

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 Cathedral and Metropolitan Church of St Peter in York

has on this date:

27th May 2026

applied to the Fabric Advisory Committee of the said cathedral for approval of the following proposal:

Reinstatement of the Gable Cross to the South transept elevation of York Minster

Summary of the nature of work and its extent (and materials) [or in the case of an object, a short description of it and details of the proposal]

This CCM application is submitted to the FAC for the re-instatement of the foliate cross atop the gable of the South Transept. The design proposal is based on conclusive archaeological and drawn evidence and is not conjectural. The cross was damaged in the fire of 1984 and was not reinstated.

The proposal includes the taking down of the upper two courses of masonry to the gable faced; the renewal of these stones and the gable cross in new French limestone (Lepine/Lavoux) of the highest quality sculpture grade stone.

We are seeking conditional approval of structural armature and the vane rod, which will be finalised subject to close inspection after the gable stones are de-constructed.

Plans, drawings, specifications or other documents

Copies of the plans, drawings, specification and other documents accompanying this application may be examined online at

<https://yorkminster.org/about-us/statutory-applications/>

From this day:

27th May 2026

and until:

24th June 2026

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.*

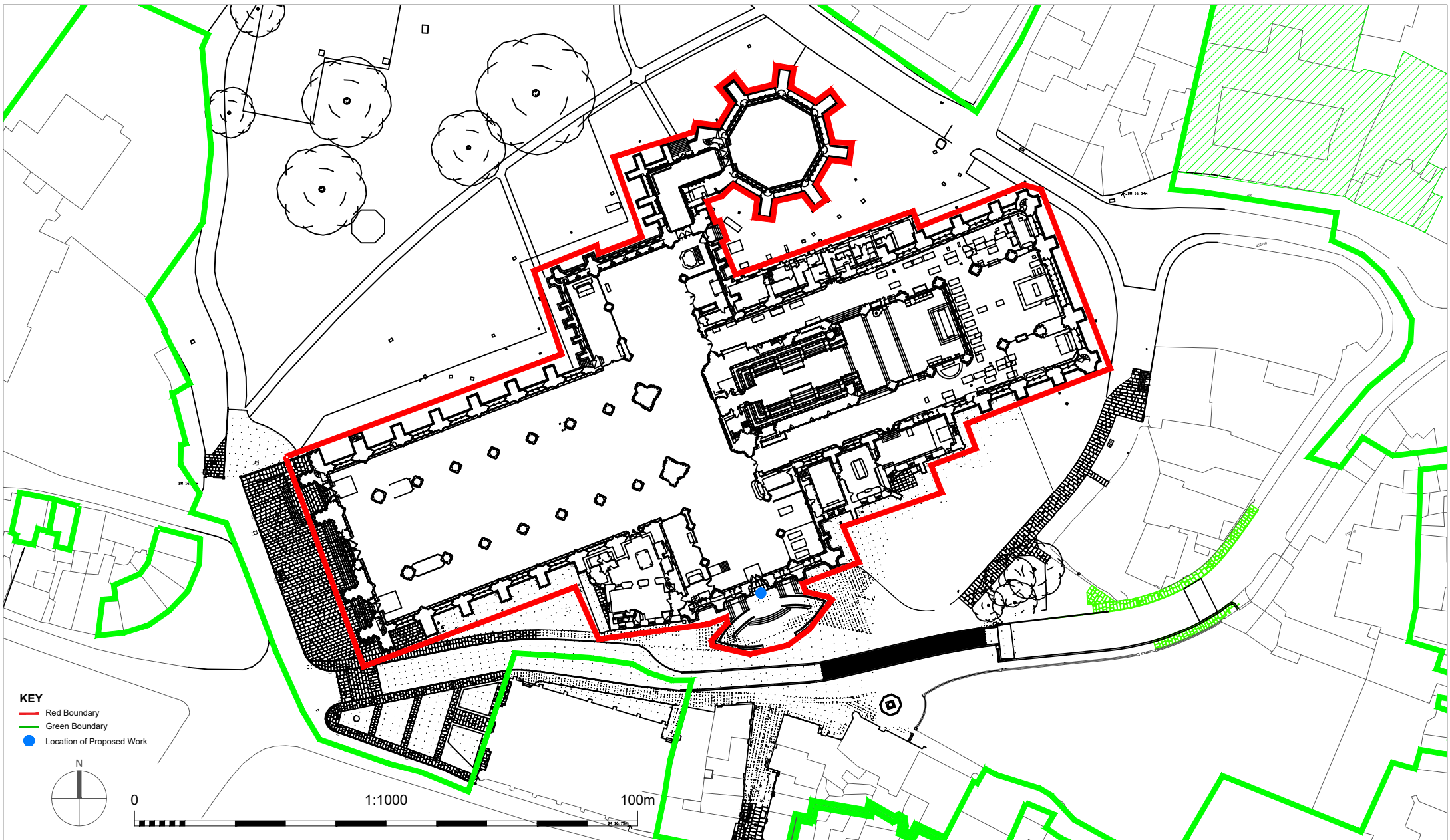
FAC Secretary
Works Department
4 Deangate
York, YO1 7JA
FAC@yorkminster.org

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.*

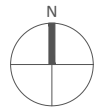
24th June 2026

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 inside and outside 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.



