-built houses.

5.60 Archaeology is shedding more light on the development of 19th century working class housing. At Hungate five houses built in the mid 1800's fronting onto Lower Dundas Street were at some point subdivided into ten back-to-backs, each house then comprising a tiny one-up/one-down residence, in many ways not dissimilar to the 14th century housing at Lady Row. A five-cubicle toilet over a cess-pit was now rebuilt as a communal toilet block with a tipper-flush mechanism that in some parts of the city was in use up to the 1980s. Used by around 50 people it remained in use until the 1930s. Elsewhere within the City Walls only the terraced housing in Bishophill survives from this period. Outside the City Walls, 19th century housing can be traced along Lawrence Street and Heslington Road.

5.61 In 1901 Joseph Rowntree purchased 123 acres of land in Huntington, later known as New Earswick, and within three years had built 30 new houses, let at 5s. a week. The emerging garden village was a challenge to bad housing and bad building. With the exception of the Water Lanes clearance in 1852, little had been done to improve or clear the slums. It was not until the 1930's that significant slum clearance was carried out by the Corporation. Whole streets off Walmgate and in Hungate were pulled down, and the residents moved to new council homes built outside the city centre. By the mid-Thirties, the corporation housed one seventh of the city's population in more than 3,000 homes in estates like Tang Hall and Heworth Grange.

5.62 As York grew during the 20th century, outlying districts and villages were subsumed into the city. The village of Acomb had fewer than 1,000 residents in the 1871 census; that figure rose to 7,500 when it was officially incorporated into the city of York in 1937. Haxby grew from 711 in 1902 to 2,100 half a century later. Areas like South Bank sprang up, providing homes for workers at the Terry's factory. Whole streets in South Bank and off

Burton Stone Lane were constructed in a few years to cope with demand. The junction of Haxby Road, Wigginton Road and Lowther Street was wide open until terraces grew up around it in the first two decades of the century.

5.63 After WWII there was further expansion of public and private housing estates around the urban fringe and the villages. In 1967, Lord Esher, president of the Royal Institute of British Architects, produced a report York: a study in conservation. His report called for the city centre to be improved and repopulated, historic buildings to be enhanced and economically self-preserving, and only buildings of the highest standards to be built within the walled city. This led, inter alia, to the construction of new residential properties in the Aldwark area.

#### *Leisure/Performance*

5.64 There is no evidence for leisure activities or performance in the prehistoric period. In the Roman period, it is reasonable to assume that there would have been an amphitheatre and also, perhaps, a theatre in Eburacum. The recent excavation of a cemetery with burials that have been interpreted as the remains of gladiators reinforces this observation.

5.65 Archaeological finds of miniature objects dating to the Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Viking and medieval periods may suggest their use as toys or playthings.

5.66 Performance was undoubtedly a feature of the Roman town. However, it is not until the appearance of the Mystery Plays and their annual performance in the streets of the city at Corpus Christi that one can again talk of public performances. There is no record of when the Mystery Plays were first performed in the city. They are first recorded in York at the celebration of the festival of Corpus Christi in 1376, by which time the use of "pageant" wagons for performance in the streets had already been established. The wagons moved through the streets of York starting at Toft Green and finishing in St Helen's Square. The wagons stopped at each of 12 points or stations along the route and each play was performed in turn.

5.67 On the collapse of the mystery plays, increasing attention was devoted to the Midsummer Eve 'show', which began soon after dawn with a review of citizens in their armour, and proceeded later in the day with music and merry-making.

5.68 Medieval and later sports and pastimes included archery, cock-fighting, bear-baiting, and bull-baiting, while the popularity of dice, cards, and backgammon was in 1573 blamed for the scandalous neglect of archery. In 1566 two boys were flogged by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for kicking a football in the minster itself.

5.69 The first recorded horse race at York took place between William Mallory and Oswald Wolstrope in 1530. In 1709 races were held on Clifton and Rawcliffe Ings. In the winter of 1730 the wardens of Micklegate Ward were ordered to drain Knavesmire, and next year the Knavesmire levelled and rolled; the meeting was first held there in the summer of 1731. In the middle of the century the amenities of the course were improved by Carr's grandstand and a new road leading to it. Further buildings were added in 1768.

5.70 The assemblies, though primarily a winter entertainment, were associated with race week, probably began about 1710 as weekly meetings in the King's Manor at which there were dancing and card games. The Assembly Rooms in Blake Street were built in time for the race week of 1732. The Assembly Rooms were built by subscription to a design by Lord Burlington. It was to be his masterpiece, an Egyptian Hall influenced by the work of Palladio and Vitruvius. For the next fifteen or twenty years, regular assemblies were probably held in the rooms, though they declined after 1750.

5.71 The riverside path and gardens known as New Walk were laid out as a promenade when the Assembly Rooms were being built.

5.72 In 1765 the Theatre Royal had been established on its present site. In 1825 a concert hall holding 2,000 people was constructed at the rear of the Assembly Rooms. Among the functions held in the concert rooms in the early 20th century were film shows: a cinematograph licence was granted from 1910 until 1915. In 1842 the De Grey Rooms were built, initially intended primarily to house the officers' mess of the Yorkshire Hussars during their annual visit to York. The rooms were also used for concerts, balls, public entertainments, and meetings.

5.73 At the beginning of the 20th century the Theatre Royal found a rival in the music hall: the 'York New Grand Opera House' was opened in 1902. In the early years of the century 'animated pictures' joined variety as a competitor of the Theatre Royal. Film shows were given in the Opera House, the Festival Concert Rooms, the Exhibition Buildings, the Victoria Hall (Goodramgate), the New Street Wesleyan Chapel, and in the Theatre Royal itself. The first building designed as a cinema, the Electric, Fossgate, was opened in 1911. Three further cinemas were established during the following ten years: the Picture House, Coney Street, The Grand, Clarence Street, and the St. George's Hall, Castlegate. Four new cinemas were opened in the 1930's: the Regent, Acomb, the Odeon, Blossom Street, the Regal, Piccadilly, and the Clifton. By the late 20th century all these apart from the Odeon had closed. Cinema was provided by a multiplex at Clifton Moor. In 2000 a new City Centre cinema, City Screen, was opened.

5.74 Sporting provision within the City of York can be traced through the emergence of cricket, football and rugby pitches managed by private and amateur clubs. Heworth Cricket Club is said to have been founded in 1784; in 2009 they celebrated their 225th anniversary. A cricket ground is shown on the 1852 OS Plan of the historic city at Leeman

Road. In 1864 a cricket ground was established by Wigginton Road where the Yorkshire Gentlemen. Yorkshire played their only first-class fixture in the City of York on this ground in 1890 when Yorkshire beat Kent. Yorkshire 2nd XI continued to use the venue until the late 1950s. In 1966 the site was developed for the district hospital.

