

Statement of Common Ground

Phase 2 Hearings

**As agreed between City of York Council and Historic
England**

28 February 2022

Introduction

1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared jointly between City of York Council and Historic England. The purpose of this SoCG is to inform the Inspector of areas of agreement between the two parties in relation to the matters to be heard during the phase two hearings into the submitted draft York Local Plan (Local Plan) [CD001].
2. This is the second SocG between the parties and should be read alongside the Phase 1 SocG dated 4 December 2019. Where areas of common ground set out in the phase 1 SocG remain relevant to phase 2 matters, they have been set out again in this statement. Following on going consultation with Historic England in the preparation of the revised TP1 addendum [EX/CYC/59] the majority of the areas of disagreement at Phase 1 hearings have now been overcome which are discussed under Matter 7 below.

Background

3. As detailed in the Phase 1 SocG, Historic England is a statutory consultee on all aspects of the historic environment and its heritage assets. There has been ongoing engagement between the Council and Historic England during the preparation of the Local Pan and evidence base.

Areas of Agreement

4. The following matters and issues have been identified as areas on which the parties agree are common ground:

Matter 1: Strategic Vision, Outcomes and Development Principles

- As an approach, the Heritage Impact Appraisal process has provided a good evaluation of the potential impact the submitted plan might have upon the six principal characteristics of the historic city identified in the Heritage Topic Paper. The use of this evaluation in Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Objective 14 (Heritage Assets) and Objective 15 (Landscape and Setting) is appropriate.

Matter 4 – Spatial Strategy and Site Selection Process

- The spatial shapers identified in Policy SS1 are appropriate in determining the location of development in York.
- The City of York Local Plan's development strategy as set out in Policy SS1 [CD001 as modified by EX/CYC/58] reflects the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives in the Sustainability Appraisal [CD008, CD011 and EX/CYC/24a], based on proportionate and updated evidence.
- The spatial strategy principles have been appropriately used to develop the pattern of development as identified on the key diagram. The Local Plan Spatial Strategy [CD001 as modified by EX/CYC/58] will help to safeguard the size and compact nature of the historic city, the perception of York being a

free-standing historic city set within a rural hinterland, key views towards York from the ring road, and the relationship of the main built-up area of York to its surrounding settlements.

- As part of the strategy for accommodating York's assessed development needs, there is considerable merit in the potential offered by the proposed new settlements. Whilst this approach clearly affects the openness of the Green Belt in those locations, the degree of harm is likely to be far less than would be caused should the housing in those settlements be located, instead, on the edge of the existing built-up area of the city or in its surrounding settlements.

Matter 7 – Approach to Setting Green Belt Boundaries



- The City of York Local Plan approach to the York Green Belt is appropriate and in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework as follows:
 - The approach used to define the detailed Green Belt boundaries around the city has been logical, appropriate and proportionate.
 - There is insufficient capacity on suitable and deliverable sites within the existing urban areas of York to be able to meet York's Development needs.
 - The size and location of the new settlements has taken into account the relationship which York has with its existing surrounding villages – an element which has been identified in the Heritage Topic Paper [SD103] as being part of the character of the city. They have been designed to ensure that they do not harm the compact form of York's main urban area, or the

individual identity or rural setting of their neighbouring villages, the green wedges that penetrate into the urban area, and important views towards the historic city from the ring road.

- The proposed approach set out in EX/CYC/59 simplifies and clarifies the methodology for delineating the proposed Green Belt boundaries.
 - The definition of five assessment criteria, each related directly to one of the three Green Belt purposes identified as relevant to York provides a clear logical thread between the different stages of the methodology.
 - The origin of the three criteria relation to Green Belt purpose 4 ‘to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns’ lies in the Heritage Topic Paper [SD103]. Compactness, landmark monuments and landscape setting demonstrably contribute to the special character of York to varying degrees depending on the location.
 - Reducing the number of considerations referred to and being clearer about the purpose of each, through explanation of their relevance, has provided a stronger and simpler rationale for the extent of the Green Belt.
5. The previous areas of disagreement included in the Phase 1 SoCG in relation to the SA have now been overcome and are no longer considered to be areas of disagreement. Areas of disagreement in relation to Green Belt permanence and purposes have also been overcome, alongside comments made in relation to paragraph 7.116 and 7.117 of EX/CYC/18 which have been superseded by the updated topic paper [EX/CYC/59].

6. There remain areas of disagreement around the detailed Green Belt boundaries. However, it is acknowledged that this SoCG relates to matters regarding Phase 2 hearings only, and that it is the Phase 3 hearings which will address issues in relation to specific parts of the boundaries proposed, including those around development sites. Both parties are committed to on-going discussions regarding detailed boundaries and site allocations.

Endorsement

City of York Council		
<i>Name and Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Neil Ferris Corporate Director of Place		28 February 2022
Historic England		
<i>Name and Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
James Langler Historic Environment Planning Advisor Yorkshire and the Northeast		28 February 2022