KEY
 Red Boundary
 Green Boundary
 Location of Proposed Work



0 1:1000 100m

| Rev. | Date | Drn. | Chkd. | Description |
|------|------|------|-------|-------------|
| | | | | |

Key Plan

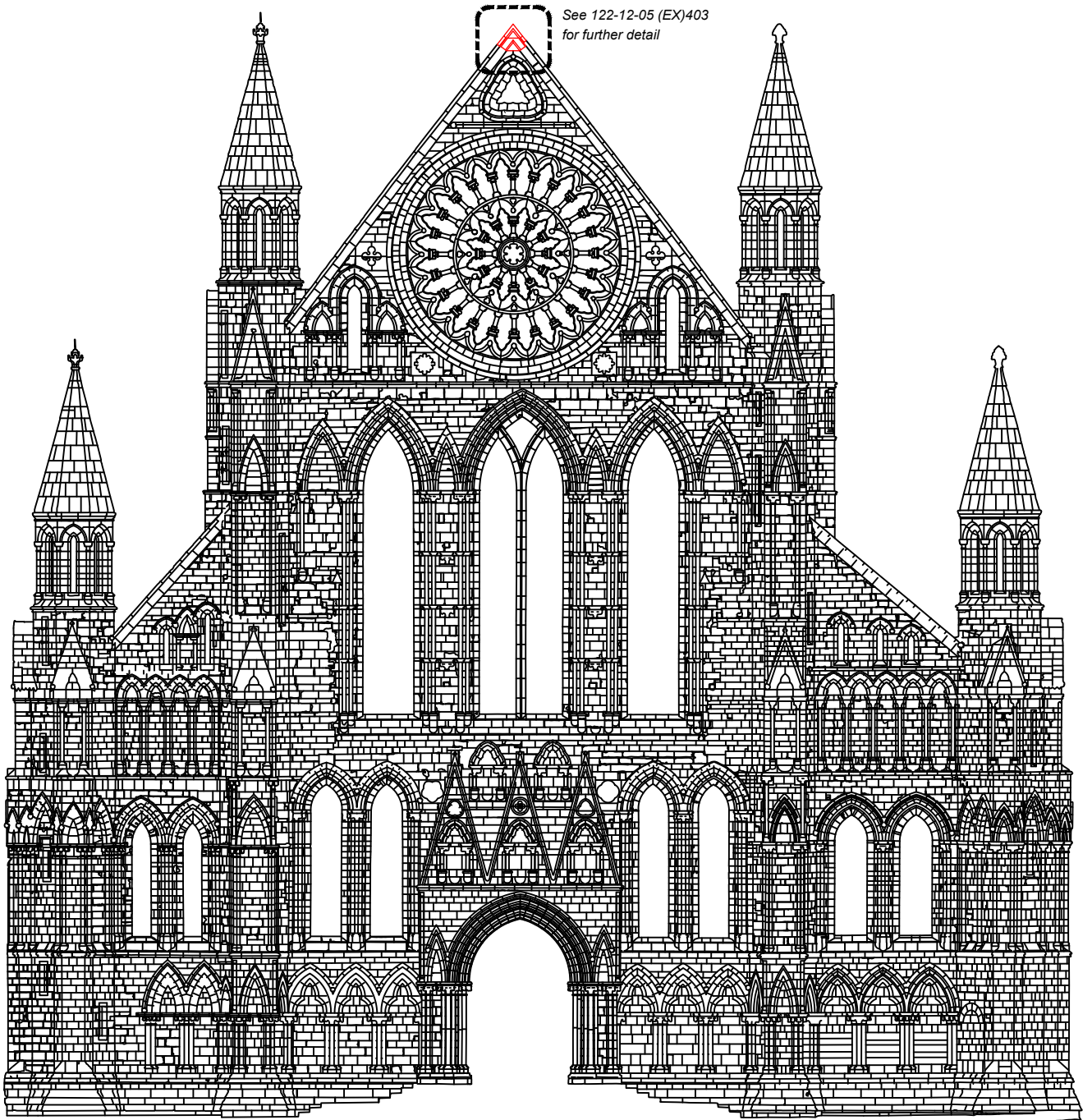
South Transept Cross drawing by George Street

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| No Stage | | Not for construction | |
| CLIENT | YORK MINSTER | SCALE | 1:1000 |
| PROJECT | YORK MINSTER SOUTH TRANSEPT | DATE | 27.05.26 |
| DRAWING TITLE | Location Plan | DRAWN | AAS |
| As Existing | | CHECKED | |
| | | JOB NUMBER | 122-12 (GA)001 |
| | | DRAWING NO. | |
| | | REVISION | - .00 |



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As Existing: Overview

Read with the CCM report and history of the elevation, which describes the works by G.E.Street, of which the proposed cross is an integral design feature.

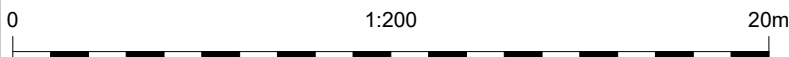
This drawing shows the assumed extent of stone to be replaced with the new cross. The apex stone was renewed in 1985; most likely the two stone below this were also renewed.

For this application, we are seeking approval to renew all three of these existing modern replacement stones, to accompany the structural requirements of the new cross.