5.75 The amateur clubs were often associated with the large employers – giving rise, for instance, to the Rowntree sports provision along Haxby Road and the York Railway Institute. This amateur provision was enhanced in the 20th century through the emergence of professional and semi-professional football, rugby league, and cricket clubs.

5.76 York City Football Club was founded in 1922 joining the Football League in 1929. It initially played at a pitch in Fulfordgate, moving to Bootham Crescent in 1932. York Football Club, the forerunner of York City Knights Rugby League Club, was formed in 1868. At first the club had no pitch of its own. The club played on the Knavesmire, at the Yorkshire Gentlemen's cricket ground in Wigginton Road (see above), eventually locating to a piece of land close to the Clarence Street, Wigginton Road, Haxby Road junction leased to the Club by the York Lunatic Asylum in 1885. In 1898 the club joined the new Northern Union. The club developed this site and eventually the site was sold for housing in 1989.

5.77 Rowing was a feature of the river Ouse in the 19th century. A regatta was held in October 1843, with the first official regatta in 1865 for "Racing and Swimming" with the course being from Marygate Landing to a boat moored below Ouse bridge which was rounded by the boats and. Swimming baths were municipally provided during the 1870's, notably at Yearsley Baths, St Georges Fields and the Museum Gardens. Bowling and cycling clubs began to increase in number during the 1890's.

### *Landscape and setting*

5.78 Views in and out - York Minster sits on the subtle ridge formed by the York moraine surrounded by flat former wetlands. The surrounding low-lying, relatively flat landscape allows far reaching view of a classic cathedral landscape and a strong landscape setting and identity for York.

5.79 Rivers and Ings - The flooding of the Ouse and Derwent have played a major role on the landscape. The wetland meadows on the flood plains of the Ouse have been traditionally managed for centuries under a regime of grazing and hay cutting resulting in species-rich grassland. South Ings, Church Ings, Naburn marsh, and Fulford Ings all have SSSI status. Clifton Ings and Bishopthorpe Ings are linked to these and have been recognised as SINCS. The extensive quantity and connectivity between these wetlands makes them an especially significant national collection of wet grassland. The majority of these can be experienced from riverside footpaths leading out from the city centre. Within the town, strolling along the river is encouraged along the tree-lined promenades of New



Walk (created in 1730's), Terry Avenue, North Street Gardens and the esplanade in front of Museum gardens. The addition of the Millennium Bridge in 2000 has enhanced this tradition.

5.80 The full length of the Derwent along the City of York Council boundary is a SSSI, which expands to include the Derwent Ings in the far south east extent of the authority's boundary as a RAMSAR site of international importance. The Derwent Ings are more extensive because they are much less constrained by flood banks, thus allowing more extensive flooding. The Ings have been protected by their isolated location and through the maintenance of traditional farming practices over centuries associated with flood meadow grasslands, resulting in a rich wildlife habitat and internationally significant wetland both for habitat and birds. There are very few other examples of this extent and quality in the country.

5.81 Open countryside - Lowland heath is the most significant habitat in the York area. Strensall common is the most extensive, northerly lowland heath site in Britain. There are other lowland heath sites, but these are largely afforested with coniferous woodland in the south east area of the district, because the poor soil was less suited to agriculture, e.g. Wheldrake wood, Hagg wood. Ministry of Defence bought out the common rights of Strensall common circa 1840. It was probably used by military before this for practice purposes. Walmgate Stray was used during the first and second world wars. There is some evidence of use during the 18th century, e.g. mound for gun turret.

5.82 Heslington tilmire is more akin to the strays and indeed connects to Walmgate stray via the golf course. It is wet acidic grassland used predominantly as common grazing. The track alongside Heslington tilmire is the line of a Roman road. Old drove routes such as Outgang lane could pre-date Roman times. Broad funnel-shaped lanes. Most species-rich hedgerow alongside Roman road.

5.83 Askham Bog is the most significant example of valley fen in northern England. It is a unique meeting place for the wetland plants and animals from the south and east on one hand, and the north and west on the other, and is particularly renowned for its rare wetland plants and animals. Furthermore it has uniquely extensive historical records of its wildlife dating back to 18th century.

5.84 The landscape setting of some villages provides evidence of layers of different land management over the centuries. For example, Skelton's contemporary field system may contain elements of a Saxon or early Norman assarted landscape, evidenced in a more or less continuous oval of ditches divided, on old maps into North Field, South Field, Park Field and Ings field for grazing and hay, stemming from the old Norman manor site. This has been superimposed with reversed S-shaped hedgerows of medieval and early enclosure field patterns. The 19th century landscapes of Skelton Hall removed hedgerows in park field followed later by the planting of more recent hedgerows.

5.85 The high concentration of airfields within the York area provides large expanses of openness within an otherwise hedged landscape. Many of the runways are still present. Elvington now has an uncommon grassland habitat and birds because of its extensive open nature on poorer soils. Airfields such as Elvington provide a link in the green infrastructure as it connects Derwent vale to Heslington tillmire and in turn to the golf course on Heslington common and thence to Walmgate stry in very close proximity to the historic core.

5.86 Orchards, both commercial and private, were common place in and around York during the late 19th to mid 20th century. Many of the trees were incorporated into long rear gardens as the city grew in such areas as Holgate, Knapton Lane, and Tang Hall, the significance of which was written into the deeds of the properties. Some of these still stand today as veteran pear and apple trees. There are a few rare instances where the remains of neglected orchards have not been absorbed by later development, such as that which formerly belonged to York City Asylum (later Naburn Hospital). This is now managed as Fulford Community Orchard by the local communities. A new community orchard was created at Danesmead meadows in Fulford in the 1990's, and on Scarcroft Green in 2011.

5.87 Many of the district's public rights of way (PROW's) are now used purely for recreational purposes. But historically they had a number of purposes such as drove roads, Roman roads, and tow paths. Today they form important direct access to the countryside and cross-country links between neighbouring settlements; and long distance routes such as The Minster Way and the Ebor Way pass through the city centre. These beneficially devised long distance routes on existing public rights of way connect a variety of landscapes and make cultural/historical references. The Minster Way links the north's two probably most famous Minsters - Beverley and York. The Ebor Way (named after Eboracum) created in 1970 connects Helmsley with Ilkley and passes alongside the river Foss and Ouse and is led beyond the city's boundaries to the Wharfe along the line of a Roman road.

