

# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

*...A sustainable future for York Minster and its Precinct*

*York Minster is the centre of Christian life in the North of England, a place of prayer and pilgrimage, and one of the best known buildings in the United Kingdom. It is a magnet that draws people to visit the City of York from all corners of the globe.*

The Minster sits within a 'Precinct' which contains Dean's Park, a Library and Archive, a Stoneyard and Minster offices which all support the day-to-day running and care of the Minster, and homes for Minster Clergy.

### Why do we need a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Minster is developing proposals to explore how the Precinct could evolve in the future to meet the changing needs of its community and visitors. It is a sensitive and complex area of the city and its future care must be planned for carefully.

We intend for the proposals to be adopted as a Neighbourhood Plan to form part of the City's planning policy. The Neighbourhood Plan will provide the Minster with a clear strategy for the next fifteen years and will be used to secure funding for individual projects.

We are working with the City of York Council, Historic England, a wide range of stakeholders and the community to get the best plan in place.

### Pre-Submission Consultation

In January 2020 we consulted statutory bodies, local organisations and the wider community on the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Thank you to everyone who commented at this stage.

The end of the Pre-Submission Draft consultation was closely followed by the Covid-19 pandemic which has challenged our whole community in unimaginable ways, a key consequence of which has been the closure of the Minster school.

As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan needs to be amended to take account of the school estate which means a significant change to Area 1 of the Plan (the area to the south of the Minster). As this is a material change to the Pre-Submission Draft, the York Minster Neighbourhood Forum is required under the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations to place the revised draft on public deposit. We have taken this opportunity to also amend the Plan in light of the consultation responses received in January 2020.

The consultation begins on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December** and closes at midnight on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2021**.

This exhibition explains our revised Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals.

You can read and comment on the full draft of the York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal online at [masterplanning.yorkminster.org](http://masterplanning.yorkminster.org) Owing to Covid all comments are to be made online.

You can also view hard copies of these documents at York Explore, Library Square.

This is the last chance to comment on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan before it is submitted to City of York Council. Your comments will help to shape the final version – please let us know what's important to you.

### Plan showing current land uses and the Neighbourhood Plan boundary



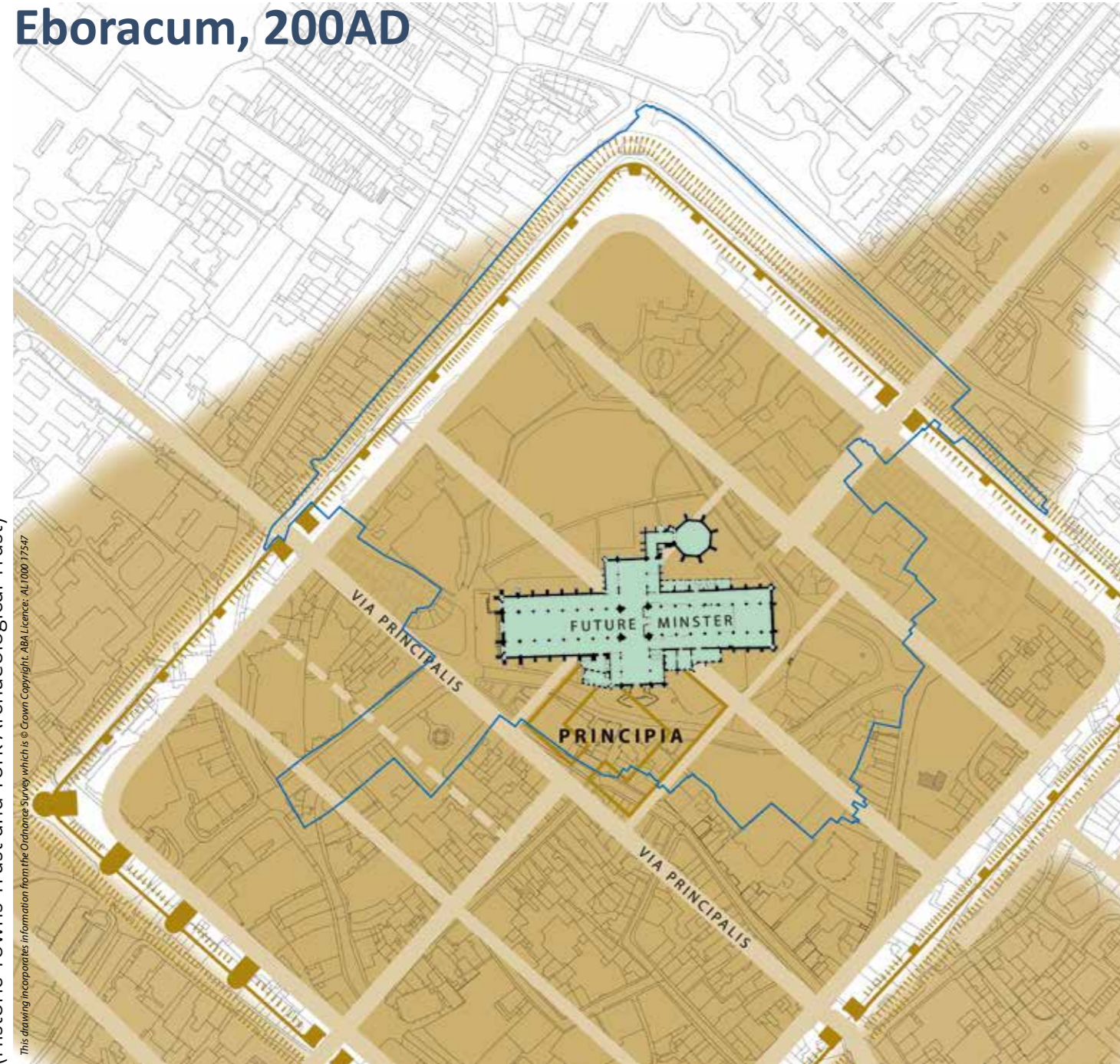
# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

*...The birth of the Precinct*

*York Minster may appear to have changed little in centuries, but its Precinct has been continuously evolving for 2,000 years.*