Not shown in this external elevation, there will also be some minor disturbance (and then reinstatement) of the flashings to the main roof behind the apex, so that the new stones can be introduced and fixed in place.

We are seeking a conditional approval in relation to structural fixings which will be resolved once there is full scaffold access to the apex stonework.

There will be some limited additional scaffold fixings to the façade (in addition to those approved by the FAC in 2025 for the earlier phases of the South Transept Glazing project.



KEY
 Downtakings

| Rev. | Date | Drn. | Chkd. | Description |
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| | | | | |

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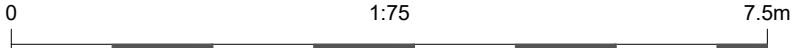
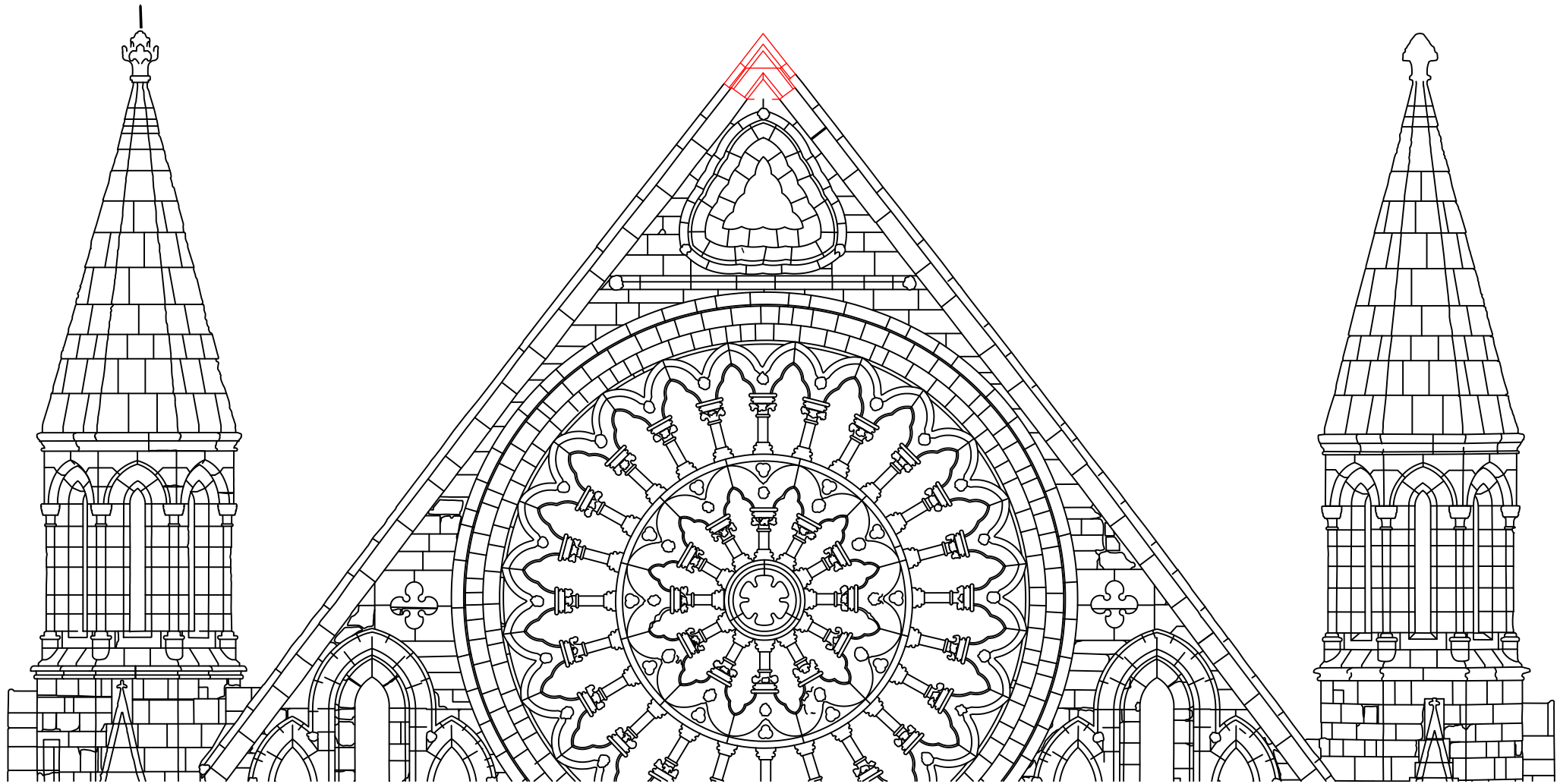
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| CLIENT | YORK MINSTER | SCALE | 1:200 |
| PROJECT | YORK MINSTER, SOUTH TRANSEPT | DATE | 27.05.26 |
| DRAWING TITLE | South Transept Elevation As Existing | DRAWN | AAS |
| | | CHECKED | |
| | | JOB NUMBER | 122-12 (EX)401 |
| | | DRAWING NO. | |
| | | REVISION | - .00 |