5.88 Designed suburban villages - The model village of New Earswick, contemporary with Saltaire and Port Sunlight, was founded by the York philanthropist Joseph Rowntree. Today it continues to provide a good example of the contribution that generous and thoughtfully laid out open space, private gardens, and landscape detail, especially grass verges, street trees and hedges, can make to the perceptions of well being through good design. The Foss, integral to the eastern side of the village, provides added amenity and recreational benefit, plus immediate access to the larger countryside. Similar principles were applied to much of Tang Hall which was designed and laid out by the City of York Corporation, where streets such as Fifth Avenue, Melrosegate, etc. were laid out with private gardens bound by hedges, wide grassed verges adorned with avenues of Lime trees; and included public parks alongside Tang Hall beck & Osbaldwick Beck, and provision of allotments.

5.89 Parks and gardens - York has a number of registered historic parks and gardens, but a number of others are noteworthy for a range of reasons, such as Homestead Park, Westbank Park, Hull Road Park and Glen gardens, York university, and also village greens and Millennium greens. All contribute to the matrix of culturally/recreationally evolved/evolving accessible open spaces that have a strong relationship with the built environment. Rowntree Park (registered in October 1999 grade II - of national significance) was York's first municipal park opened in 1921 based on a sketch plan attributed to Frederick Rowntree. The trees and shrubs for the park were supplied by the James Backhouse Nurseries in York. The basic format of the garden has remained unchanged, but there have been several alterations over the years, most recently this has resulted in a popular park that is suited to today's requirements of a municipal park. Terry Avenue, the former tow path along the river Ouse, forms its eastern boundary. To the south lies communal informal grass land providing a continuation of the open space and the avenue. The tree-lined Terry Avenue was added to the park in 1954 as a memorial to those killed during the Second World War. Homestead park is not of such importance in design terms, but it was also provided by Rowntrees and is located on the opposite side of town on the opposite bank of the river, thus balancing the distribution of parks by Rowntrees.

5.90 Museum gardens (registered Grade II May 1984) were laid out by Sir John Murray Naesmyth for the Yorkshire Philosophical Society in 1844, designed to provide private pleasure grounds for members of the society which formed an appropriate setting for the museum and the various ancient monuments and incorporated a botanical garden. The main circuit path remains substantially as shown on the 1847 plan, designed to offer changing views of the grounds, buildings and antiquities. In 1961 the Society gave the Museum and gardens in trust to the citizens of York. It contains a number of important specimen trees and the general tree cover provides setting for the many SAMs and listed structures within its grounds.

## **6: The Special Character and Significances of the City of York: Characteristics**

6.1 Contemporary York is the latest manifestation of an internationally and regionally important city that dates back at least to the Roman occupation of Britain in the first century AD. It is easy to think of York in a historical sense as a series of overlapping past urban environments such as 'Roman York', 'Viking York' or 'Medieval York'. In fact, the modern city is all of this and more. The historic environment is the glue that brings it all together, not in a stale and overtly precious way but in a dynamic, exciting and very contemporary way. Partly through accident and partly through design, York, has uniquely retained much of the special character that sets it clearly apart from other similar historic cities in England. Since Lord Esher published his Conservation Plan for York's historic centre in 1968 there have been many subsequent studies, statements, plans and strategies which have researched and discussed the character and significance of York. Some have been protectionist, some have been progressive and it is clear that there can be no agreed single definitive statement about the special character and significances of the historic environment of York.

### *National Planning Policy Framework*

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in March 2012, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It replaces the previous Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development will involve seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life which can include moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature and replacing poor design with better design. At the heart of the NPPF is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

6.3 With regard to local planning policies the NPPF states that policies should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment. They should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of the area's defining characteristics. Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account: the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring and the character of a place.

6.4 The NPPF includes policies about conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The objective of the policies is to maintain and manage change to heritage assets in a way that sustains and where appropriate, enhances its significance. That significance is the value of a heritage asset to this and future generation because of its heritage interest, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. This significance may derive not only from its physical presence but also from its setting.

6.5 Great importance is attached to Green Belts in the NPPF. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Five purposes which the Green Belt serves comprise the following:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

6.6 For the natural environment the NPPF sets out that the planning system should protect and enhance valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils, recognise the wider benefits of ecosystem services and minimise impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.

### *The Evidence*

6.7 Heritage assets in York are varied and complex. Ranging from the huge and impressive to the small and subtle, from highly visible surviving monuments and buildings to the buried remains of 2000 years urban development, human settlement and activity. The evidence is rich, unique and irreplaceable. The majority is hidden and relatively unknown either through burial or later building. Heritage assets and evidence can also be intangible, relating to aesthetics and interests which are hard to quantify and therefore difficult to manage and monitor. Presentation of evidence has traditionally dealt principally with the formally designated, or protected following national criteria and methodologies.

6.8 The following table presents evidence about assets that are currently recognised in one form or another through being included in statutory lists and schedules as well as inclusion in the City's Historic Environment Record. What it does not do is list evidence of all the undesignated historically valuable and architecturally interesting buildings, streets and urban landscapes because that data does not exist. The City of York does however have ambitions, in partnership with others, to establish a Local List of heritage assets (buildings, structures or spaces of archaeological architectural, historic or artistic significance) that will meet this.

<b>Asset type</b>	<b>Designated</b>	<b>Undesignated</b>
Listed buildings	1581	
Grade I	70	
Grade II*	170	
Grade II	1341	
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	22	
Conservation Areas	35	
Registered Parks and Gardens	4	
Areas of Archaeological Importance	1, divided into 7 polygons	
Historic Environment Record: monuments (including buried archaeology and upstanding buildings and ruins)		2272
Historic Environment Record: events (excavations, surveys and other research)		4296
Historic Environment Record: sources (books, journal articles, reports, personal communications)		1210
Vertical aerial surveys		4(1936, 1965, 1971, 1971-73)
Historic Landscape Characterisation data		various

## Principal Characteristics

6.9 The following pages consider six principal defining characteristics of York's historic environment which have been arrived at following a period of detailed assessment and analysis. The six principal characteristics describe the fundamental special qualities of York that sets the City apart from other similar cities in England. There are gaps in our knowledge and understanding and this document recognises that further research will provide greater clarity.