### Eboracum, 200AD



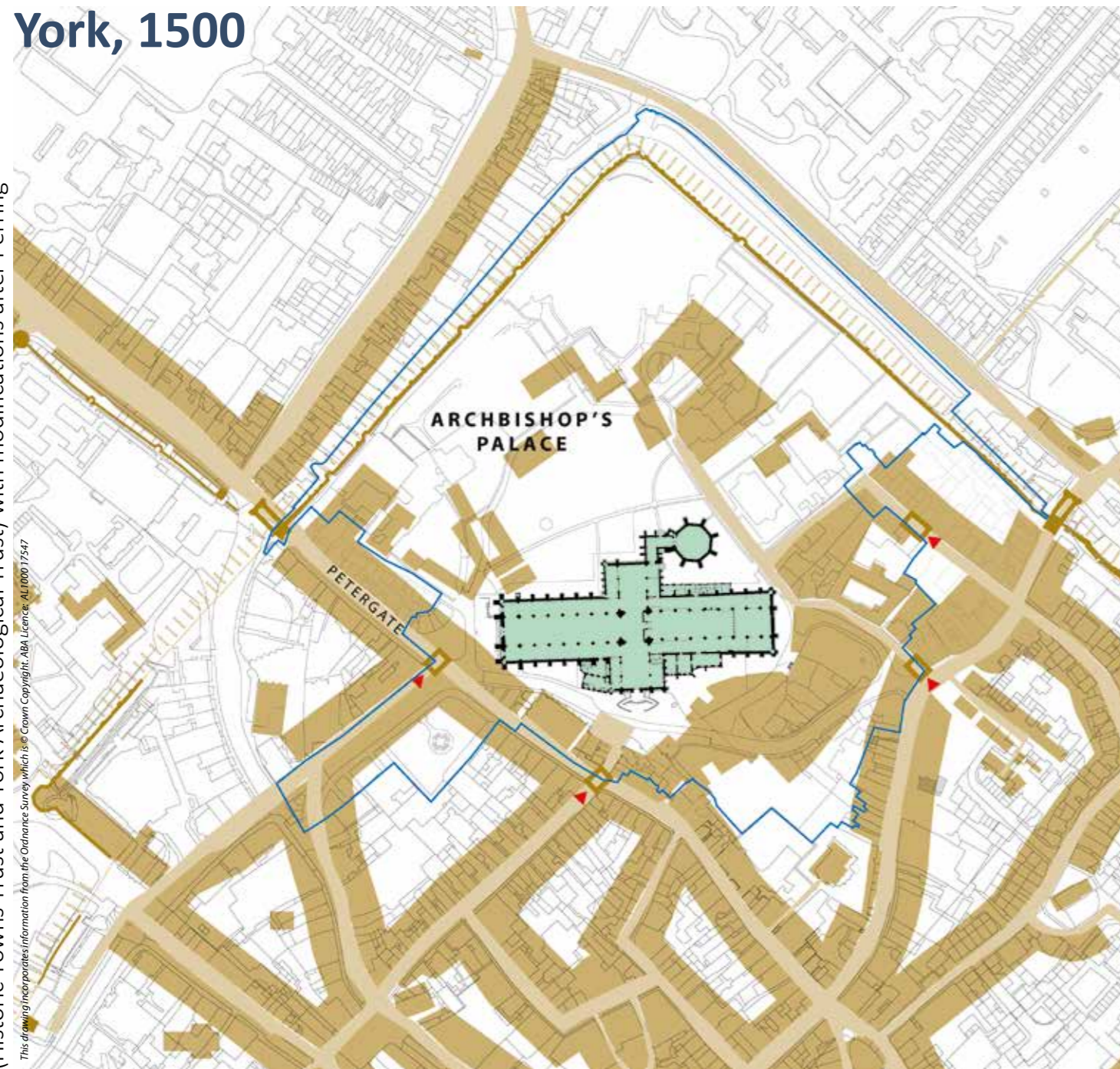
### Roman and Anglo-Saxon York

You are standing on the site of a 2000 year old Roman legionary fortress, Eboracum. Today's Precinct occupies a quarter of the area of that fortress. Part of the Precinct boundary is still defined by the line of the Roman fortifications, later adapted as the medieval walls of the city. A third side, now Petergate, was the main street of the camp. The headquarters building – the 'Principia' – lies under the Minster itself.

The last Roman soldiers left Britain in 409AD. In the following centuries York was revived as an important city in the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria. A Christian cathedral – or Minster – was built in 627. No-one knows for certain where this wooden building was, but it is generally thought to be north of the medieval Minster. It would have been surrounded by an enclosure, containing the houses of priests and the bishop, and other facilities. The facilities included a school founded by Alcuin, the pre-eminent York scholar, in the seventh century.

Mapping based on the British Historic Town Atlas of York (Historic Towns Trust and York Archaeological Trust)