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KEY
 — Doughtakings

| Rev. | Date | Drn. | Chkd. | Description |
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| Key Plan |
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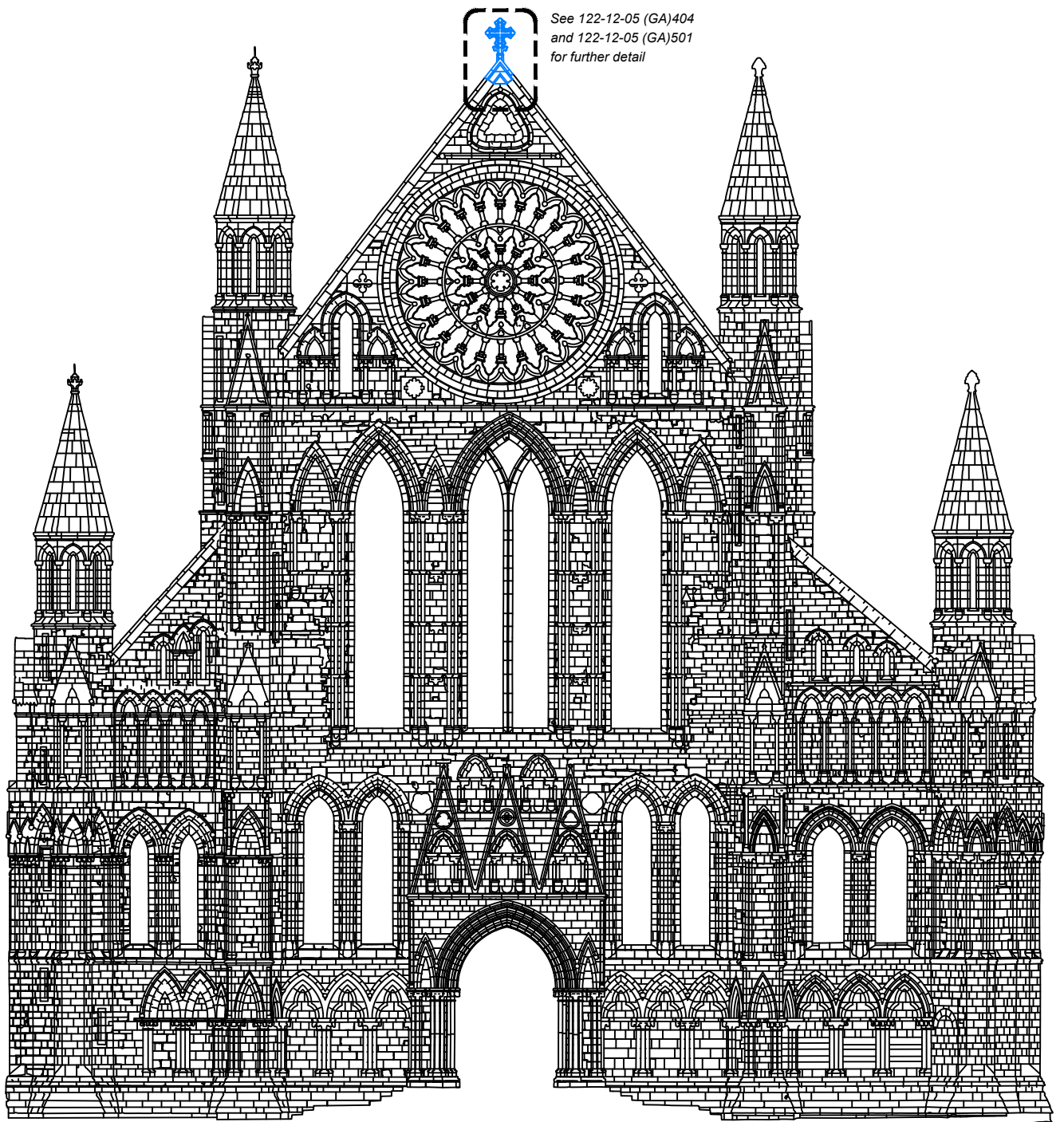
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| CLIENT | YORK MINSTER | SCALE | 1:75 |
| PROJECT | YORK MINSTER SOUTH TRANSEPT | DATE | 27.05.26 |
| DRAWING TITLE | South Transept Elevation As Existing Detail | DRAWN | AAS |
| | | CHECKED | |
| | | JOB NUMBER | 122-12 (EX)403 |
| | | DRAWING NO. | |
| | | REVISION | - .00 |



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See 122-12-05 (GA)404
and 122-12-05 (GA)501
for further detail

As Proposed: Overview

Read with the CCM report and history of the elevation, which describes the works by G.E.Street, of which the proposed cross is an integral design feature.

This drawing shows the proposed cross including (provisionally) the renewal of the two stone below the apex - subject to close inspection on site.

Not shown in this external elevation, the

proposed works will include reinstatement of the lead flashings to the main roof behind the apex, so that the new stones can be introduced and fixed in place.

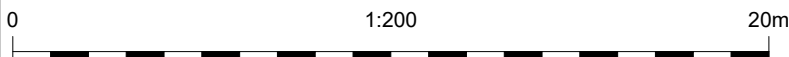
We are seeking a conditional approval in relation to structural fixings which will be resolved once there is full scaffold access to the apex stonework. For the purposes of this application, as a minimum there will be a stainless steel core to the new cross; and an

anchor for this rod into the masonry below the cap stonework.