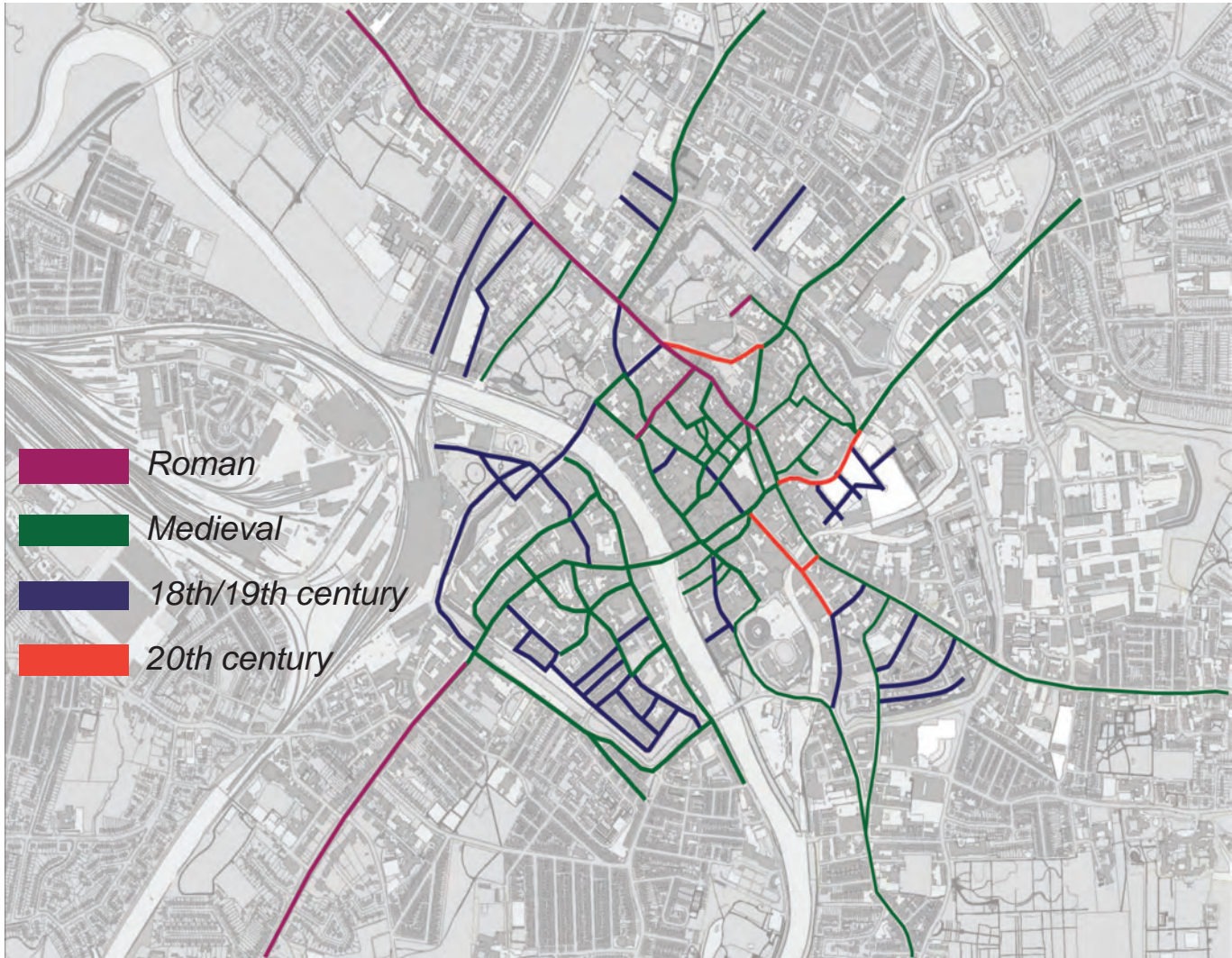
### *Strong Urban Form*

6.10 There are few places in England where a 2000 year legacy of urbanism can be appreciated in such detail as in York. In many ways York offers a unique experience largely because it has remained relatively unscathed by the post-war urban renewal and reform programmes that have compromised so many other historic towns and cities. Post-war development, especially housing has instead added interest and value as at Walmgate in the historic centre and in many of the suburban areas of York. The medieval street pattern, in place by the 12th century, overlays of Roman roads, significant 19th century highway improvement schemes including St Leonard's Place, Parliament Street and the few later streets such as Clifford's Street and Piccadilly separate urban blocks of medieval tenements built on and rebuilt over many centuries. This is a remarkable survival and nowhere in competition with the dominance of the Minster which deliberately occupies the highest point in the centre.

6.11 The theme of these early urban blocks is taken up outside the historic core by the warehouses, factories, train stations, commercial, cultural and institutional buildings of the Victorian and Edwardian eras, built as a consequence of rapid urbanization, generally occupying whole blocks on the edge of the city centre where the scale of operation could take advantage of more open sites and close access to transportation routes.

6.12 The main arterial routes, many of Roman origin link countryside to historic core via suburban villages, linear developments and formal housing estates that continue the urban gain interspersed with major buildings and building complexes like Fulford Barracks, Bootham Hospital, Nestle and Terry's factories.

*Map showing the most significant streets and roads by broad period in the historic core*





<b>Strong Urban Form</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Large urban blocks	Mixed use blocks composed of taller (3-5 storey) buildings facing the street with lower extensions and <i>ad-hoc</i> smaller structures behind and within the blocks, retained private yards. Blocks strongly enclose streets.	Throughout the walled city but particularly evident at Stonegate/ Low Petergate/Church Street.	This is a defining characteristic and the historic urban core.
Long narrow plots and gated side passages	Usually reflecting medieval or earlier building plots with side access to former workshops and gardens	Stonegate and Coney Street	Highly flexible form capable of successive occupation and reuse. A rare opportunity to appreciate the complexities of a medieval city as so much survives

<b>Strong Urban Form</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Framed shop fronts	Variety of good quality “frames” around shop windows, providing visual support to building above whilst allowing interaction with the street. Usually associated with smaller retail premises	Stonegate, Goodramgate, Low and High Petergate contain many historic examples. The Shambles interesting but less authentic. Coney Street is an example of a street under pressure	The extensive survival of small specialist retail establishments is a significant contributor to the quality of the York experience. Architecturally there is a close fit between this use and the layout and fabric of many surviving historic buildings; so importantly this characteristic maintains the authenticity of historic form and additionally it supports the local economy

<b>Strong Urban Form</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
medieval street patterns	Overlaid pattern of historic routes, narrow well enclosed primary streets, gentle curvilinear routes, secondary lanes & ginnels/alleys threading through the blocks or giving access to more private enclaves. High degree of choice, connectivity and permeability.	Networks both south and north of the river within the city walls: Micklegate, St Martin's Lane, Goodramgate, Coney Street, Coffee Yard, historic water lanes on north bank leading to river	The survival of such an extensive network of medieval streets and lanes is rare in an English city. The "pre-conquest" origin of so many streets in the historic core increases the significance of this asset.
Small squares	Close distribution of small squares intimate in scale. Larger spaces formed later by highways interventions or through provision of markets. Few examples of formal compositions such as at "Eye of York".	St Helen's Square (good quality natural materials), St Sampson's Square (early market place) & King's Square (triangular space created from former church yard) – both lined with trees. Added to in C20th with St Mary's Square off Coppergate and enhancement scheme in Parliament Street.	Rare survivals of early spaces where previous uses often determine the spatial form. Enduring quality of openness to be guarded.

