# FORM 4 (Rule 5)

# Section 8 of Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011 Public Notice on application to the Fabric Advisory Committee

	PUBLIC NOTICE
TAKE NOTICE	that the Chapter of the Cathedral Church of:
The Cathedrai and	Metropolitical Church of St Peter in York
has on this date:	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
applied to the Fab following proposal	ric Advisory Committee of the said cathedral for approval of the l:
Enhancing Accessib	vility (Police Cabin Entrance)
An application to in	cription of it and details of the proposal] stall an automatic bi-fold door within the Police Cabin corridor entrance into the f York Minster, improving the accessibility of the primary staff and deliveries ster
<u>Plans, drawings, s</u>	pecifications or other documents
Copies of the plan	pecifications or other documents s, drawings, specification and other documents accompanying this e examined online at
Copies of the plan application may b	s, drawings, specification and other documents accompanying this
Copies of the plan application may b	s, drawings, specification and other documents accompanying this e examined online at

# **REPRESENTATIONS**

If you wish to make representations about the whole or any part of the proposal described in this Notice you should write to the Secretary of the Fabric Advisory Committee: *insert postal and email address*.

Mr David Demack c/o 4 Deangate York YO1 7JA FAC@yorkminster.org

**So that it reaches the Secretary not later than:** insert a date ending 28 days after the time of the commencement of the period for representations.

12th December 2025

# **DIRECTIONS TO CHAPTER**

- 1. This public notice (or a copy of it) must be displayed for a continuous period of 28 days in a prominent position <u>inside</u> and <u>outside</u> your cathedral where it is readily visible to the public.
- 2. A copy of this notice must be sent as follows:
  - (a) to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission, and
  - (b) if the proposal is of a kind described in section 2(1)(a) of the Measure—
    - (i) to Historic England (formerly English Heritage)
    - (ii) to the national amenity societies as applicable (see list on Form 3)
    - (iii) to the local planning authority.



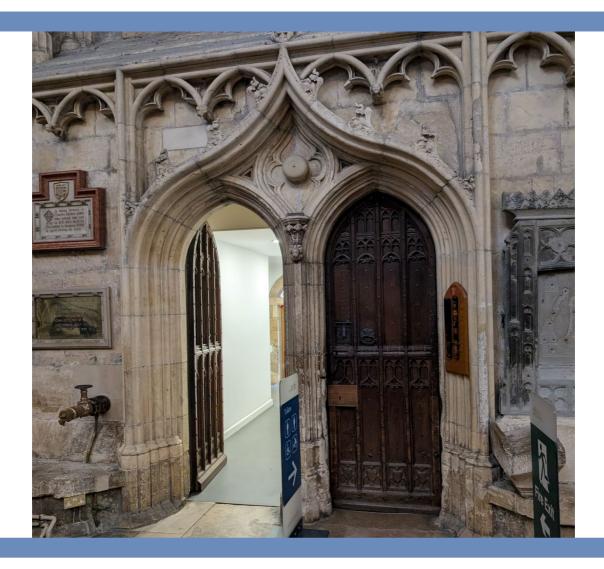


# York Minster: Enhancing Accessibility (Police Cabin Entrance)

Paper for CCM approval to FAC

FOR FAC APPROVAL December 2025

Rev. A 00\_06.11.2025







# 1. INTRODUCTION

The report is to accompany an application to install an automatic bi-fold door within the Police Cabin corridor entrance into the North Quire Aisle of York Minster, improving the accessibility of the primary staff and deliveries entrance to the Minster. The report includes a statement of need, a statement of significance and a heritage impact assessment.

This document should be read alongside the appended drawings:

- (EX)100 Existing Floor Plan (Rev 2.00),
- (EX)300 Existing Sections (Rev 2.00),
- (EX)400 Existing Elevations (Rev 2.00),
- (GA)100 Proposed Floor Plan (Rev 2.00),
- (GA)300 Proposed Sections (Rev 2.00),
- (GA)400 Proposed Elevations (Rev 2.00),

# 2. STATEMENT OF NEED

The Police Cabin passageway and entrance is the primary means of staff and deliveries access to York Minster. The entrance and approach currently provides step-free access to the North Quire Aisle (including via a ramp erected externally in the Chapter House Yard in 1988). However, the circa fifteenth-century door between the Police Cabin and the North Quire Aisle is very large and heavy and must be opened by hand, which prevents this route from being independently accessible for mobility impaired people and wheelchair uses. The doorway presents day-to-day challenges for some staff and visitors of all abilities. There is therefore a need and opportunity to address these very real limitations and obstacles and to improve managed access through the Police Cabin passage with an automatic door.

The Minster's own codes of practice further establish this need. Chapter has recently affirmed its commitment to 'leading and driving a greater level of EDI [equality, diversity and inclusion] among everyone connected to York Minster' (paragraph 1.1 of the *York Minster Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy*, 2024). Paragraph 4.8 of this document states that efforts will be taken to 'design and provide services that meet the needs of diverse communities, and which are accessible to all.'