In addition we are conditionally proposing that there may need to be an external stainless armature hidden to the back of the cross stonework as a supplementary support and as a safety measure for a feature that is expected to remain, maintenance free, for over 100+ years. The detail of all structural support to be agreed with reference to FAC

members once full access has been achieved.

The proposed stone for the cross will be a specially selected 'sculpture-grade' Lepine/Lavoux limestone, the quality of stone to be signed off by the master mason.



KEY

— Proposed

| Rev. | Date | Drn. | Chkd. | Description |
|------|------|------|-------|-------------|
| | | | | |

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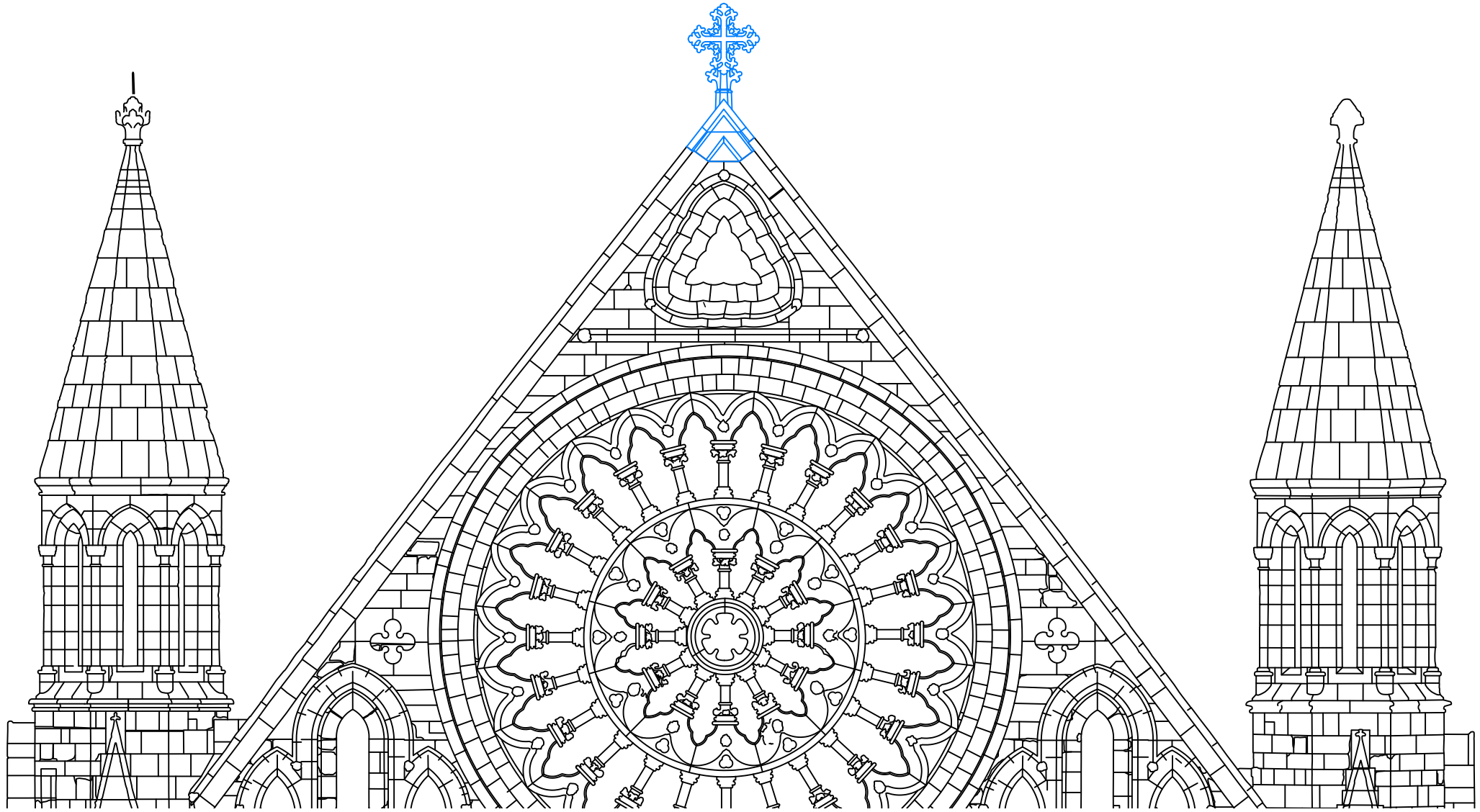
| | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| No Stage | | Not for construction | |
| CLIENT | Yorik Minster | SCALE | 1:200 |
| PROJECT | Yorik Minster, South Transept | DATE | 27.05.26 |
| DRAWING TITLE | South Transept Elevation | DRAWN | AAS |
| As Proposed | | CHECKED | |
| | | JOB NUMBER | 122-12 (GA)402 |
| | | DRAWING NO. | |
| | | REVISION | -.00 |



