

York Central Community Forum

Date: **Tuesday 6 February 2018**
 Time: **17.00 – 19.00**
 Place: **Hudson Board Room, West Offices, City of York Council**

In attendance

NAME	ORGANISATION
INDEPENDENT CHAIR	
The Very Revd Vivienne Faulk	Dean of York Minster
HOLGATE	
Cllr Cannon	Holgate Ward Councillor (substitute for Cllr Derbyshire)
David Finch	Friends of Leeman Park
Andy Richardson	Wilton Rise
Peter Fisher	St Pauls Square Association
MICKLEGATE	
Cllr Kramm	Micklegate Ward Councillor
Marc Allinson	Micklegate Business Initiative
Hussein Syed	Chair Micklegate Neighbourhood Plan Forum
WIDER CITY/ OTHER	
Phil Bixby	York Environment Forum
Bob Towner	York Older People's Assembly
Alison Sinclair	Conservation Area Advisory Panel
Ian Williams	Chamber of Commerce/ York Property Forum
Andrew Lawson	York Business Improvement District
Chris Bailey	Chair York@large, Arts & Culture
Lindsay Cowle	SUB Katherine Blaker York Central Action
YORK CENTRAL PARTNERSHIP (YCP)	
Tom Devine	National Railway Museum
Tamsin Hart-Jones	Homes and Communities Agency
Mike Stancliffe	Network Rail
David Warburton	CYC Commercial Project Manager
Katherine Atkinson	CYC Commercial Projects
Specialist advisors depending on agenda	Alistair Macdonald, Allies & Morrison Jason Syrett, Allies & Morrison Elizabeth Lancaster, Allies & Morrison Anna Joynt, Allies & Morrison Jenny Wilkinson, Aberfield Jayshree Patel, Homes and Communities Agency

NOTE OF MEETING

1. Opening business

1.1 Welcome & apologies

Vivienne Faull welcomed the group. A number of apologies were received:

Cllr Derbyshire	Holgate Ward Councillor
James Pitt	Friends of West Bank Park (cover for Laura Outhart)
Rob Askew	St Barnabas Church
Cllr Crawshaw	Micklegate Ward Councillor
Rob Bennett	South Bank Multi Academy Trust
Nick Bosanquet	Former Kings Cross Camden Cllr, Professor of Health & wellbeing
Andrew McBeath	Commercial Property
Sean Heslop	York RI
Tracey Carter	City of York Council
Judith McNicol	National Railway Museum

1.2 Notes of last meeting 11/01/18

The notes of the last meeting were agreed as correct.

2. Matters Arising/ Project Updates

2.1 Homes England

Tamsin Hart-Jones explained the recent change from the 'Homes and Communities Agency' to 'Homes England'.

Background

- First referenced in Government's Housing White Paper in February 2017
- Chancellor Hammond included us as part of the November 2017 budget
- Launched in January 2018

Role

Our investment in supply and interventions in the market will help deliver 300,000 homes a year by the middle of the next decade

This government is determined to build the homes our country needs and help more people get on the housing ladder. Homes England will be at the heart of leading this effort.

Sajid Javid MP

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

What's different?

- **Speed** We will act differently from our predecessor to accelerate the supply of new homes and address affordability issues.
- **Resources** We will use our land, finance and expertise to expand the delivery of affordable new homes and connect ambitious partners to remove barriers to house building.
- **Quality** We will take the lead in delivering better quality homes and great places that set the bar high for others.
- **Bespoke approach** We will offer a bespoke mix of direct capital grant and financial transactions to move supply.
- **Commercial** We will develop a new commercial approach to acquiring and developing land in areas of high demand.
- **Powers** If needed, we can also use our planning and compulsory purchase powers to help willing partners build more homes more quickly.

Three initial priorities

- Continue delivery of our existing programmes
- Build a new organisation capable of responding to the long-term housing challenges facing this country
- Accelerate housing delivery over the next few years

We want to disrupt the market

We need to increase the number of people building homes, particularly SMEs and companies using Modern Methods of Construction.

Supporting new approaches

- **Supporting Modern Methods of Construction** We're really positive about MMC and will use our land and finance to help scale it up.
- **New technologies** We will support a spectrum of MMC technologies through our activities to grow confidence in the sector.
- **Flexibility** We will increase flexibility on construction routes to achieve additional supply.

Questions

- BT: Is Homes England now just focusing on targets around housing given that 'communities' has been lost from the title?
 - Have lost communities from name, but not from our core thinking in creating new places.
- DF: How will the change of direction for Homes England apply York Central?
 - Don't envisage major changes - speed of delivery; commitments to affordable housing and quality; and acceleration to deliver sooner all support the things that we are already doing.