### York, 1500



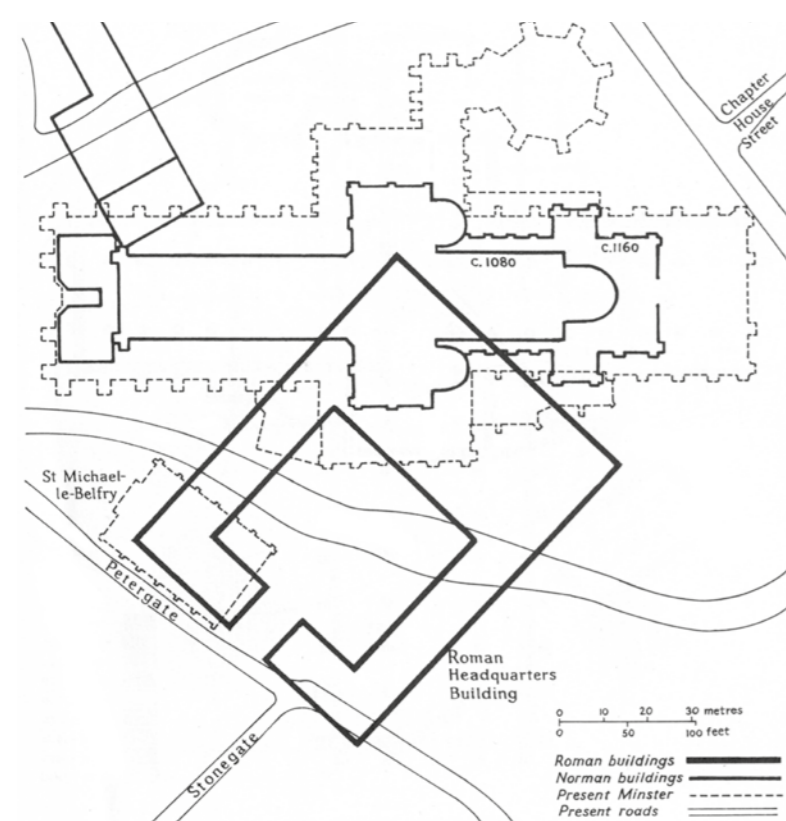
### Medieval Precinct

Soon after the Norman Conquest of 1066, a grand new Minster was built on the site of the present cathedral. It was surrounded by a Precinct, extending from the city walls to Petergate. The Precinct was administered by the church: it was subject to separate laws, and was densely built up with streets lined by dozens of houses for the Minster's clergy, churches and chapels, and a large palace for the Archbishop, which occupied most of the area north of the Minster. The chapel of the palace survives as the Minster Library.

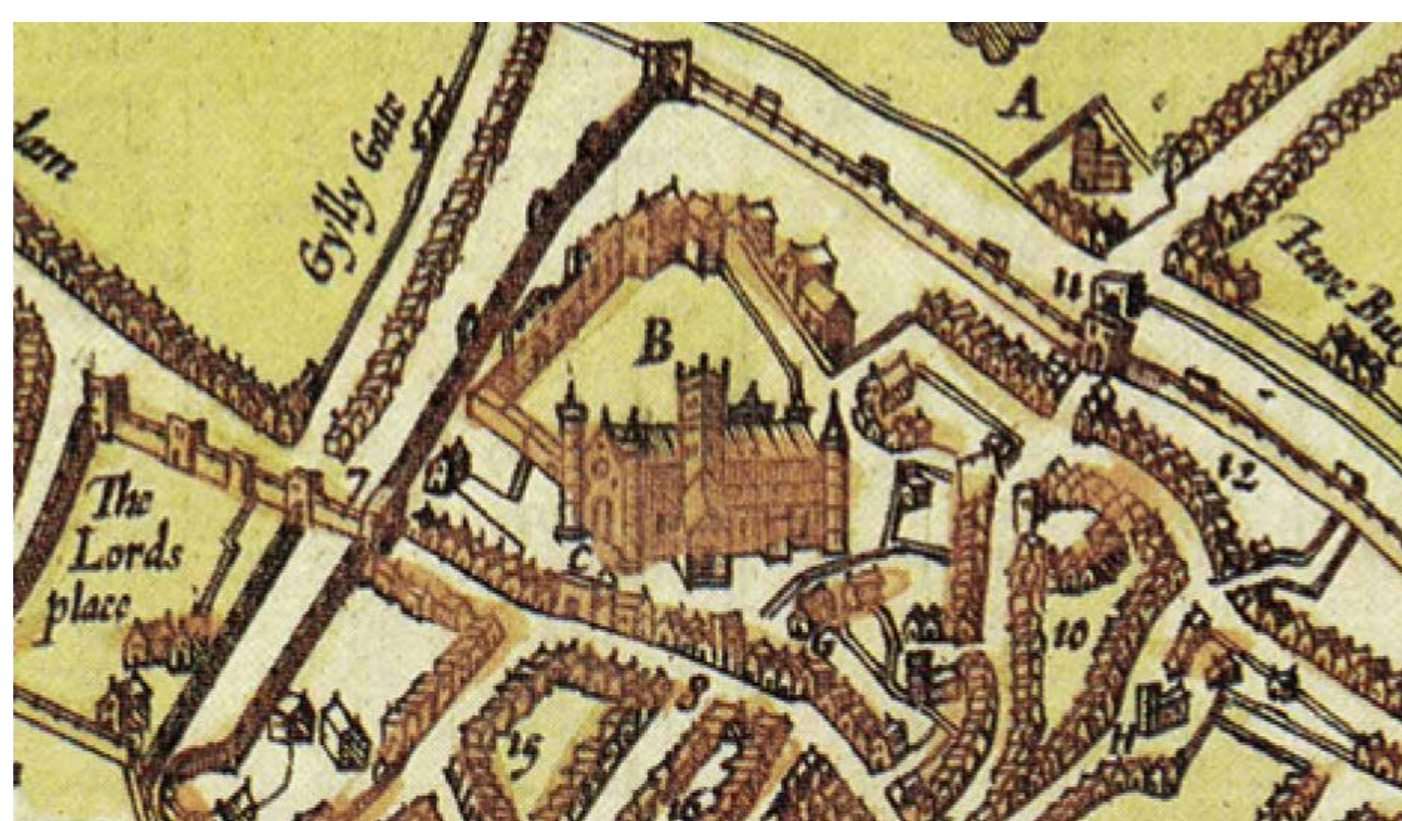
To protect church property and enforce its laws, the Precinct was surrounded by a ditch and wall. Access was via gateways. The most important was on Petergate, outside the west end of the Minster.

Mapping based on the British Historic Town Atlas of York (Historic Towns Trust and York Archaeological Trust) with modifications after Perring

- Gateway into the Precinct
- Historic buildings
- Masterplan boundary
- Historic streets



Relationship between the Roman 'Principia', the Norman Cathedral and the present Minster (derived from G E Aylmer and R Cant, *A History of York Minster*)



Speed's map of York c.1610. One of the very few illustrations of the Archbishop's Palace, shown curving around the letter 'B'



The Archbishop's Palace as recreated by Edwin Ridsdale in 1917 (Murray et al, *York through the eyes of an artist*)