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0 1:75 7.5m

KEY
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| Rev. | Date | Drn. | Chkd. | Description |
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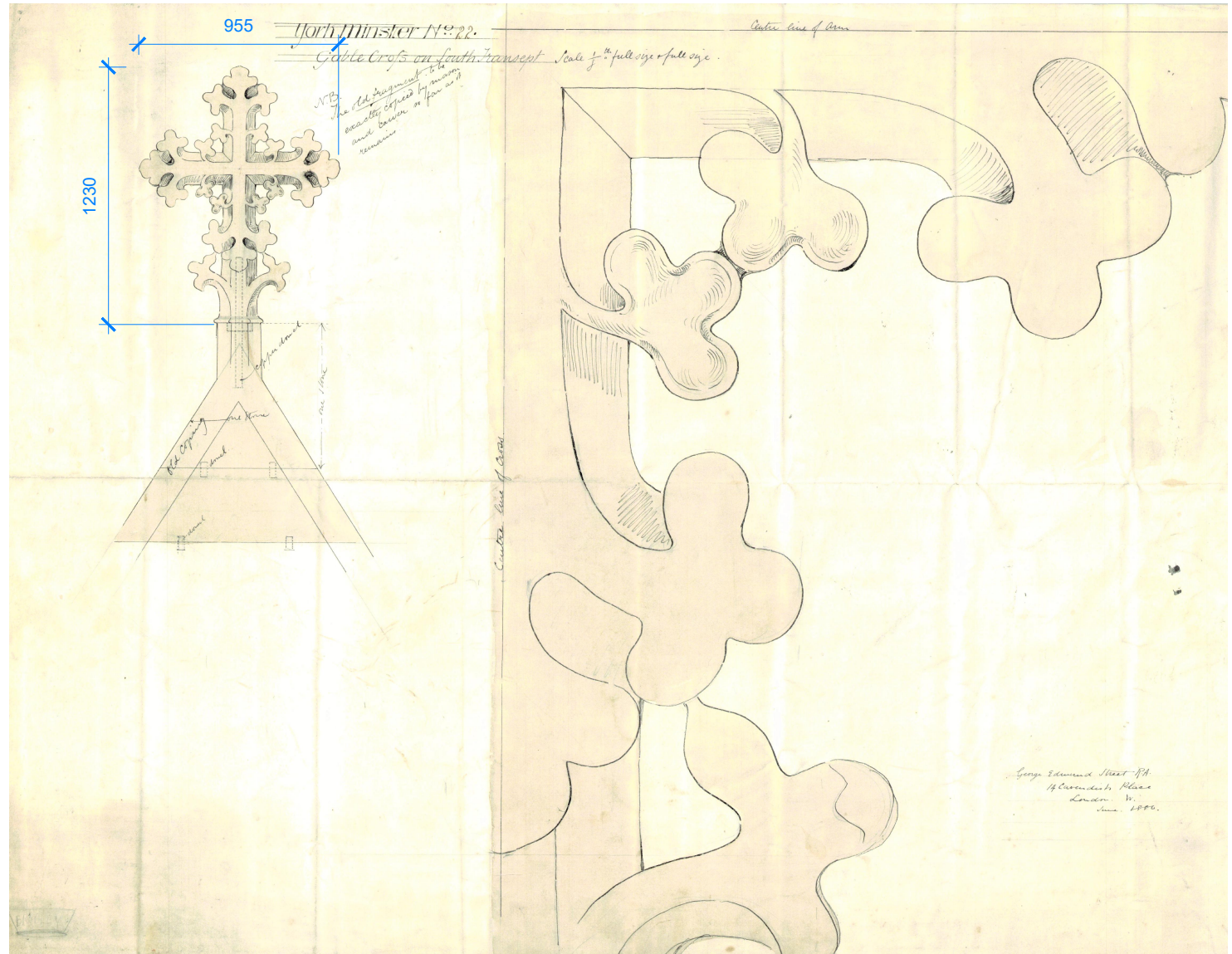
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|---------------|---|----------------------|----------------|
| CLIENT | YORK MINSTER | SCALE | 1:75 |
| PROJECT | YORK MINSTER SOUTH TRANSEPT | DATE | 27.05.26 |
| DRAWING TITLE | South Transept Elevation As Proposed Detail | DRAWN | AAS |
| | | CHECKED | |
| | | JOB NUMBER | 122-12 (GA)404 |
| | | DRAWING NO. | |
| | | REVISION | - .00 |



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The Surviving Cross

The surviving cross fragment matches the G.E. Street drawing in detail and scale fairly precisely.

The proposed cross will be set out to match the architectural fragment, developed into a working detail for the stouling and new apex stone, to fit the facade as existing.

The drawing and cross scales to a new stone which is approximately 955mm wide and 1230mm tall from the abacus.

| Rev. | Date | Drn. | Chkd. | Description | Key Plan |
|------|------|------|-------|---|----------|
| | | | | South Transept Cross drawing by George Street | |

| No Stage | | Not for construction | |
|---------------|---|----------------------|----------------|
| CLIENT | York Minster | SCALE | Not to Scale |
| PROJECT | York Minster South Transept | DATE | 27.05.26 |
| DRAWING TITLE | South Transept Elevation As Proposed Detail | DRAWN | AAS |
| | | CHECKED | |
| | | JOB NUMBER | 122-12 (GA)501 |
| | | DRAWING NO. | |
| | | REVISION | - .00 |



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York Minster: South Transept Gable Cross Re-Instatement

Paper for CCM Approval to FAC

May 2026 Rev A01



1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This CCM application is submitted to the FAC to support an application for the re-instatement of the foliate cross atop the gable of the South Transept. The design proposal is based on conclusive archaeological and drawn evidence and is not conjectural. The cross was damaged in the fire of 1984 and was not reinstated.