<b>Strong Urban Form</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Rich townscape	city centre as a place of diversity, contrasts and surprises; unfolding views of great variety and historic interest; juxtaposition of different materials and forms; experience of shock scale; bridges offering panoramic views; pre-industrial skyline of city centre; city walls as vantage points, highly legible environment	Micklegate unfolding up the hill(Pevsner), view from Exhibition Square towards Bootham Bar and beyond, emergence from Minster Gates to south transept of Minster, from Lendal Bridge towards north bank of River Ouse, roofscape from Clifford's Tower	Highly attractive environment of human scale developed over two millennia. Vulnerable to loss through large scale interventions (highways and buildings)
Arterial roads	broad straight streets connecting city centre to suburbs enclosed by buildings of higher stature towards city bars; cobbled margins and tree lined avenues giving way to broad verges (at best); routes interrupted by large outlying complexes providing green open spaces	Blossom Street/The Mount/Tadcaster Road (main route into city from Great North Road, Bootham with later Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian residential developments and location of purpose built hospital by John Carr	Streets of high quality following historic routes, particular to York.

### *Compactness*

6.13 The city is located to the north east of the trans-pennine conurbations. It is a series of contained settlements each with its own planned agricultural hinterland with historic city at the heart of the administrative area. There is close access to and strong identification with the countryside. In turn the natural environment and relatively flat topography dramatize the setting of each settlement as it rises from the plain.

6.14 The historic city has a contained concentric form of approx 10km (6miles) across and its relatively flat terrain makes it “walkable” and cycle friendly. The historic green strays and rivers feed into the historic city centre and divide the built form into identifiable segments.

6.15 The majority of village settlements are linear in form, situated to take advantage of ridge routes. This gives rise to gently curving streetscapes with glimpsed views out of an immediate surrounding countryside.

6.16 Where village and town coalesce, villages retain their separate identity in various ways: by having a separate focus such as the village green (Clifton), an intermediate area of openness (Fulford), through change of scale (Dringhouses) and/or through provision of some local facilities.

6.17 The historic city centre is inward focused. The combination of dense urban fabric and relatively flat topography prohibit most outward views from street level. The open swathes of the rivers and strays provide visual relief and enable connection with the wider context. Elevated locations provide panoramic vistas of the city’s roofscape. Most important vantage points are the Minster, Clifford’s Tower and the city walls which assume strategic importance in connecting the city with long distance views beyond.

6.18 York is a compact city of international reach. Overseas connections forged through governance and trade have been supplanted by international relations in research and education, and by world wide tourism.



*View from the grounds of Millthorpe Secondary School, one of the rare areas of relatively high ground in York.*



*The thriving shopping centre of Bishopthorpe Road during an annual street party.*

<b>Compactness</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Contained concentric form	The city is walkable and the centre is accessible by cycle and foot with relative ease. The York outer ring road accentuates the city form and the walls enclose the historic core.	The whole city.	This creates strongly defined entry points or 'gateways' and separates out rural from urban in a way that links countryside and urban very positively. A very significant contributor to York's unique identity.
Flat terrain and views	Low lying setting and compactness of city creates both long views and surprise views both out of and in to the historic core.	View from Clifford's Tower; views from the City Walls; revealed views of the Minster and other key monuments; enclosed views within the urban centre – The Shambles, High and Low Petergate.	Prohibits outward views from street level, enhancing the importance of views from elevated positions providing panoramic views of City's roofscape.
Arterial roads	Broad straight streets connecting city centre to suburbs enclosed by buildings of higher stature towards city bars; cobbled margins and tree lined avenues giving way to broad verges (at best); routes interrupted by large outlying complexes providing green open spaces	Blossom Street/ Tadcaster Road (main route into city from Great North Road, Bootham with later Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian residential developments and location of purpose built hospital by John Carr	Streets of high quality following historic routes, particular to York.

<b>Compactness</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Dense urban fabric	Inward focussed centre, mixed uses both horizontally and vertically in urban centre, identifiable sub-areas of particular form and use	Retail core with living above the shop (Shambles), housing districts (Southbank), commercial area close to station	Mixed use compact city retains inherent characteristics of the pre-industrial city. The dense multi-nucleated city is also be a model for sustaining the city in the future.
Identifiable compact districts	Outlying development is divided into segments by the rivers, strays and arterial roads; this containment of built form positively accentuates the identity of each area whilst allowing quick access to open areas, informal green spaces and the cycle routes and riverside walks leading out of the city	Southbank and Tadcaster Road (Knavesmire/ Racecourse), Bishopthorpe Road & Fulford Road (divided by river)	Defining characteristic of peripheral area; access routes of high amenity value
Urban villages retain identity	Village greens as focus or linear main streets with surviving back lanes. Clusters of facilities retained in village core	Clifton (village green), Fulford (linear main street with wide verges)	Clustered form provides community focus; origins as separately planned rural settlements



<b>Compactness</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Planned rural villages	Enduring form of curving linear main street with burgage plots running to historic back lanes; broad planted verges common feature of main artery, later infilling and minor extensions often protect historic grain, openness, and views out to countryside	Wheldrake, Elvington (linear), Askham Richard with village green	Origin as early planned agricultural settlements often dating from the 12th century.

### *Landmark monuments*

6.19 Buildings of high cultural significance or common value remain highly legible within the everyday fabric of built form. They concentrate visual attention and punctuate both streetscape and skyline. These 'Object Buildings' act as physical and temporal landmarks within the city and are set apart from the everyday working/living/commercial fabric of the city. They possess special qualities to distinguish themselves such as: generosity of space; size and scale; special materials or technologies; highly skilled craftsmanship; and/or they employ architectural devices and symbols to evoke authority.

6.20 The Minster is the City of York's "signature building" and a symbol of common identity, which presides over the built environment surrounding it, dominating the city's skyline. The castle dominated by Clifford's Tower and complemented by the formal complex of 18th classical buildings within its precinct is an architectural and urban composition with few rivals in Britain demonstrating the long-standing importance of York, first as a political centre and later as a social centre. The city walls almost circumscribe the historic urban nucleus. They are a linear edge-defining monument softened by planted grassed ramparts and punctuated with formal gateways and towers. Their earlier role of physical and legislative limitation has given way to recreational use and they now provide a city perambulation with elevated vantage points.