2.2 Local Plan Housing Numbers

Masterplan - coarse block structure



The early masterplan work presented to the forum in January included a block plan (as included above) with potential residential areas identified in red.

The YCP position with regard to housing numbers for the Local Plan is that:

- 1700 homes are deliverable across land within the current control of YCP.
- There is the potential that other land will come forward within the plan period. Up to 2400 homes could be built if we include this land (e.g. up to 200 units on land north of Leeman Road between the road and the east coast mainline, and up to 500 units on York Yard South, which is operational rail land until at least 2023).
- 2500 is the maximum number of units deliverable if this extra land comes forward, and if there is an increase in numbers on individual plots.
- Some 'swing blocks' could see a shift from commercial to residential if necessary over the plan period - if there is less demand for commercial space.

Local Plan Working Group (23 January) and Executive (25 January) took the view that it is important to deliver new homes in York, and saw York Central as a priority. Executive decision:

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MId=10195&Version=4>

Questions

- BT: The government's increased housing target figures for the local plan were rejected by CYC Local Plan Working Group and Executive.
- DF: If north of Leeman Road and York Yard South don't come forward, will the numbers come off the total, or will they need to be squeezed in elsewhere?

- The allocation of up to 2500 homes is dependent upon these sites coming forward.
- IW: Concerned regarding potential 'swing block' from commercial space to housing. York desperately needs commercial space.
 - Issues of change/ flexibility will affect the build out during the 15/20/25year life of the masterplan. This does not undermine the principles of a central business district. Residential / commercial could flex over the timeframe IF the demand for commercial space is not there.
- LK: There was a last minute change to YC boundary to include land north east of the rail line including the Post Office, and land south of the mainline. Does this influence housing numbers?
 - For technical (policy) reasons, the previous local plan allocation boundary, which is the wider line was used. The masterplan boundary does not match the local plan boundary. The 1700 to 2500 residential and up to 100,000 sqm commercial capacity relate to the tear drop area. There is no definitive red line boundary for the planning application at this point. **ACTION: Clarify local plan allocation boundary for next meeting.**

Post Meeting Note – Clarification note being prepared for circulation

- MC: where is the south west extension to site? This would be an issue in Holgate if they are going to get hundreds of houses they had not been expecting.
 - The housing numbers relate only to the red coloured blocks shaded in the plan. The wider site boundary to include Holgate Works and reserved southern access land was included in the local plan for technical (policy) reasons.
- MC: The three possible access roads across Holgate Works were not available due to a land swop with Network Rail.
 - Three access road options were rejected due to landing in York Yard South, as a decision as to whether this area will become surplus to operational rail use will not be known before 2023 & WYTF funding towards infrastructure must be spent by 2021. CYC Executive report November 2017 explains this reason clearly (<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=733&MId=10193&Ver=4>)
- LC: Do you have an alternate site plan without the fringe sites? They are critical to the sense of enclosure of the site.
 - At the moment YCP are masterplanning comprehensively. **ACTION: Provide plan showing land in/out of YCP ownership for next meeting.**

3. Engagement Charter

Tamsin Hart-Jones thanked the forum for their input into the creation of the engagement framework and charter. THJ and KA are responsible for delivering the Engagement Framework.

Why have an Engagement Framework?

- A clear public commitment to engagement in a conversation that lasts the lifetime of the York Central project
- Ensure as many people engage with the development of the site as possible
- Promoting extensive and diverse engagement
- Sets out the overarching principles for engagement, the themes and our long term commitments to engagement in the charter

Agreed Principles for Engagement

- Establish trust in the process and the project
- Transparency as default
- Sensitivity in building relationships and providing consistency:
- Clarity on the processes and stages of engagement, what is discussed when and how it informs the design
- Clear communications which are accessible and appropriate
- Interesting formats to encourage people to engage

Our Engagement Charter

- We commit to engaging on York Central in a conversation that lasts for the lifetime of the project
- We commit to engaging based on our six key principles of engagement
- We commit to building knowledge and understanding of the York Central site itself
- We commit to providing opportunities to enable people to engage with, and build knowledge and understanding around, the planning and development process and place making
- In addition to providing forums and methods of engagement ourselves we commit to supporting and encouraging communities to engage with York Central in their own ways
- We commit to engaging on York Central in the context of all proposed development in the locality, being clear on those proposals and how they fit with York Central and aligning engagement where possible
- We commit to ensuring interested people and organisations are kept up to date regularly
- We commit to monitoring and evaluating the engagement process regularly, seeking feedback on how it's going and collating demographic and geographic data and analysing it to assess whether we're reaching all communities, responding to any identified gaps