The current proposals will address this need in a creative way which will remove harms to existing heritage. We propose a reversible fixture to hold the hinged medieval door open. We will also be able to remove the modern closer from this ancient door, which will stand open. To create an acoustic, draft and secure lobby in the existing passage, a new set of automatic bi-fold doors will be installed.

This will, for the first time, create a fully accessible staff entrance to the Minster from the Chapter House Yard. In submitting this application, Chapter are making an affirmative and positive statement to celebrate diversity and equality within the Minster, particularly in terms of and supporting its workforce.





# 3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following provides an overview statement of significance of the specific area of change and for the Minster as a whole, using Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (2008) and the following significance scale:

EXCEPTIONAL is used to define areas or aspects considered to be of international importance or value.

HIGH is used to define areas or aspects considered to be of national importance or value.

SOME is used to define areas or aspects considered to be of local importance or value or to have an element considered to be of potentially national interest.

NEUTRAL is used to define areas or aspects considered to be of neutral value (neither contributing to nor detracting from the heritage values).

DETRACTING is used to define areas or aspects considered to have a negative value or which are intrusive to the significance as a whole.

#### The Police Cabin: Neutral

The Police Cabin is located within a single-storey range erected within the Chapter House Yard over three phases. The central three bays were built in 1868 by J B W Atkinson (architects of York) — where the Police Cabin is situated; the four western bays in 1902 (to the designs of Bodley); and the two eastern bays in 1987 to the designs of Charles Brown. The steps and landing were erected externally within the yard in 1988.

This north range is of limited heritage value. It does not detract from the Minster – matching the magnesian limestone and simple Gothic tracery of the surrounding built fabric – but does not contribute to the spectacle either. The range building is clearly not intended as a focal point. The interior of the entire range was completely re-modelled in 2012 (creating the WCs and Police Cabin), and no historic features survive internally. A further re-modelling of the public WCs was completed in 2025.

The Police Cabin Door: High

Evidential Value: High

The Police Cabin door forms part of a pair with its neighbour adjacent (to the WC). Both are set within fifteenth-century openings, but the WC door has had its tracery face entirely replaced, whereas the Police Cabin door is original on both sides. Diagnostic features of the age of the door include the wide oak boards to the Police Cabin face and the Perpendicular tracery with armourial panels to the North Quire Aisle face. There have been some repairs, for instance the upper tracery of the outer face, and modifications to the door furniture (the modern lock box and its predecessor are both visible on the outer face of the door), but the door remains a remarkable survival.

Both WC and Police Cabin doors have almost certainly been re-hung. The timber below the strap hinges to the outer face of both doors have been excavated, suggesting a preceding hinge either taller or set slightly lower. Unusually, the embellished face of the doors face inwards. This configuration needs to be better understood or explained, as the door was an external door (prior to





the nineteenth century). It is therefore possible (or likely) the doors have been reversed. The reversal could have been achieved without moving the hinges simply by swapping the WC and Police Cabin doors. Such a record of change contributes to evidential value, capturing the many alterations undertaken in this part of the Minster and providing evidence of former circulation routes.

Aesthetic Value: High

Today, the Police Cabin door and its two-centred arch are an attractive feature within the north wall of the North Quire Aisle. The door forms a clear pair with its neighbour; they are combined with a flowing ogee arch topped with foliated accents. Each door is set within its own portal, a decorative corbel head placed where they meet. Together, door and arch attest to the skill of medieval carpenters and stone-masons, and the shared repertoire of motifs which unifies their work (such as heraldic shields, tracery patterns and moulded mullions and transoms).

The setting of the door contributes to this aesthetic value, mirroring the Perpendicular tracery of the Great East Window and ornamental timberwork of the Quire stalls, and forming a clear pair with the adjacent traceried door to the WC.

The Police Cabin face of the door is much less embellished and has a detracting modern context with some harmful modifications, such as the modern door closer at its head (which we propose will be removed).

Historical Value: High

This door is said to be the original entrance from the Bedern to the Minster, the route taken daily by the Vicars Choral (who once lived in the Bedern). This is visible today from the small ledge to the eastern side of the door, believed to be erected for the placement of a sign-in book. Today, as the main access point to the Police Cabin, the door has a close association with the Minster Police – possibly one of the oldest warranted police forces in the country. This connection is further established by the historic truncheons displayed in the North Quire Aisle adjacent to the door. The door to the Police Cabin therefore has significant associations with two important aspects of the Minster's workforce.

Communal Value: High

Today, the Police Cabin door is the main entrance route into the Minster for its staff and has an important role in controlling access and keeping the building and the people within secure.

# York Minster Generally: Exceptionally Significant

The following statement of significance is taken from the York Minster Conservation Management Plan (2020) p. 205. It highlights the importance of the Minster for its associations with early Christianity, its depth of archaeology, its enormous scale and the quality of its craftsmanship from each phase of Gothic architecture:

'York Minster is the principal place of Christian worship in York, Yorkshire, The essence of what makes the Minster significant is that it is a place to encounter God's love. This is embodied in its fabric which bears witness to the power of God's love through the ages and connects those who visit or work in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John Gough A Handbook for Guides (Chapter of York, 2017), p.122.