6.21 York is unique in England for the number of substantial communal buildings which survive intact or as ruins from the Middle Ages. Other monuments include the four 14th and 15th century guildhalls, set apart from the more homogeneous fabric of the city.



*The Minster from the city wall with the converted 1840s railway station in the foreground*

<b>Landmark Monuments</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Buildings of high cultural significance	Visually, aesthetically and historically interesting and sometimes associated with historical events and specific individuals.	The Minster; Clifford's Tower (12th century massacre of York Jews); The Eye of York complex (Luddites; Chartists).	The relative completeness of the city walls and the presence of so many principal monuments within their circuit such as the Minster, Castle, Guildhalls, and numerous churches is unique in England.
Physical and temporal landmarks	The Minster in particular can be viewed from the Wolds, Moors and Dales. The walls are ever present and a perambulation of them will reveal many of the City's monuments including Terry's and the Nestle Factory. Clifford's Tower is particularly associated with historical events. The Civil War is associated with the Bars. The Eye of York with Luddites.	The Minster; Clifford's Tower, Terry's Factory; Nestle Factory. Rowntree Wharf; Foss Islands chimney.	The revealed views, distant views and iconic views of the Minster and other monuments are extremely important and are a principal characteristic.

<b>Landmark Monuments</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Substantial numbers of medieval communal buildings	Buildings that reflect functional importance as civic centres, places of justice, work and religious activity	Minster Court; Gray's Court; St Leonard's Hospital; King's Manor; Merchant Adventurers Hall.	The Minster is the largest Gothic Cathedral north of the Alps and probably the most architecturally expressive.
Monument clustering	There is very little dispersion and most principal monuments are sited within the historic core and there is a degree of inter-visibility, especially from the City Walls.	Exhibition Square (Bootham Bar; Roman Wall; City Wall; Art Gallery; Kings Manor; St Mary's Abbey).	The proximity of principal monuments to each other helps legibility and accessibility making it easy to enjoy the historical and cultural significances of York.
Quantity of monuments	York has a higher than average number of listed buildings and other principal monuments.	Views from the City Walls.	This is a defining characteristic of York which has succeeded in conserving so much of its architectural and artistic legacy.

<b>Landmark Monuments</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Diversity of monuments	Diversity ranges from Substantial limestone structures like the Minster to Timber framed Barley Hall and Merchant Adventurers Hall and domestic buildings to brick built Railway headquarters and 19th and 20th century factories.	Brick – Fairfax House; Limestone – The Minster; Timber framing – Merchant Adventurers Hall.	This diversity adds richness and interest and sets it apart from Bath as an example where easy access to good quality local stone and formal 18th century town planning resulted in less diversity.
Churches locked into urban fabric	Provide pockets of green space within dense urban blocks and are a haven for wildlife.	Churches off Micklegate.	Substantially enriches the spatial quality and amenity of the city centre in particular and historically they are surviving markers for important city parishes.

*Architectural character*

6.23 A morning's stroll around the historic centre and suburbs will reveal the full range of architectural styles from the 14th century up to the present day that can be experienced and appreciated. Two story timber framed 14th century almshouses on Goodramgate; jettied later medieval buildings on Low Petergate and The Shambles contrast with the four and five story brick Georgian and Victorian buildings on Church Street and Colliergate. These predominantly single developments sit adjacent or close to more formal terraces such as St Leonard's Place, St Saviourgate and elsewhere.

6.24 Areas of planned housing occur at Bishophill and Aldwark in the historic centre and Southbank and New Earswick as examples outside the City walls. Late 20th century housing in Aldwark supplanted an area of declining and noxious industry and was grafted onto the earlier street pattern accommodating pre-existing houses and other important buildings.

6.25 Housing is mostly set out as linear grids forming primary and secondary streets outside the city walls. The more orderly are the Victorian and Edwardian sub-urban expansions from the city core, usually substantial houses of 3 main floors with attic and cellars. Post war housing in the suburbs, for instance, Dringhouses and Woodthorpe comprise a mix of semi-detached and terraces with wide streets and generous gardens.

6.26 This rich diversity of age and construction is accompanied by a wealth of detail in window and door openings; bay rhythms; chimneys and roofscape; brick, stone, timber; ranges; gables; ironwork; passageways; and rear yards and gardens.



*City Screen to the left and the Early Music Centre above.*

<b>Architectural Character</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Architectural legacy	Buildings representing two thousand years of architectural development in close proximity to each other.	14th century almshouses on Goodramgate; The Guildhall, Merchant Adventurers Hall, The North eastern Railway Headquarters, Yorkshire House.	Expression of York's history - its important religious and early political role; and its socio-economic and technological development within Britain and Europe
Variety	The fine grain of urban blocks accommodates a tremendous range of building types from all ages. Early timber framed ranges and gabled fronts sit amongst later 18th century and 19th century brick built development. Formal Georgian town houses occupy plots adjacent to more ordinary dwellings. Churches and churchyards punctuate almost continuous street lines. Large guildhalls sit in their own enclaves. Few streets have consistent themes, though streets have formed their own identity. High degree of articulation through bay windows, window reveals, chimneys, high brick walls, iron railings and decorative artefacts.	Early 14th century Lady Row Goodramgate, Micklegate House, St Leonard's Place	York's architectural Continuity and change have resulted in a rich townscape with formality and informality co-existing.



<b>Architectural Character</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Human scale	The limits of natural materials and techniques have ensured that human scale buildings predominate. Narrow plot boundaries assist in developing rhythm. Where these limits have been exceeded to create factories, warehouses, office blocks, they have simple massing and are clustered on low ground close to the station or within extra mural compounds. Even so height is restrained, roof-tops acknowledge with modelling or decorative parapets, and facades have a level of detailed consideration.	Majority of city centre and village buildings built as residences, shops, workshops. Former railway HQ building sets standard for station cluster. 1960s and 1980s insurance buildings sit reasonably well into the urban landscape	The absence of post-war high rise development has protected the visual dominance of the Minster and ensured the survival of ground level views as well as preserving York's unique skyline. The significance of this is also experiential for visitors and residents. Use of large scale with hierarchy of elements is usually reserved for important buildings

<b>Architectural Character</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Craftsmanship	Highly skilled craftsmen and artists have benefited from religious and secular patronage through-out York's history. Of particular significance are: stained glass, stone carving, carpentry and timber relief work, wrought and cast ironwork, monuments, brasses, bells and public statuary	Minster east window, Merchant Adventurer's aisled timber frame, Lutyen's war memorials	Highly significant artefacts in international and national context. Focus of research and apprenticeship training. Important to retain knowledge, skill base and workshops in city centre and local area.