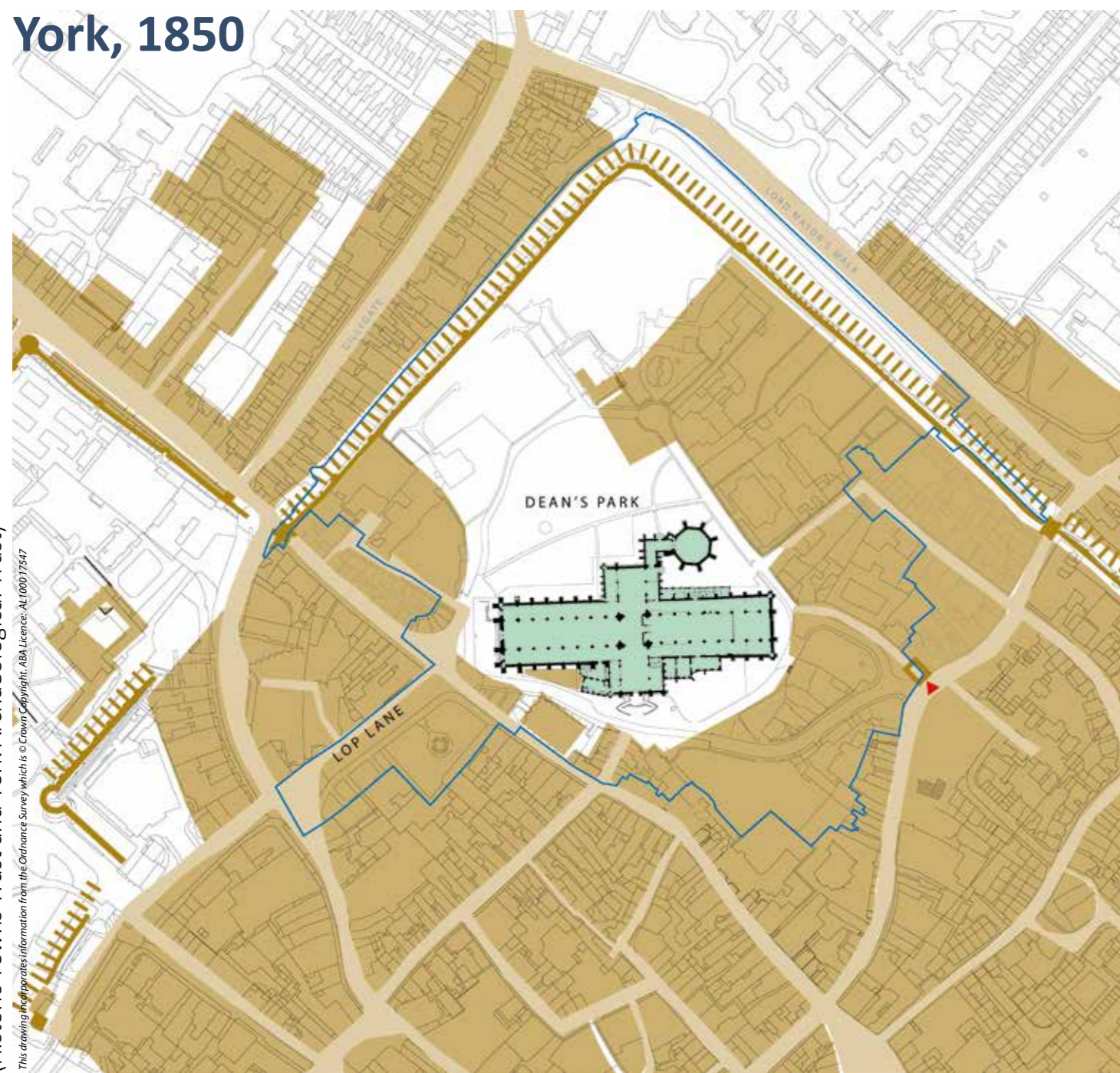
# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

### ...Opening up the Precinct

Following the Reformation, the character of the Precinct began to change: it became a less separate place, increasingly occupied by secular uses.

York, 1850



Mapping based on the British Historic Town Atlas of York (Historic Towns Trust and York Archaeological Trust)

#### Opening up the Precinct

By 1600 the Archbishop's Palace had been vacated in favour of Bishopthorpe on the Ouse, south of York. Most clergy also chose to live outside the Precinct. Instead, shops were built against the west end and south transept of the cathedral.

In the eighteenth century the Minster began again to be recognised and celebrated as a magnificent building. The houses, shops and other buildings cheek-by-jowl with the Minster were swept away.

The Victorians continued this process of change. A view of the Great East Window was created by demolishing buildings to form College Green.