The report includes a proportionate overview history of the South Transept – focusing on the history of the south elevation and roofline – and assesses the significance of the South Transept, with a focus on its roof, the gable stonework and the cross.

This document also includes a statement of need and a summary of the works proposed. The final section is a heritage impact assessment. A summary of relevant passages from the York Stone Practice Policy and the draft Conservation Management Plan (2026) are included as an appendix.

The present application should be read alongside the following drawings:

1. As Existing elevation of the South Transept;
2. As Proposed elevation of the South Transept with the re-instated cross.
3. Scan of the detailed drawing for the cross by G.E. Street;

[For cover image caption see figure 4]

2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTH TRANSEPT

Early History

The current above-ground structure of the South Transept was erected by Walter de Gray, (Archbishop of York from 1215 to 1255). By 1225, the resources needed for a major building project were being mobilised on a large scale.¹ It is likely the structure was mostly complete by the time of de Gray's death in 1255. The South Transept was built atop the previous south transept of the Norman minster. The new structure is roughly twice as long and twice as broad as its predecessor (the footings of the outer wall of the earlier structure partly provided the foundations for the arcades of the new).

There is some evidence the South Transept was intended to have a stone vault. Provision for a vault springing is visible to the interior triforium today. Abandonment of a stone vault meant that the south façade could accommodate a large rose window and three very large lancets. This is a possible explanation for the unusually high placement of the Rose Window on the south elevation today.

Successive expansions to the Minster in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries altered the fabric of the South Transept. From 1291 to the middle of the fourteenth century, the Nave was rebuilt. To accommodate the new structure, the South Transept was altered, its west wall cut through at arcade level.² The foundation stone for a new East End was laid in 1361 by Archbishop John de Thoresby. The new East End butted-up against the transepts of the Minster. This necessitated the removal of a solid masonry half-bay which had accommodated Norman stair turrets.³ There were further internal alterations to the South Transept after the fall of the Crossing Tower in the early fifteenth century to re-enforce the rebuilt tower.

Between the consecration of 1472 and the eighteenth century, other alterations of the built fabric of the South Transept was relatively minor. However, there were considerable developments within the setting of the Minster. By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, city buildings began encroaching on the Minster Precinct, culminating in 1633 when the crowded arrangement of adjoining buildings was criticised by King Charles I (reportedly, shops stretched to the walls of the South Transept itself).⁴

The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

In the eighteenth century, there were several major interventions to the South Transept. Firstly, a clock was installed above the South Door between 1702 and 1728, with an external and an internal face, replacing an exterior sundial.⁵ This was replaced in 1752, as recorded by Francis Drake, who records a fire which 'burnt a considerable part of the roof' and was 'repaired by the active care of the present Dean (John Fountayne).'⁶ This possibly destroyed a bell tower which had been placed atop the South Transept roof previously. The roof of the South Transept was rebuilt after the fire in the 1750s and a spire was added to its apex. In 1774-76, Leonard Terry re-built the South Transept

1 Sarah Brown, *York Minster: Architectural History* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2003), p. 13.

2 Brown (2003), p. 16.

3 Stuart Harrison and Christopher Norton, *York Minster: An Illustrated Architectural History 627-c.1500* (2015), pp. 42-3.

4 Alan Baxter, *Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal* (York: City of York Council, 2012), pp. 223.

5 Stuart Harrison, *York Minster South Transept Desktop Study* (2023), p. 11

6 Francis Drake, *Eboracum; or, the History and Antiquities of the City of York*, (London, 1736).

vault.⁷ This was then altered in 1796-7, tilted upwards at its south side to reveal the rose window (hitherto partially obscured).

The nineteenth century saw a number of significant changes within the South Transept. Between 1800 and 1825 William Shout records cutting new capitals and bases for the lower parts of the facade of the south front.⁸ A further restoration was conducted 1840-44 under Sydney Smirke, which constituted work on the roof and restoration of south steps (these steps were rebuilt in 2017 to incorporate a ramp).⁹ There was also a major programme of works to the south side of the South Transept's setting, with clearances of city buildings to create additional views of the Minster.

There was a major programme of stonework renewal in the 1870s and 80s. These works were overseen by George Edmund Street, who conducted a major scheme of alteration, 'restoration' (in his terms) and repair. His works are summarised in a letter by Street to Dean Duncombe (who part funded the works), held within the Explore York Archive.¹⁰

Street describes 'taking down and reconstructing the whole of the Clerestory', including re-glazing; a 'restoration' of the ceiling (based on historic models); a 'restoration of the marble shafts and mouldings throughout the interior', using a 'large quantity of new marble'; and exterior works 'far in excess of what I [Street] had hoped would be necessary.' This included the replacement of a large amount of external stonework by 'cutting out all rotten and decayed stones, and replacing them with new, copied from the old work.' He suggests the need for this was due to 'a great deal of damage [...] done by a general repair and reworking of the stonework in [...] the last century.' Street also describes adding 'four great Pinnacles' and the 'restoration of the three Gables over the south doorway.' Elsewhere, Street also 'restored the great carved string course round the tower.' These gables were in place of the clock; both internal and external faces of this clock were removed. There are traces internally of the supports for the clock remaining in the thickness of the wall.