Questions

- HS: How long is the lifetime of the project? What will the long term management be? How will the site be maintained? Will YCP hand over responsibility for engagement at the next phase? YCP are only committed to delivering the teardrop land infrastructure and will not deliver the buildings.
 - CYC and landowners will stay involved to work with developer(s) to ensure delivery of the project as per our aspirations.
- CB: Great engagement statement. Terrific that My Future York are getting involved in My York Central (MYC). There is a danger that expectations are unrealistic. Charter has a missing dimension - co-creation community development, where those consulted have an impact. Through MCG project, a better plan emerged. MYC needs the right level of ambition, for engagement not consultation. YCP need to demonstrate that they are listening. Critical to this is demonstrating the fixes (what are the givens/ what cannot change) and the flexes/ opportunities, both now at this outline stage and in the future. MYC will give people the chance to ask questions and shape discussion themselves.
- BT: Arup masterplan was tangible, could be understood, knew localities, principles valid, around things that people can understand.
 - Engagement Charter is statement of intent.

Tamsin introduced Phil Bixby from My Future York who will be working with Helen Graham and the YCP team to deliver 'My York Central' based on the approach developed for My Castle Gateway.

4. Masterplan, Allies & Morrison

Alistair Macdonald presented a summary of the emerging feedback from Stage 1 of the engagement exercise. This included the YCCF meetings, a number of wider sessions with other stakeholder groups and the first public pop-up event.

Jason Syrett presented an update on the masterplanning process including further information in relation to the emerging design proposals and supporting strategies relating to movement, landscape, uses and heritage.

Alongside the ongoing stage one pop-up events, feedback from YCCF will assist in refining the masterplan proposals and honing the key messages for the formal consultation exercise (stage 3) which is due to commence in mid-March.

Questions

- HS: With the NRM aspirations to increase visitor numbers, the site is begging for river taxi to connect with other parts of the city/, and a link to the

river north of the museum. Is a direct connection to the river not feasible, or is it not in the brief?

- JS: We are looking at connectivity. To get over the mainline railway and then down the big drop [in level] to the river would require significant infrastructure. It is felt that it would be better to focus on improving Marble Arch and Scarborough Bridge.
- DF: Today is the first time the proposed pedestrian/ cycle link to Leeman Road Park has been dropped. Access to Leeman Road Park is important as a link onto the Salisbury Terrace area, else this park will not be easily accessible to all.
 - MS: Would be a challenge to put in due to heights. Analysis didn't suggest that there would be significant movement patterns along this route, and therefore it is better to concentrate on improving the west underpass through to Salisbury Terrace. We are asking for responses on movement strategy now, so tell us your thoughts.
- LK: Connectivity – it is disappointing that the closure of Marble Arch to cars is not an option. Nice pictures of the park don't show the queuing cars to get through Lendal archway. Cars already queue over Queen Street bridge etc
 - JS: We have been tasked to look at connectivity around Marble Arch. Cycles and pedestrians currently share the narrow tunnel, whilst cars use the wider tunnel. How can cycle/ pedestrian links be improved with the limitations of the bridges/ tunnel? Beginning to look at options of how cyclists and pedestrians can be prioritised. It is a key connection through to the city, so stopping cars completely is not really an option, and would require re-routing all traffic around the site. We are looking to improve connections. The access consultation was clear that the road through the site would be kept open.
 - MS: The effect of the displaced traffic if the road was closed is considered unacceptable.
 - LK: Need a reliable bus service, where the journey takes 5 mins not 35 mins. Could separate car and bus lanes.
 - JS: There is a strong feeling from some that car traffic through site is required, perhaps with bus/cycle/pedestrian priority at times. Connectivity is a current task to progress.
 - HS: In the short term, a congestion charge would help, with hybrid cars exempt.
 - DW: Clarified to YCCF in December that the ARUP traffic modelling data initially included a bus gate at Marble Arch to restrict through traffic. This increased congestion on Holgate Road and Poppleton Road. The agreed access option doesn't include a bus gate - as the starting point. However, the city will see changes in travel patterns over the 5-20 year plan period, and therefore a range of future options will be looked at.
- The meeting noted that the desire for vehicular controls is not unanimous.