<b>Architectural Character</b>			
<b>Character Elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Materials	<p>Magnesian limestone used for early religious buildings and the few stone houses, with sandstone being sourced later for civic buildings. Historically materials were locally sourced and crafted, with timber framing succeeded by clamp bricks in lime mortar. Highly skilled master carpenters extended spans and the range of details in important buildings such as Guildhalls. Brickwork gave warmth, texture and solidity to many ordinary buildings whose solidity was punctured by regular openings of limited width. Subtle variety of detail exists within regular facades, though timber framing allowed more freedom. Heavy dentilled cornices and string courses of formal architectural buildings are common. Small element tile and pantiles common on older roofs were followed by slate brought in by the railways White/buff bricks belong to industrial period.</p>	<p>City churches (limestone), guildhalls (timber framing), 18th and 19th century houses (brickwork), 1870s railway station and hotel (buff brick)</p>	<p>Materials signify the importance of a building. They dictate rhythm, scale and proportion and are used to give emphasis through articulation and detail. Modern framed buildings in York have used natural materials and solid compositional discipline to avoid uncharacteristic transparency.</p>

### *Archaeological Complexity*

6.27 Archaeological features and deposits are finite and fragile. Sub-surface deposits cannot be repaired or replaced. Whilst the fabric of above ground buildings and structures can be repaired or restored, this inevitably entails the loss of original material, the fragile and finite archaeology.

6.28 Archaeological deposits can be found throughout the City of York area. All areas within the City of York have the potential to preserve archaeological features and deposits. Detailed characterisation of the archaeological features and deposits within this area is a complex process beyond the scope of this paper. This section therefore attempts to provide simple, high-level character statements which can be used to assess the impact of Local Plan policy statements.



*Foundations of the medieval church of All Saint's, Fishergate (photo by John Oxley).*



*Iron Age round house ditches at Campus 3, Heslington (photo by John Oxley).*

<b>Archaeological Complexity</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Exceptional preservation in historic core	Timber foundations of Anglo-Scandinavian houses have been found well preserved at Coppergate and Hungate. Food waste and other similar organic waste is well preserved giving valuable insight into diet, health, economy that is lacking in more conventional archaeological deposits	Excavated examples include Coppergate and more recently, Hungate.	Very few major urban sites of this age and complexity in Northern Europe have this amount of well preserved archaeological deposits, especially for the earlier periods. York has an internationally significant resource.
Depth of deposits in historic core	Remains of successive development from Roman through to the present day.	Throughout the centre but best illustrated through the 1980's excavations of Coppergate, now ably presented by the Yorvik Centre	This is one of the main factors in York's bid to become a World Heritage Site.
2000 years of urban development	Archaeological deposits relating to at least Roman through to the present day,	The Hungate excavations revealed the remains of housing from the period of Sebohm Rowntree's ground breaking study of poverty and health. Coppergate provided exceptional insights into Anglo-Scandinavian York.	Very few North European cities have so much well preserved evidence of urban development over such a long period of time.

<b>Archaeological Complexity</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Finite and non-renewable resource	Anaerobic deposits that are extremely dependant on sustained ground conditions. Fluctuating water table creates pressures on the continued preservation of these deposits. Any form of deposit removal, even by archaeologists in a controlled and recorded manner will destroy important evidence and information.	Throughout the city.	Archaeological deposits and the remains of human settlement and activity provide a rare insight into the lives of our ancestors in a way that the limited number of contemporary documents cannot. Because the deposits are so rich and so well preserved in York, the information contained within them is both irreplaceable and internationally important, especially for the earlier periods.

<b>Archaeological Complexity</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Majority of Known and unknown archaeological features and deposits are not designated heritage assets.	The York Historic Environment Record contains some 6000 records relating to the archaeology of York and its surroundings which is only a small percentage of actual remains.	East Heslington excavations of prehistoric and Roman settlement.	Very difficult to predict where significant archaeology will be found and because the historic core is so special, its relationship with the rural hinterland is also very important. The low density of damaging development throughout the Unitary area has meant that more archaeology has survived.

*Landscape and setting*

6.29 On a national scale York's landscape is considered generally not to be of a particularly high quality. Nonetheless it does include a range of features of natural, historical, and cultural significance that contribute to the special qualities of the local landscape. This is also the landscape that serves a substantial population, thus placing great importance on the amenity that it affords. The landscape provides the city and its outlying villages with a rural setting and a direct access to the countryside, and thus has a value/status that reaches beyond the relative quality of the aesthetic landscape.

6.30 Its relevance lies in the conglomeration of layers and relics of old landscapes, in part conserved through time by continuous administration, absence of development, and centuries of traditional management. It is the combination of the various elements such as the lngs and strays that provides York's unique make up. The natural environment is significant in its concentrated collection of a variety of examples of historically managed landscapes, represented for example by wild flower meadows, lowland heath, valley fen, strip fields, veteran orchard trees, species-rich hedgerows. Many of these otherwise isolated remnant landscapes link up with other open spaces resulting for example from our industrial or war time past, to form often accessible tracts of subtly diverse landscapes; thus the landscape/natural heritage is much greater than the sum of its parts.



*The  
Knavesmire,  
part of  
Micklegate  
Stray and an  
important part  
of York's green  
infrastructure.*



<b>Landscape and Setting</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Views in and out	<p>Long-distance views of York Minster in low-lying relatively flat vale landscape. The Minster constantly reappears at closer quarters.</p> <p>View of the race course/ Knavesmire and Terrys combined.</p> <p>Rural edge setting viewed from majority of ring road by way of field margin (northern ring road business parks exception to rule).</p> <p>Views out to the Wolds, Moors and the Howardian Hills (orientation, identity, and sense of location/ setting).</p>	<p>Views from the A64 to Minster from stretch between Hopgrove roundabout to Hull Road</p> <p>View of Minster and city from Askham Bryan roundabout</p> <p>Closer views of Minster from Leeman Road and Water End.</p> <p>View of Terrys/race course/Knavesmire from A64/Bishopthorpe.</p> <p>Views out from Acomb, Kimberlow Hill/Grimston Bar.</p> <p>Views from the Ouse when approaching from the south;</p> <p>Views entering York by Rail from the North, as the line sweeps round by Water End bridge.</p>	<p>This is an important English cathedral landscape that goes to the heart of York's identity and attractiveness.</p> <p>There is a unique combination of elements of historic/ cultural significance important for the setting and identity of York.</p> <p>The proximity of hills/ countryside give a strong sense of place and location. The long distance views are rare - element of surprise and appreciation.</p>

<b>Landscape and Setting</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Strays (including racecourse) and common land	Openness; greenness; natural/rural character within city. Village greens.	All the strays. Some connect with other open spaces which extend their capacity as part of the City's green infrastructure with linked spaces providing a continuous green route through a range of open spaces, e.g. Scarcroft recreation ground – Scarcroft allotments – Knavesmire – allotments - Hob Moor. Walmgate Stray/ allotments - university grounds, Heslington golf course.	More than any other similar city there is a strong countryside connection between the historic core and perimeter countryside. Variety between them; each serving a range of different functions; in part protected by historic management. Immediacy and availability/welcome, most are open access. Race course open space - cultural significance. Race days – sense of event across city.