Minster in the present day to generations of the faithful who have built, cared for, worshipped in and beautified the church. The ongoing stewardship of the building is itself an expression of faith.

The Minster is the Metropolitical church of the Northern Province of the Church of England, the principal place of Christian worship in York and Yorkshire and a long-established centre of church administration. The apparent presence of a Bishop of York at the Council of Arles in 314AD and the refoundation of the Minster in the 7th century are testament to the Minster's long history and status and a continuous Christian tradition spanning more than 1,300 years. Its profound spiritual and cultural value is therefore unquestionable. The present Minster, constructed after 1225, is also a deeply—rooted source of identity for its city and county, not least because it is a defining and unmistakable feature on the skyline of York and its environs. It is a spiritual focus for individuals and groups alike, providing a place to encounter God's love for its regular congregations, other congregations and Christian groups in the diocese, local people, visitors from further afield and organisations of all kinds including the armed forces. The Minster's clergy, staff, volunteers, musicians and friends enjoy a strong sense of community, and the warmth of their hospitality is often commended by visitors. There is a very strong musical tradition, which brings great pleasure to visitors and adds significantly to the atmosphere of the building and the experience of worship.

The Minster stands as a witness to the history of York: its monuments, outstanding archaeology and extensive Collections provide unique evidence of the city's past and development. The Collections include objects and documents which testify to local and national history: some, such as the Horn of Ulf and the York Gospels, are of particular antiquity and significance. The building itself has exceptional evidential and design value. Its sheer scale and the quality of its craftsmanship reflect the prosperity of the medieval city and the ambition of its patrons and archbishops, and position the Minster in the first rank of European great churches. More than that, its particular interest rests in the way it contributed to the distinctive evolution of the Gothic tradition in the north of England, and the way it illustrates how architectural concepts were transmitted across medieval Europe. The Chapter House and especially the Vestibule channel French ideas that were being introduced at court; these ideas were then developed in the nave and Quire in an increasingly idiosyncratic fashion.

The Minster's celebrated medieval stained glass is an integral part of its architectural design and essential to creating the special atmosphere of the building. By virtue of the remarkable extent of survival and its artistic and technical quality, it is unquestionably of international importance. The Minster and its glass and fittings were the creation of many designers and craftsmen of regional and national importance. Today the design and craft tradition is kept alive through the work of the Minster's stonemasons and conservators, and their skill and knowledge is one of the cathedral's greatest heritage values. Above all others, it is the architectural and artistic values of the Minster, and the achievements and skill of both past and present designers and craftsmen, which is most admired by visitors.

The Precinct's archaeology and architecture – not least the City Walls, the remains of the Archbishop's Palace and St William's College - are outstandingly important and contain unique evidence of the history and development of one of the country's most historically important urban centres since its creation by the Romans.'





# 4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Initially, it was suggested that an automatic door mechanism could be applied to the medieval door. This would be attached to the two-centred arch of the door and door head. However, this presented a number of issues, both in terms of practicality and impacts to heritage. These are outlined below.

# **Risk to Joinery**

The medieval door was not designed to be opened solely from pressure to its head (the required location of the mechanism). The door is narrow and heavy. It is already showing signs of its age (in terms of cracking and cosmetic patterns of wear). It is likely the direct application of an additional motorisation or actuation mechanism would exacerbate damage to the door in the medium and long term. There would also be fittings to door and arch required for the mechanism which may cause further damage.

# The Speed of Operation

The door currently opens inwards towards the passage, away from the North Quire Aisle. The passage is a busy area with traffic in both directions. For safety reasons, a motorised hinged door would have to move slowly to avoid injury: this is not ideal for such a busy route.

# **Aesthetic Impacts to Door**

There would be a number of unsightly aesthetic interventions required to facilitate the operation of an automatic mechanism. This includes the addition of buttons on either side of the door (including in the highly-significant North Quire Aisle) and the addition of sensors, warning signs and finger guards. Each of these would be anachronistic to the medieval fabric and would therefore be unsuitable.

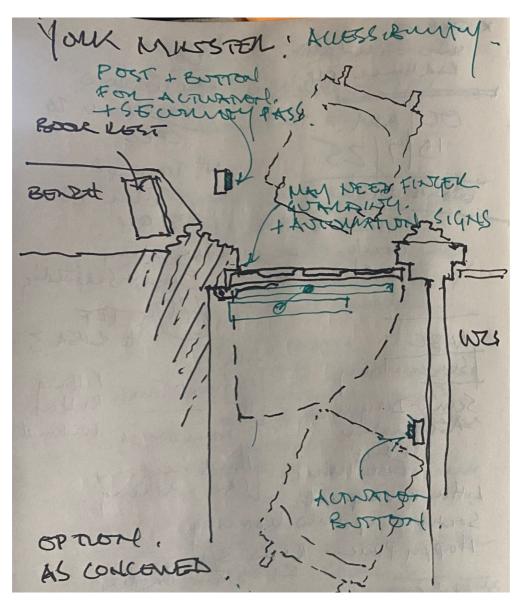
#### **No Vision Panel**

A vision panel is recommended for automatic doors to ensure no one is standing behind the door when it opens. Fitting a vision panel to a door of this age and significance would be unsuitable.