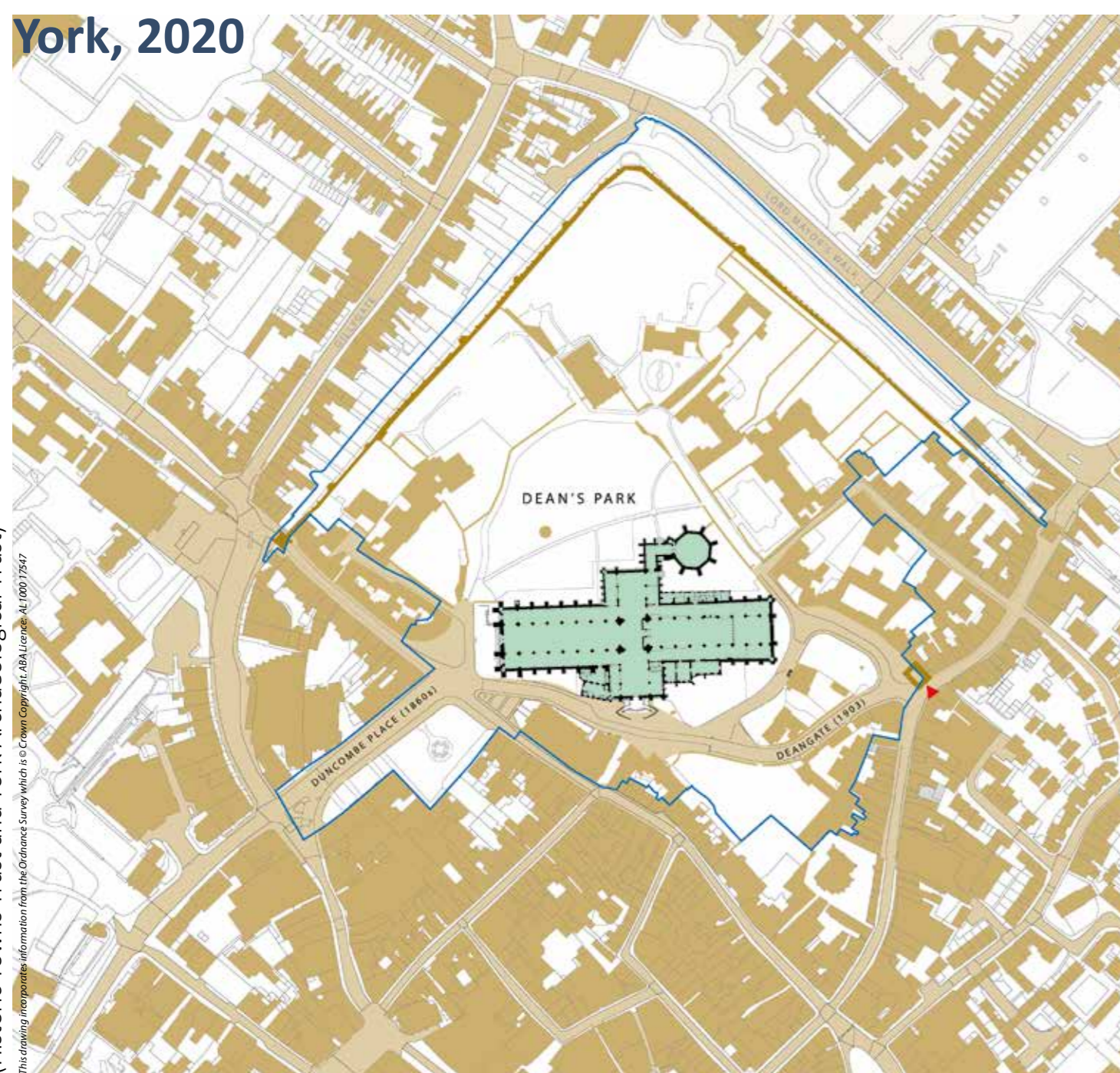
#### Building roads

With the arrival of the railway, an entirely new approach to the Minster was created from the station, via a new bridge, Lendal Bridge, and a grand new avenue, Duncombe Place, created by demolishing a warren of medieval housing. Before this, there had been no view of the west end of the Minster.

In 1903 this route was extended by demolishing many more historic buildings, to form Deangate. This was not just a street: it was the main road to Hull and Scarborough, and by the 1960s lorries were pounding past the Minster. Thankfully, the road was closed, greatly improving the setting of the cathedral.

The cumulative consequence of these changes is that any sense that there was once a defined, separate Precinct is lost south of the Minster.

York, 2020

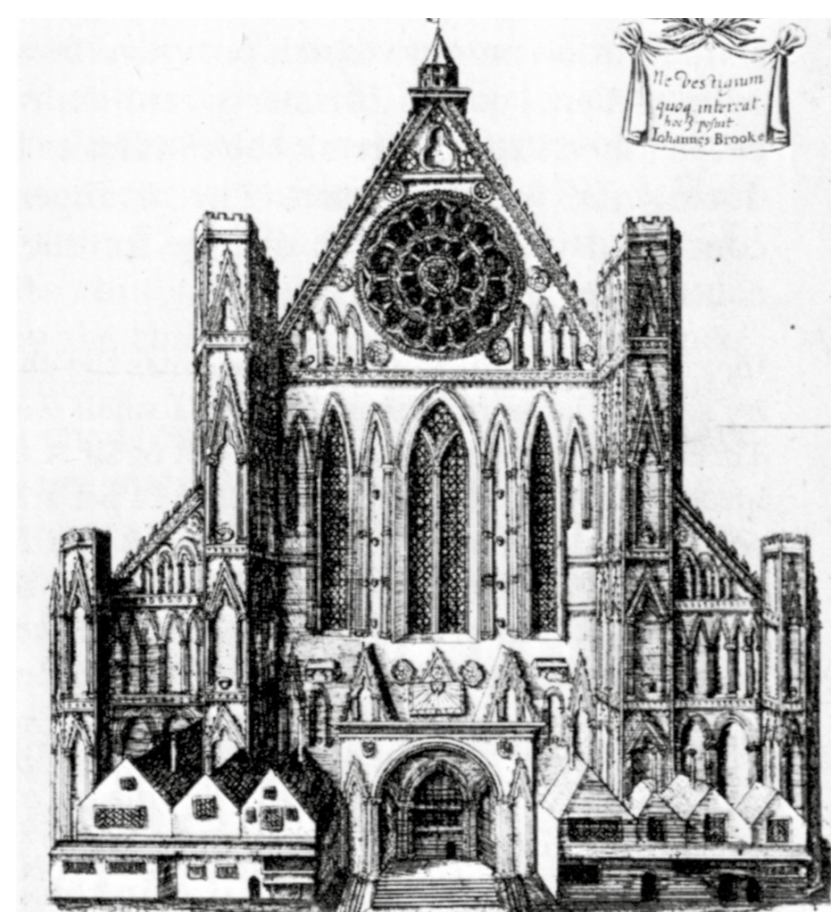


Mapping based on the British Historic Town Atlas of York (Historic Towns Trust and York Archaeological Trust)

#### Conserving the Precinct today

At over 800 years old, the Grade I listed Minster is subject to a complex and continuous cycle of repair, restoration and conservation, requiring specialist skills fostered in the Stoneyard. The wider Precinct contains many other historically important listed buildings, and the site sits above exceptionally important archaeology from the Roman occupation onwards.