- AL: Echo the Chamber of Commerce's wish to highlight connectivity through to the traditional city centre on behalf of the Business Improvement District. How will the site be accessed and interact with the city centre is crucial. City centre retail is struggling. Would like to see maps that show this journey to reassure us that links to traditional city centre will be easy and clear.
 - JS: We naturally flow through arches in city wall, so it is possible to make it work. Need to offer attractive opportunities for new businesses through flexible approaches. Increase inward investment.
 - IW: Access is not easy at the moment. It is busy with traffic. How will it become easier without radical intervention?
 - JS: Pedestrian route through from city to museum is difficult now, with poor legibility. Need good permeable bus/cycle/pedestrian priority and investment in Marble Arch. Working with CYC traffic officers.
- CB: York one of the least deprived cities, but has the 9th biggest gap between rich and poor. Understanding future work patterns is crucial. Look at international examples of our intended future - One Planet York, UNESCO City Media Arts. Need to look at what York Central can do for York. How will the spaces relate to York? How will the new square be used (not un-used due to poor design).
 - JS: Key is to allow flexibility on building sizes/ mix - could combine blocks to achieve large floor plates for anchor tenants. Build flexibility into the parameters so it can evolve over time. Small tech start ups/ shared workspaces/ networked/ headquarter/ co-working. Framework beyond life of individual buildings. Plan is sustainable enough to allow changes in 25 years time.
- PF: Has routing the main road through adjacent to mainline been considered, therefore residential opens straight onto park without intervening road?
 - JS: We won't know the availability of land at York Yard South until 2023, and therefore cannot deliver the road through it. York Yard South is part of the masterplan, but it's availability does not sync with the available road funding.
- LC: Ground floor uses in the commercial area should include entertainment/ retail if we want to create community and vibrancy into the evenings as well. How can YCP insist on this when development is market led?
 - JS: Occupiers of offices have changed their perception of what is needed on the ground floor. Canary Wharf had glass lobbies on ground floor, with retail sub-terrain in basement, but the later phases recognised the benefits and all have retail on the ground floor. Need to get right balance of active ground floor uses to create a sense of place, with convenience shopping for residents etc, This can be orchestrated through the planning process.
- AS: Conservation Area Advisory Panel today asked whether there was any provision for artwork in the public spaces/ park (e.g. George Hudson statue)

- JS: Investigate incorporation of art to add historic and local value, and interest.

Post Meeting Note – Clarification on work in progress

The content was presented as work in progress for discussion. It is not final, and no decisions have been made. There will be further opportunities to discuss these during workshops later this month and again during the next consultation/ engagement sessions (mid-March onwards).

With regard to Marble Arch, whilst the Masterplanners are currently working on the assumption that there will not be a bus gate, the Partnership has asked that the consultant team test both options (with/without) so we can better understand the implications within the site (particularly on Museum Square) and on the wider highway network. We are currently hearing mixed views from York residents for and against a bus gate so to help inform this debate we will share this information with the community through the ongoing engagement work that's taking place. The results will also be reflected in the Environmental Impact Assessment, to be submitted as part of the planning application.

With regard to the footbridge into Leeman Park, it was explained to the forum that to put a footbridge in this position would be a challenge due to the height required to get over the mainline railway and then down the big drop to the river, which would require significant infrastructure. Current thinking in the technical team is that it would be better to focus on improving connections through Marble Arch, Scarborough Bridge and the western underpass through to Salisbury Terrace. However, the movement strategy forms part of current discussions, so we again welcome all thoughts on this.

ACTION: Circulate the stage 2 presentation (KA). This is 'work in progress' and the ideas will be further informed by the ongoing stage 1 and 2 engagement work. Further comments about the emerging masterplan ideas are encouraged (email to KA by end of February):

What are your thoughts on the following elements of the emerging strategy for York Central?

- **Movement**
- **Landscape & Environment**
- **Design & Heritage**
- **Uses and Activities**
- **Other**

5. Any other business

Holgate by election 15 Feb. Hustings to pose questions (York Central) to candidates, Tuesday 13 February, 7pm at 'The Holgate' pub.

Suggestion future agenda items

- Rob Bennett – Invite a commercial view from Make It York, CYC, Chamber of Commerce, strategy how going to attract businesses to York Central
- Mary Cannon - look at options for uses on site, e.g. conference centre
- Next level of detail of western access - details/ visualisation/ costing

6. Close of meeting

Vivienne thanked everyone for their attendance and input.

Next meeting

Wednesday 14 March, at the later slightly time of 5:30-7:30pm @ National Railway Museum

- Boundary clarification & plan showing land in YCP ownership
- Preview of formal exhibition content