The current scheme avoids all these risks and impacts, and means neither the speed of operation nor the lack of vision panel will present a problem. Our proposal is discussed in detail below.







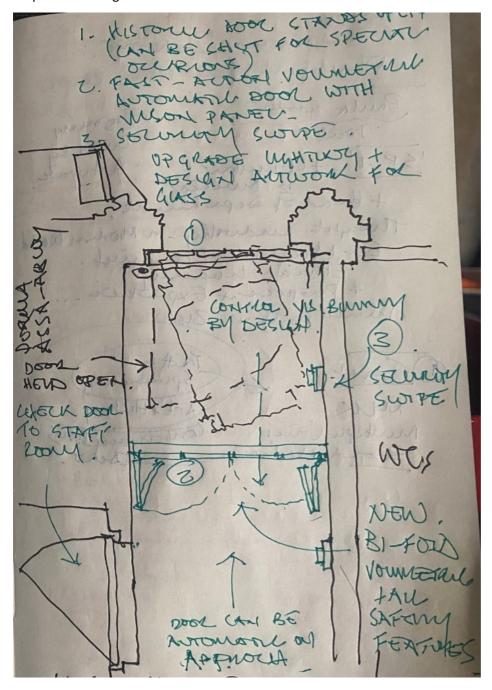
Sketch of an alternative option for the application of an automatic opening system to the medieval door. The sketch appraises the initial brief given.





# 5. DESIGN OVERVIEW

The proposal for FAC consideration and for CCM approval is for the historic door to be stood open with a simple hook or similar, so the door can still be closed if desirable. Behind the existing door, set within the passage, a new set of bi-fold doors will manage access. These will be opened by a button on each side – both located within the modern interior of the police cabin passage. The new automated doors will be glazed and also screened with some decal manifestation, for instance with the Minster logo. The bi-fold doors will be located some distance from the doorway to the North Quire Aisle to allow for wheelchair manoeuvrability. They will extend full height to the modern suspended ceiling.



Concept Sketch of the present proposals for the introduction of bifold doors within the Police Cabin passage.





# 6. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The following will consider the heritage impact of the proposals alongside justifications for change. It adopts the following scale: High Positive; Moderate Positive; Minor Positive; No Impact; Minor Detrimental; Moderate Detrimental; High Detrimental.

Impact and Mitigation	Justification
There will be a small aesthetic change to the North Quire Aisle from propping the timber door open (making the interior of the Police Cabin partially visible from the North Quire Aisle). However, this is mitigated by the fact that the door to the WC adjacent is already propped open and that the propping of the door will be fully reversible. Application of manifestation to the new door will limit views into the 'impolite' passage. We also feel we can improve the view and signs in the WCs passage and present both openings in a better manner.  Impact: Minor Detrimental	This will prevent the need to open the door by hand, creating a fully accessible throughway.
The door closer to the medieval door will be removed. Some TLC and minor works of repair to the existing door can be undertaken at the same time, subject to more detailed survey.  Impact: Minor Positive	None required.
There will be a small aesthetic change to the Police Cabin passage from the new bi-fold doors and buttons. However, this is mitigated by the fact that the interior of the Police Cabin was entirely modernised in 2012 and that the area is not within the original footprint of the Minster.	This prevents the need for a harmful automatic closer to the fifteenth-century door and for unsightly buttons for the automatic system within the North Quire Aisle.
Impact: No Impact/Minor Detrimental	