- Surviving gateway into the Precinct
- ▲ Historic buildings
- Masterplan boundary
- Historic streets



Shops built against the south transept of the Minster, illustrated c. 1700



Drawing by James Malton in 1794, showing the newly revealed north side of the Minster following the demolition of medieval buildings



Lop Lane in the 1850s, before it was swept away to create Duncombe Place (York City Library)

# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

...The Precinct today

*Today, the Minster welcomes over 700,000 visitors in a normal year. It is a major pilgrimage site and tourist destination but it remains, first and foremost a house of prayer.*

***Our Mission at York Minster is to invite everyone to discover God's Love through our Welcome, Worship, Learning and Work.***

The Minster's Mission and our emphasis on caring for the Minster for future generations, have led us to look at how the Precinct could be used differently to address current shortcomings:

- Unlike many other cathedrals the Minster has no dedicated cafe to offer our visitors refreshments and no welcome centre for orientation and tickets.
- Dean's Park is an important green space, but feels cut-off from the wider city.
- The lack of defined Precinct boundaries presents challenges for security and the quality of our public spaces.
- Other buildings in the Precinct – St William's College and the Old Palace – require restoration and could be used differently.
- The Minster itself can be cluttered and noisy and the visitor experience is not consistent.
- The Minster is the only cathedral with museum accreditation, but the artefacts on display in our undercroft are at risk due to the high humidity of this space.
- The Minster has no dedicated community space for youth groups or community meetings.
- There is an opportunity to establish a centre of excellence for craft skills reflecting the important role our crafts people play in restoring and conserving the Minster, but the current workshop and supporting facilities are no longer fit for purpose.

It costs £22,000 per day to care for and operate the Minster. The Minster receives no ongoing Government funding or central Church of England financial support and relies entirely on the generosity of our community, paying visitors and funding bodies to maintain its care and operations. Ensuring a viable and sustainable business to underpin the care of the Minster lies at the heart of how we plan for the future.

One example of the costly but necessary conservation work at the Minster is the restoration of the South Choir Aisle. This dates from 1361 and its construction took around 60 years to complete. It bears dramatic evidence of six centuries of exposure to the elements and the industrial revolution, with issues including extensive cracking and erosion to the stone work and serious damage to the medieval glass, which has buckled and cracked in places allowing water in. The scheme involves work to repair and replace stone and glass in 15 window bays, which will take around 11 years and cost £11 million.



View from the City Walls



St William's College

# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

*...Our vision for the Precinct*

*“In 2035 York Minster Precinct continues to be a welcoming and special place loved and used by the local community and visitors from around the world. It is acknowledged as a lynchpin in the cultural identity and daily life of the City of York and reaches out to engage the community in discovering God’s Love.”*

*In January 2020 we held a public consultation in St William’s College and online about our Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals.*

*We asked visitors to the consultation whether they supported our proposals and we received many helpful comments. We have taken on board the comments received and refined our proposals for the Precinct which are explained at this consultation. Our refined proposals also reflect how the Minster Precinct has had to adapt in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.*

**71% of people surveyed supported the emerging Neighbourhood Plan proposals in January 2020.**

### **You said We did**

*You supported the overall vision for the Precinct and the location of different land uses including visitor welcome facilities on the south side of the Minster*

*Our overall vision has not changed. We have expanded the visitor welcome area to make use of some of the vacant school buildings*

*You wanted to see greater emphasis on green space, trees and heritage in our draft Policies*

*Our draft Policies have been rewritten in response to these comments*

*You wanted the Precinct vision to be reflected more clearly in an overarching Policy and a Policies Map*

*We have included a new overarching Policy (A1) and a Policies Map in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan*

*There were different opinions about pedestrian and cycling routes to the south of the Minster*

*We are retaining cycle access along Deangate and are continuing to work with the City Council on the best long term solution for cycling and pedestrian access in this area*

*There were comments that more detail was needed on the design proposals, but also comments that the Neighbourhood Plan was not the right document to contain this detail*

*We have committed to producing separate development briefs for project areas 2, 3 and 4. These will contain much greater detail on the design proposals and are to be developed with Historic England and City of York Council*



# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

...A long term plan

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals for the Precinct show areas for potential development and improvement. The Plan is at the Pre-Submission Draft stage and we welcome your comments.

Key features of the draft proposals include:

- ① A cluster of new visitor facilities to the south of the Minster including a refectory in the former song school, a ticket office and new public square and green space. This will provide an improved welcome to the Minster, guiding visitors to the main entrance which is to be moved back to the South Door
- ② A high quality public square for the city 'Queen Elizabeth Square' is created at the west end. The west end of the Minster becomes the entrance for services and ceremonial events
- ③ The public green space of Dean's Park is expanded with a new sensory garden created
- ④ A new space for learning and the museum collections is created linked to the Old Palace. New access to the City Walls is created
- ⑤ Improved facilities for the Minster's craftspeople including new accommodation for Minster apprentices, new storage and workshop space
- ⑥ New Minster offices, support facilities and conference and event facilities are created in a newly refurbished St William's College which achieved planning and listed buildings consent in 2019
- ⑦ Improved back of house facilities and public realm improvements in Chapter House Yard



### Improving the Minster's welcome and setting



# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

...A welcoming place

*A new ticket and box office, café refectory and enlarged public space near the South Door will create a warm welcome for the 700,000+ people who visit the Minster from around the world in a normal year.*

*The south of the Minster is a natural location for visitor facilities as it faces the city and has the space to accommodate large numbers of people. The South Door to the Minster will again become the main visitor entrance to the Minster as it has been historically.*

*Many people supported our proposals to create new visitor facilities including a café and ticket office in Minster Yard and were pleased to see existing buildings being reused although the spaces available were small.*

The updated proposals make use of the recently vacated Minster song school building, bringing this into a new use as the Minster Refectory which will have space to serve the many people who visit the Minster. The former school playground and field will become new public space for families to enjoy and for temporary pop up events. It will be of exceptional quality respecting the setting of the Minster

Our emerging proposals for project area 1 include:

- ① A new ticket and box office in 1 Deangate. This is a very visible location close to the South Door
- ② Entrance to the Minster via the South Door and exit via the shop
- ③ The former song school will be restored and converted into a destination refectory (café/restaurant) with space to accommodate large visitor groups
- ④ A new public square with outdoor seating and a great view of the Minster
- ⑤ A new public space on the former school field which can be used by families and for pop-up activities
- ⑥ Investment in the public realm and landscape of College Green to create more usable public space
- ⑦ On road cycling route maintained along Deangate
- ⑧ Investment in the Stoneyard and Masons' Lodge to form part of the international centre of excellence for heritage craft skills
- ⑨ Other vacant former school buildings used for residential, office or continued educational use



Minster Yard proposals



# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

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*...A new public square for York*