<b>Landscape and Setting</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Rivers and Ings	<p>Derwent/Ouse: Flooding; Ings meadows; retention of traditional management over centuries - still hay cropped and grazed where possible.</p> <p>Ouse - walking along most of either bank north to Beningborough hall, south past Bishops palace. Activity on river - rowing (3 clubs) dating back to mid 19th century.</p> <p>Foss – two rivers converging in city centre; walkway from centre to countryside beyond ring road; linking villages – the ‘hidden’ river.</p> <p>Views along river/banks.</p>	<p>Derwent Ings; Fulford Ings (north of the ring road); Naburn marsh (south of ring road); Church and South Ings at Acaster malbis; all SSSI’s; Millenium Walk, New Walk, Terrys Walk; avenues of trees.</p>	<p>The Derwent Ings are internationally important. SSSI’s of national importance. Their significance lies in the number and extent of SSSI’s within the local authority boundary.</p> <p>Setting of city and recreational value.</p>

<b>Landscape and Setting</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Open countryside and green belt	The open countryside surrounding York contributes to the landscape setting of the historic city. A wide variety of different habitats and landscape elements including: Lowland heath; wet acidic grassland; rich hedgerows; valley fen; open Ings landscape associated with river; wildflower meadows; Airfields with large expanse of openness/cultural heritage/habitat value; Village settings including: assarted land; strip field pattern/ridge and furrow; hedgerows; veteran orchards. Long distance uninterrupted recreation routes with cultural significance through countryside Orchards – vale of York high orchard productivity historically; veteran Pear and apple trees often in gardens of later development.	Strensall Common; Askham bog; Heslington tilmire. Airfields: Elvington, Acaster Malbis, Rufforth, Clifton Moor, Copmanthorpe. Rufforth & Murton. Nether Poppleton; Skelton Hessay church yards. Ebor Way, Minster way – linking two Minsters. York to Selby disused railway line passing through open countryside connecting to other routes. Walmgate stray; Heslington golf course Derwent Ings. Scarcroft recreation ground – Scarcroft allotments – Knavesmire/Racecouse – splits to Hob Moor allotments – Hob Moor and Trans-Pennine trail cycle route. Orchard trees: in gardens at Skelton, Tanghall, Holgate. One fruit tree planted in every garden in first model of New Earswick.	Strensall common most extensive, northerly lowland heath site in Britain. Askham bog - most significant site in northern England and has uniquely extensive historical records of its wildlife dating back to 18th century. High concentration of airfields. Elvington - uncommon grassland habitat and birds because of extensive open nature. National route: spur of Trans-Pennine trail, runs coast to coast from Southport to Hornsea; cultural heritage along line of disused railway. Orchards at Skelton, Tanghall and Holgate remnant veteran Pear and apple trees usually in back gardens of later development. Significance written into deeds of properties. Historically significant.

<b>Landscape and Setting</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Suburban villages	Street trees, public parks, large gardens, 'quiet streets', pedestrian-friendly environment, strong community identity, allotments, front gardens bound by hedges	New Earswick model village, Tanghall, Dringhouses	Design/movement examples; philanthropic; cultural significance; association with Rowntrees Complete compositions of key features and holistic community provision
Parks and gardens	Registered historic parks and gardens Parks for the people Designed campus landscape Matrix of accessible parks	Museum gardens; Rowntrees park; York cemetery. Others - Tower gardens, Homestead Park York university	Museum gardens: Exceptional concentrated collection of SAMs/ listed buildings in designed circulatory walk; botanical gardens Rowntrees park and Homestead park given to people of York by Rowntrees and son Seebolm: Cultural significance and major recreational facility for large population, landscape/trees/ setting. York cemetery: landscape setting, trees, bio-diversity, important people/ head stones; listed structures. Iconic campus landscape (originally)

<b>Landscape and Setting</b>			
<b>Character elements</b>	<b>Key Features</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>
Relationship of the historic city of York to the surrounding settlements	The relationship of York to its surrounding settlements. This relationship relates to not simply the distance between the settlements but also the size of the villages themselves, and the fact that they are free-standing, clearly definable settlements.	Skelton, Upper and Nether Poppleton, Bishopthorpe...etc	The relationship of York to its surrounding settlements was identified as one of the elements which contributes to the special character of the City. The relationship of York to these settlements could be damaged by with the growth of the city or, conversely, the expansion of the villages.

## 7: Conclusion

7.1 This document has considered evidence relating to the City of York's historic environment and how the evidence is translated into our understanding of the city's special qualities and its complex 2000 year history. This evidence and understanding has then been used to identify six principal characteristics of the historic environment that help define the special qualities of York, providing a detailed explanation of each characteristic.

7.2 The following six principal characteristics are identified as strategically important to the special character and setting of York:

- the city's **strong urban form**, townscape, layout of streets and squares, building plots, alleyways, arterial routes, and parks and gardens;
- the city's **compactness**;
- the city's **landmark monuments**, in particular the City Walls and Bars, the Minster, churches, guildhalls, Clifford's Tower, the main railway station and other structures associated, with the city's railway, chocolate manufacturing heritage;
- the city's **architectural character**, this rich diversity of age and construction displays variety and order and is accompanied by a wealth of detail in window and door openings; bay rhythms; chimneys and roofscape; brick; stone; timber; ranges; gables; ironwork; passageways; and rear yards and gardens;
- the city's **archaeological complexity**: the extensive and internationally important archaeological deposits beneath the city. Where development is permitted, the potential to utilise this resource for socio-economic and educational purposes for the benefit of both York's communities and those of the wider archaeological sector will be explored; and
- the city's **landscape and setting** within its rural hinterland and the open green strays and river corridors and lngs, which penetrate into the heart of the urban area, breaking up the city's built form.

7.3 These characteristics define the city and set it apart from other similar cities in England and should be key considerations for enhancement and growth. New development can have an adverse, neutral or positive impact on what makes the city special and it is important for development proposals to respond to York's special qualities, character and significance whether in the historic core, urban fringe or rural village communities. Although York is famous for its historic assets, new developments can add richness and diversity to its existing corpus of building styles and types and better reveal its significances through enhancement and research.





**Prepared by:** City of York Council Design, Conservation & Sustainable Development Service

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