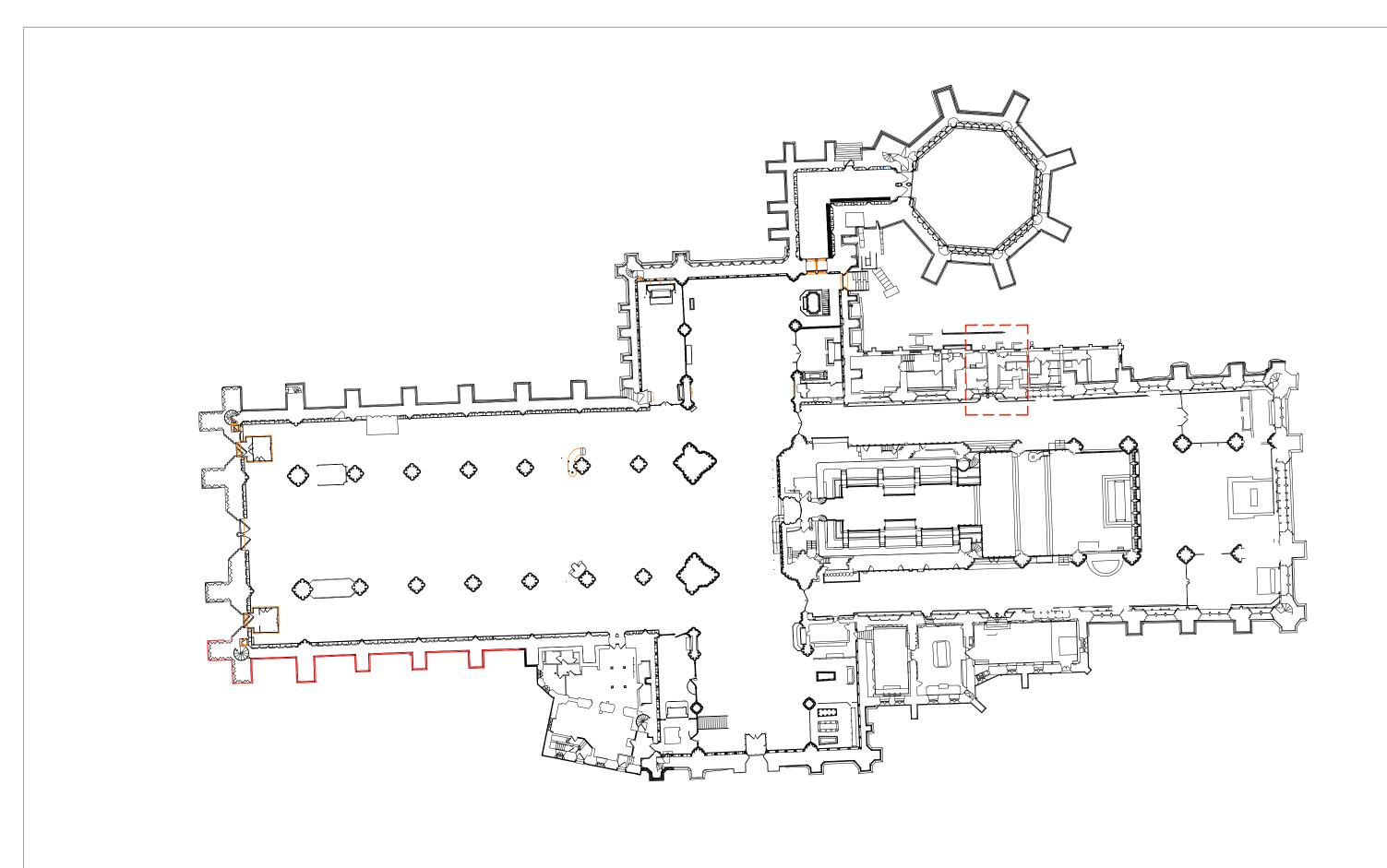




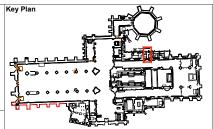
# CONCLUSION

Overall, the proposals present **No Impact** to heritage. Minor detrimental aesthetic effects are mitigated by the reversibility of the changes and the Police Cabin's negligible significance (as an entirely modern interior), are justified by accessibility improvements and are offset by the heritage benefits of removing the unsightly door closer attached to the head of the medieval door.

We believe that this favourable heritage impact assessment and robust statement of need are sufficient for a CCM approval of these proposals.