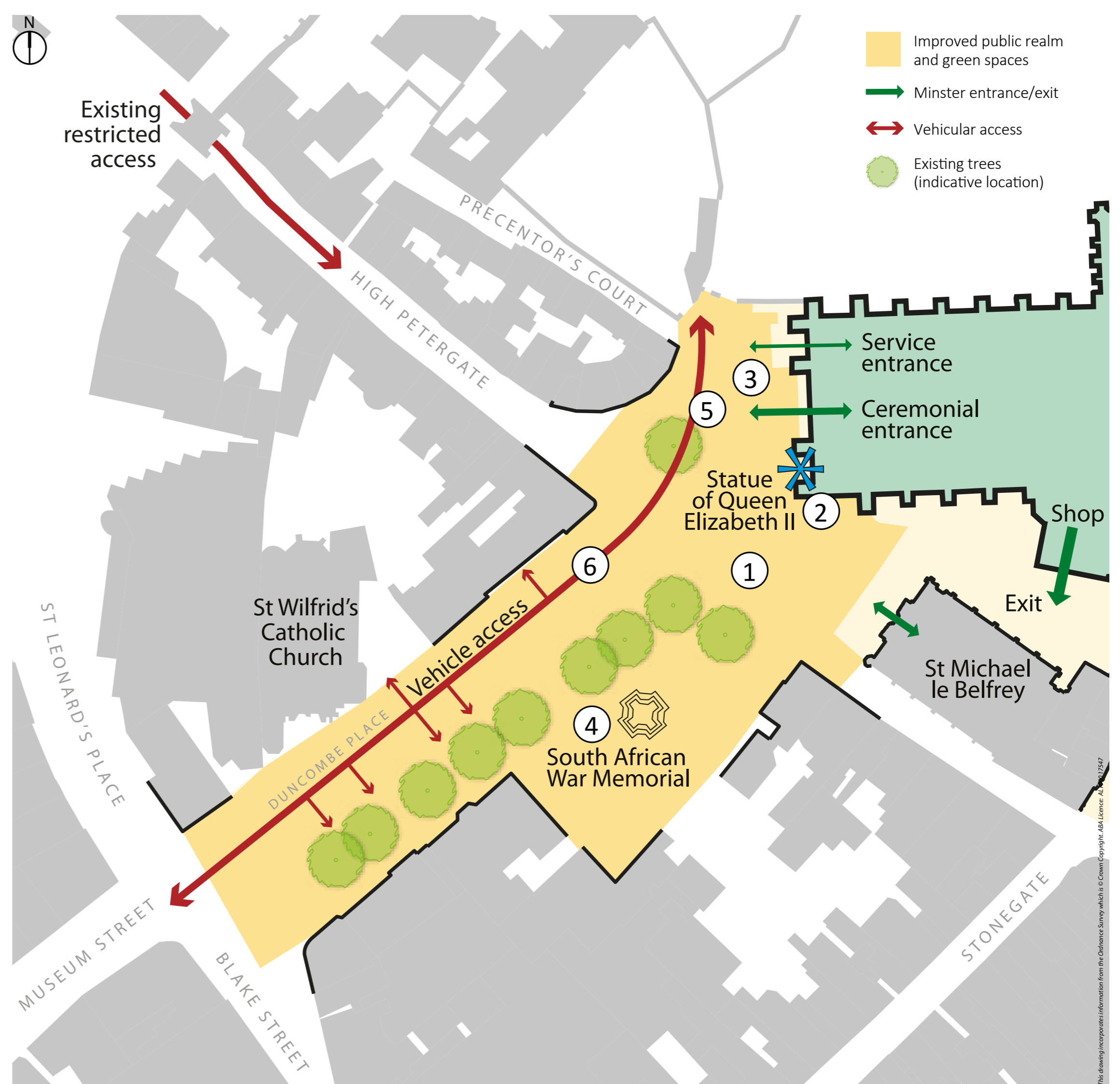
*Duncombe Place is to be transformed into a fine public square for York.*

*Renamed in honour of the Queen, it will be a high quality, civic setting for the Minster and a ceremonial space for Yorkshire under the 'Heart of Yorkshire' window.*

Duncombe Place was created as a grand approach to the Minster. Over time the quality of the spaces at the west end of the Minster has deteriorated. Sadly, there is a need for permanent anti-terrorism measures to be put in place.

The redesign of this area, project area 2, will create a high quality public space for the city, reveal views to the Minster and improve security. The design will give due regard to the existing trees

- ① A new square 'Queen Elizabeth Square' is created which can host civic and ceremonial events for the city and county
- ② A new statue of Queen Elizabeth II is to be commissioned and will be carved by one of the Minster's masons. It will stand in an existing empty niche on the Minster's west front
- ③ The west end becomes the entrance for Minster services and ceremonial events
- ④ South African War Memorial is to be incorporated in the design of the new square
- ⑤ Security measures are to be designed into the square to restrict vehicle access close to the Minster
- ⑥ Cycle access and vehicle access for residents, businesses, the National Railway Museum train and taxis is retained



**Queen Elizabeth Square proposals**





# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

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*...A sense of wellbeing*

*Dean's Park will be retained and expanded as a quiet green oasis in the centre of the busy city.*

*The Old Palace will become home to a new learning and education centre allowing better access to its library and collections.*

We received strong support in our earlier exhibitions for the idea of creating a sensory garden and learning centre. Our proposals for project area 3 retain the existing character of Dean's Park and support the wellbeing of our community.