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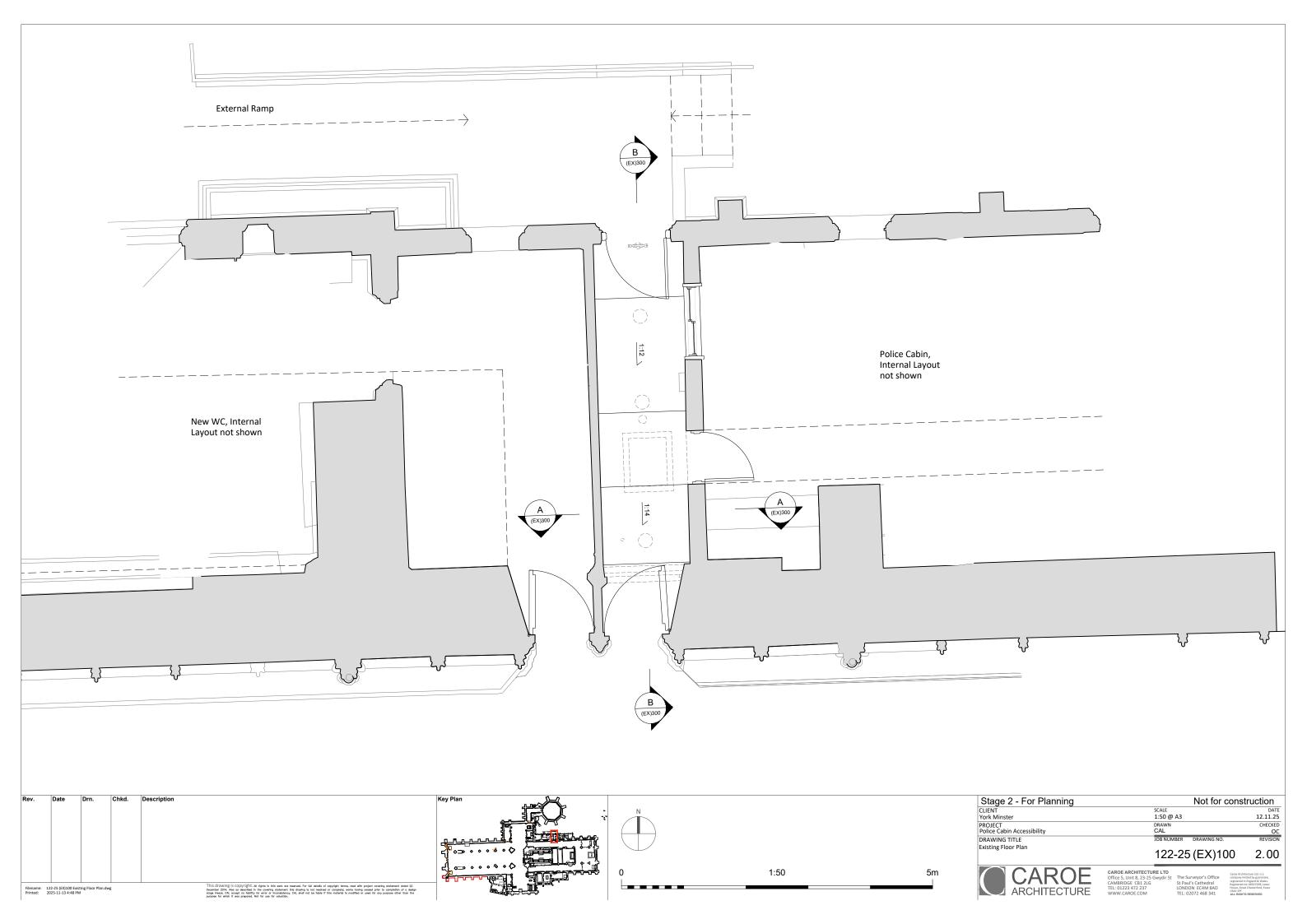
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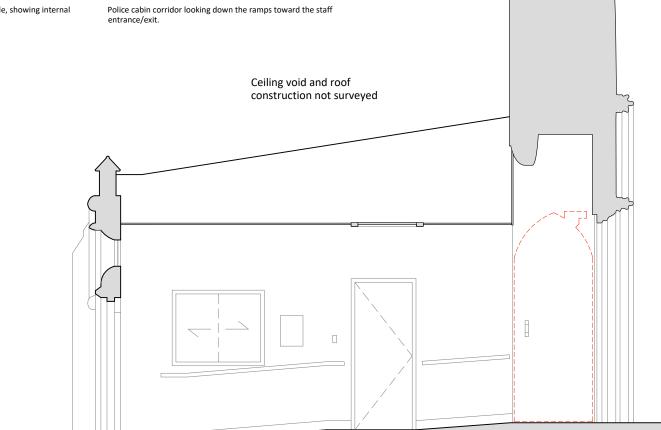
Ceiling void and roof construction not surveyed

Existing medieval door to North Quire Aisle



Same medieval door seen from the Police cabin side, showing internal approach.





North Quire Aisle

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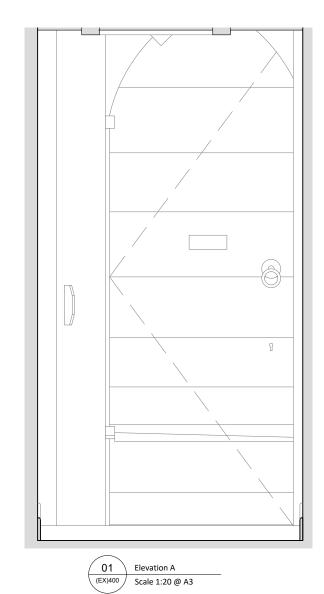
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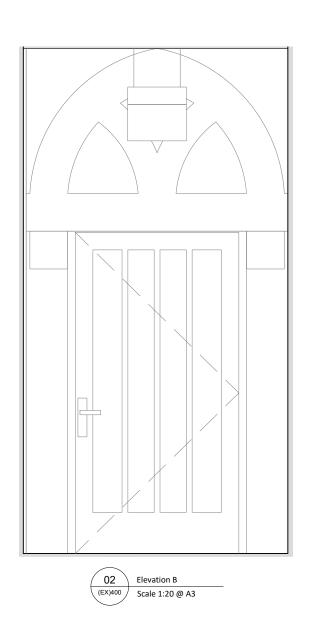
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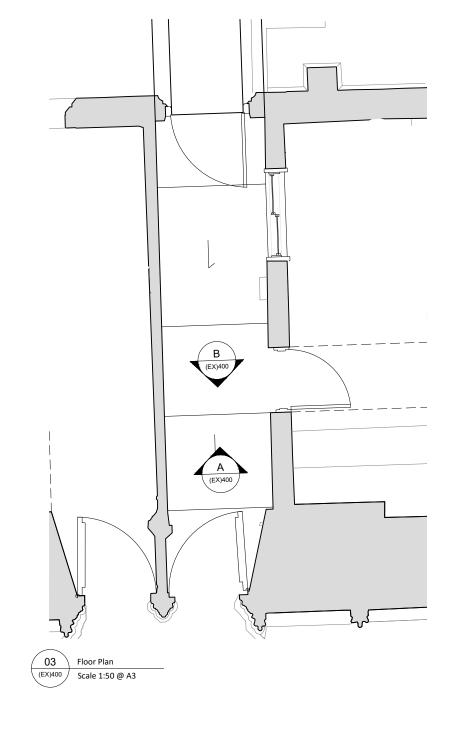
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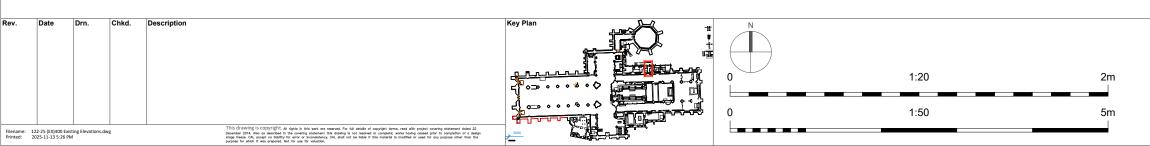
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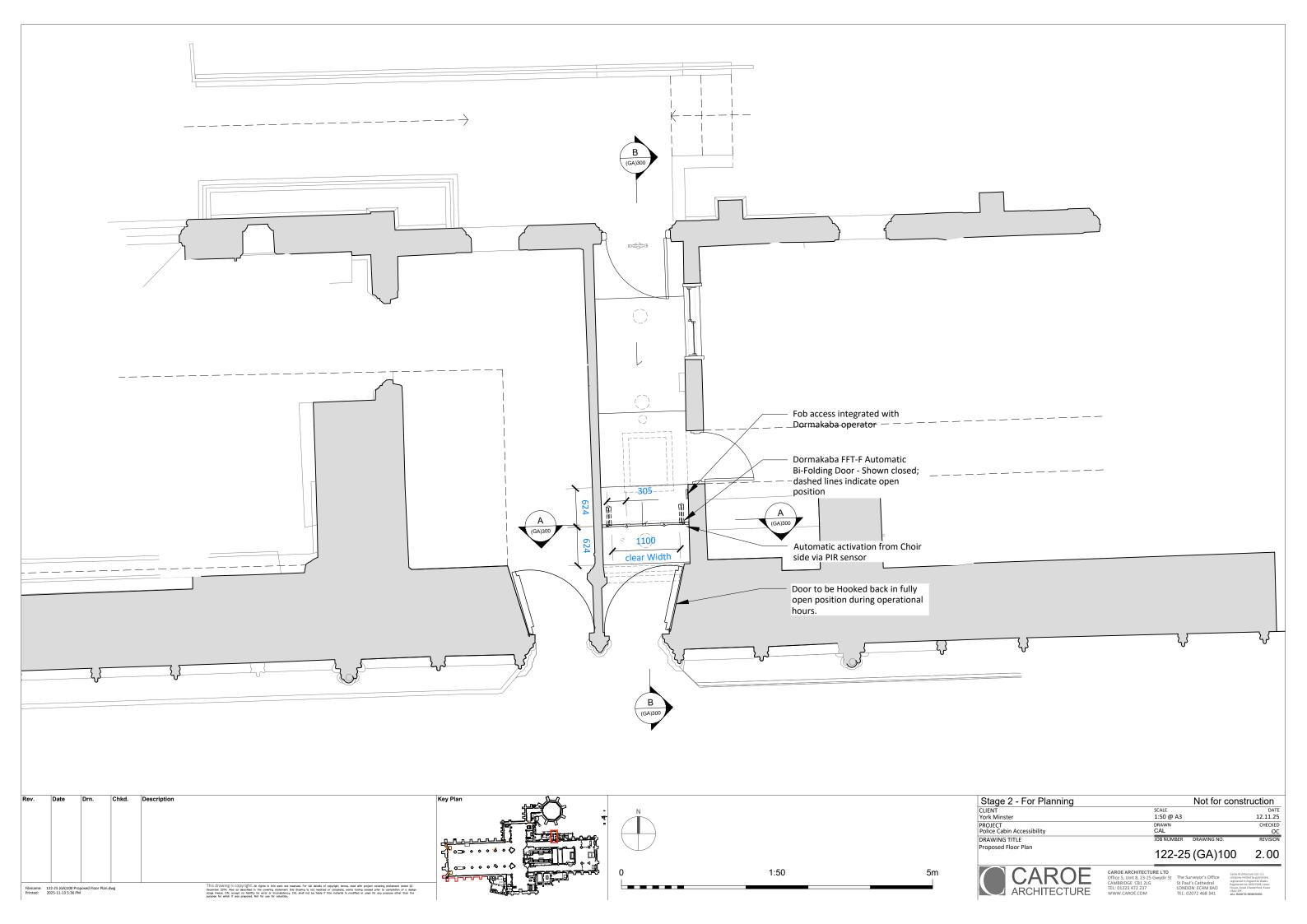