- ① Dean's Park is enhanced as an important city centre green space
- ② A sensory garden is created on land which is not currently public. This space for reflection and contemplation is enclosed by the War Memorial to the Second Division, and reflects the Minster's commitment to the wellbeing of its community
- ③ A small cafe kiosk could open in the Summer months
- ④ A new learning and education centre with space to exhibit the Minster's artefacts, will be created alongside the Old Palace. It will have flexible spaces for use by visiting schools, community groups and for adult learning
- ⑤ A new access outside the sensory garden will be created onto the City Walls which will allow disabled access from this point up to Robin Hood's Tower
- ⑥ Dean's Park will continue to host temporary events to support York Minster



**Learning and wellbeing proposals**



# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

## Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

*...Supporting the life of the Minster*

*Many of the buildings to the north, east and south of the Minster house functions which are essential for the daily operations of the Minster.*

*The Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan provides space for additional facilities to support those who live and work in the Precinct.*

*York Minster is one of only 9 Anglican Cathedrals (out of 42) in the UK to retain its own dedicated body of craftspeople. With the support of the York Minster Fund we aim to create an international centre of excellence for craft skills to ensure York Minster always has the craft skills needed to conserve and repair this unique building.*

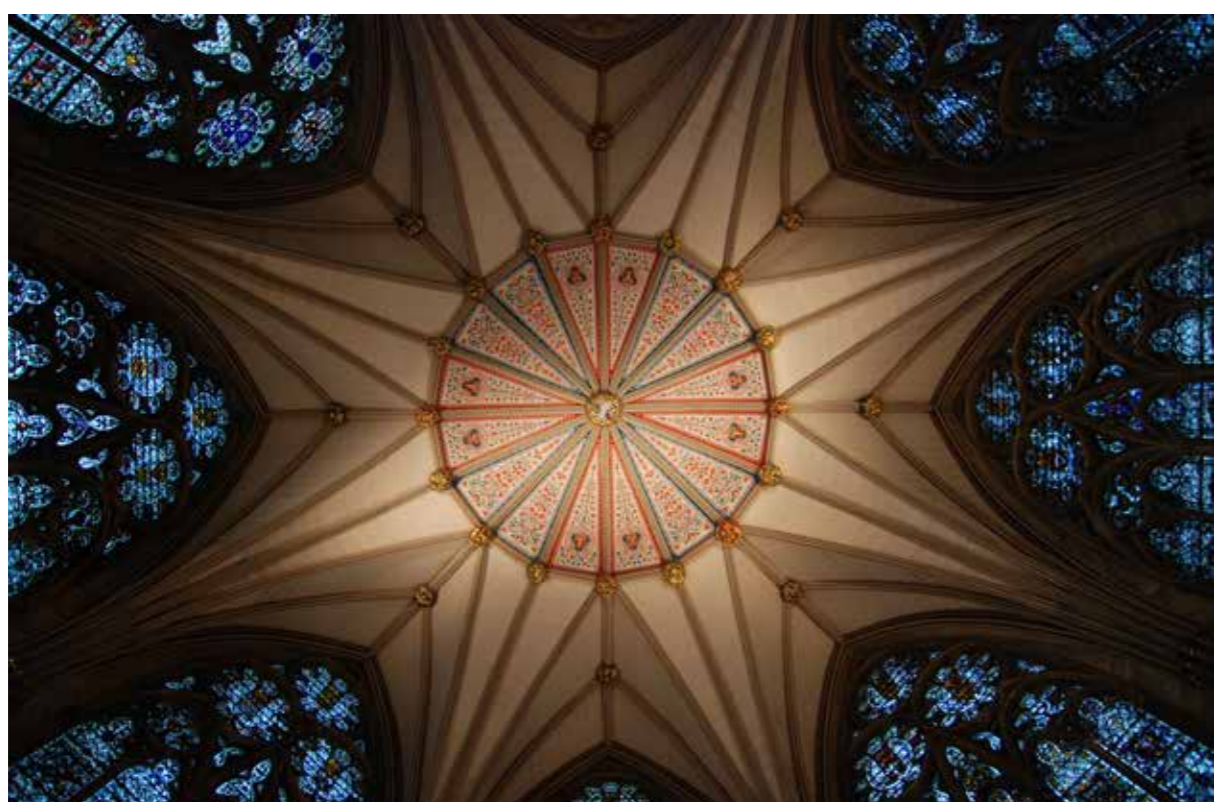
We are hoping to provide a limited amount of new accommodation for Minster apprentices, better space for storage and a new craft workshop, new Minster offices and other back-of-house facilities.

St William's College has been empty for many years. A major restoration of the building is planned for 2021 so that it can be used as office space for the Minster and Minster Police, and a high quality conference and events space. Once the Minster's offices are moved out of Church House, the building will be a valuable residential development, generating income to support the Minster's restoration work. Our emerging proposals for project area 4 include:

- ① Accommodation will be provided for Minster apprentices together with improved storage at the Deanery garages
- ② New single storey, stone masons' workshop with green living roof, as part of the international centre of excellence for heritage skills
- ③ Display of the Minster's historic stone which will be visible from the city wall
- ④ The restored St William's College will house Minster offices, support facilities and conference and events space
- ⑤ New homes at Church House
- ⑥ Additional back-of house facilities and improvements to the appearance of Chapter House Yard
- ⑦ The lane alongside Dean's Park is to be improved with new surfacing and enhanced security



Living and working proposals



# YORK MINSTER PRECINCT

*...What happens next?*

*Whatever your reason for visiting the Precinct, we would encourage you to comment and help shape the future of this special place.*

Please complete a feedback survey online at:

**masterplanning.yorkminster.org** where this exhibition is available to view. The consultation period runs from Wednesday 16th December and closes at midnight on Sunday 14th February 2021.

Over the next few months we will review all the comments we have received and use them to finalise the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Comments will be recorded in a Statement of Consultation which will be available on our website.

As proposals develop we will continue our conversations with stakeholders. We have already engaged with and received support from Historic England, the City of York Council, York Minster's Fabric Advisory Committee and the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England.

## *York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan*

We are hopeful that the draft proposals will become part of the Development Plan for the city and will be adopted as a Neighbourhood Plan. A Neighbourhood Forum made up of church, resident and business representatives from within the Precinct has been established. The City of York has ratified the Neighbourhood Plan boundary which covers the Precinct and its close surroundings.

Following this consultation, the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan will be the subject of a further period of statutory public consultation and examination by an independent Planning Inspector. The Plan will then proceed to a community referendum of all residents on the electoral register within the Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Area. If the majority are in favour the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted by the City Council as part of the statutory development plan for the city. Once adopted it will provide a framework against which detailed proposals can be developed and investment secured for individual projects.

*In the meantime, the important restoration works to the Minster's South Choir Aisle and protection of the medieval stained glass windows will continue.*