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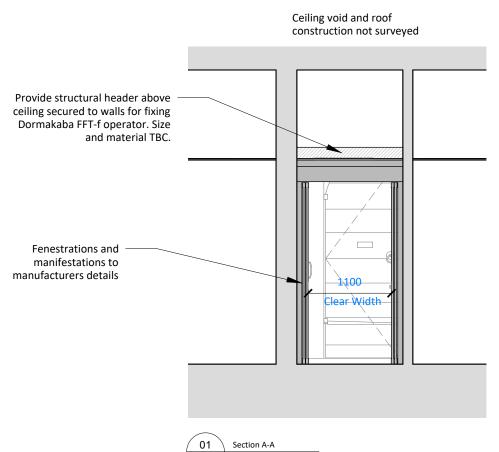




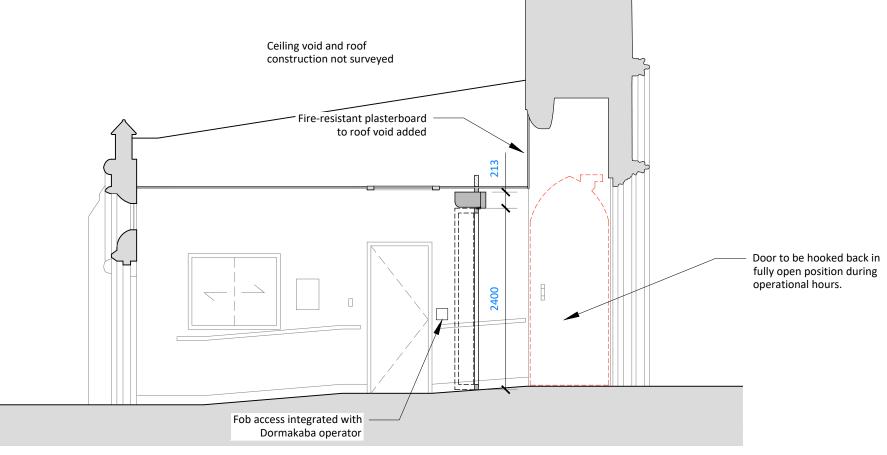
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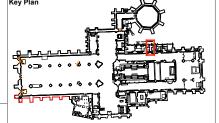






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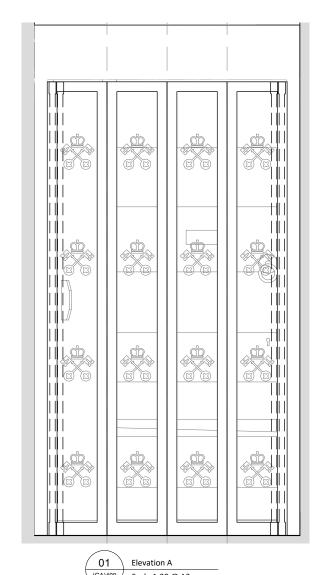


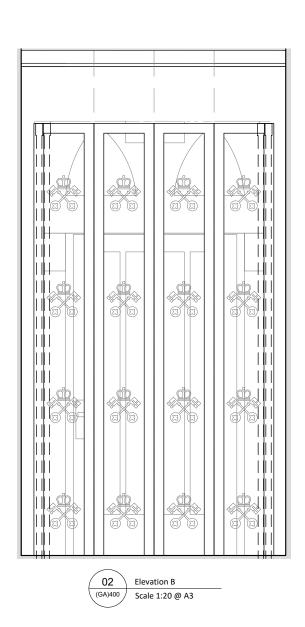
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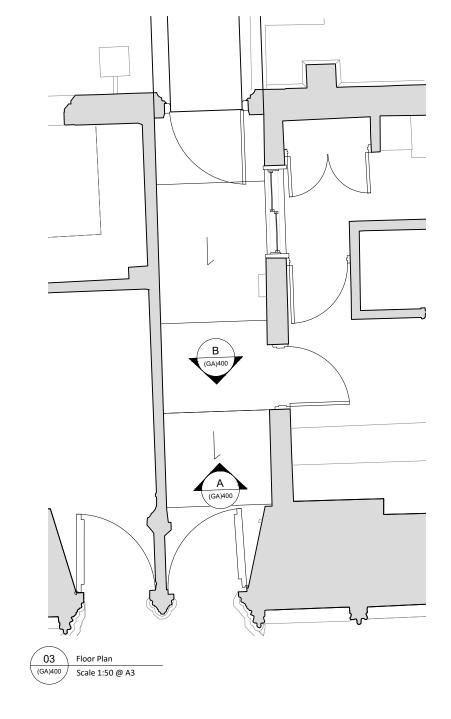
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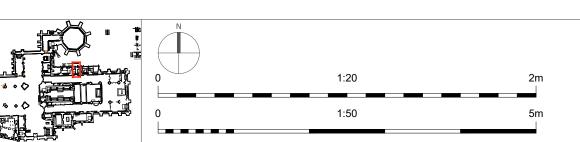




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Proposed Elevations	122-25 (GA)400	2.00



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