Not mentioned in the letter, Street also designed a large foliate cross for the ridge of the South Transept, to be set atop the south elevation apex. This is shown in a full proposal elevation (figure 1) and in a detailed drawing, dated June 1880 (figure 2). The detail consists of a close-up elevation of the cross and a 1:1 quarter drawing, presumably a working drawing for masons to work from.

Street's detailed drawing includes the annotation 'the old fragment [underlining as per the original] to be exactly copied by mason and carver as far as it remains.' This suggests his cross design was based on a previous fragment, perhaps a medieval survival ornamenting city-side elevation of the Minster, which stood over the original entrance for pilgrims. An indication of the earlier fragment is given in early illustrations, including a 1660s elevation by Daniel King and an 1819 illustration by J. Britton (figure 3). Both of these show an ornament cross of similar scale in the same location as Street's cross design.

7 Brown (2003), p. 30.

8 Harrison (2023) p. 10.

9 Harrison (2023), p. 10.

10 Explore York Archive, George Edmund Street letter to Dean Augustus Duncombe (October 16th, 1876).



Figure 1: A proposal drawing by G. E. Street (only partially realised), showing three gables above the south door interspersed with windows and a proposal for a turret atop the ridge (York Minster Archive).

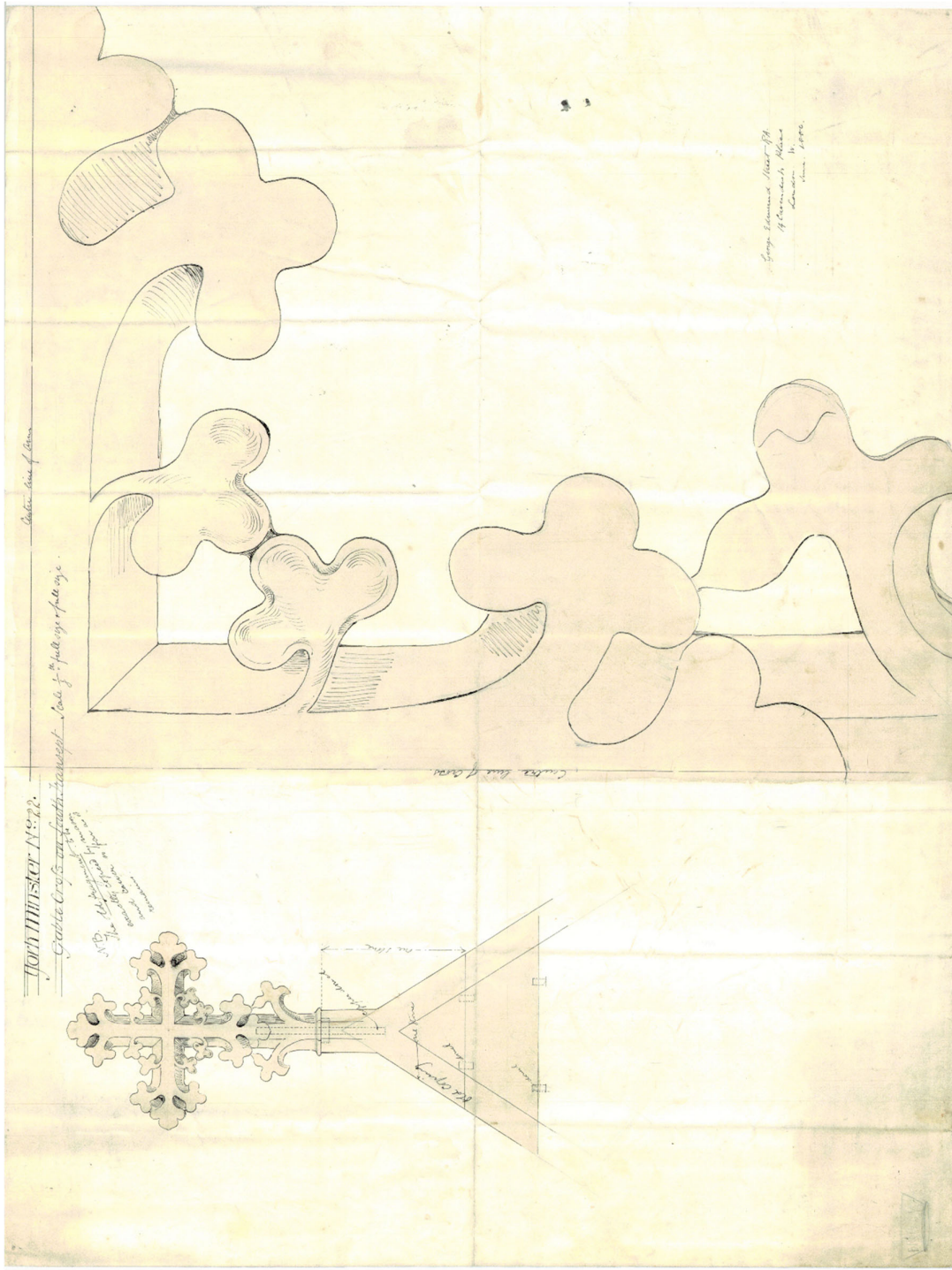


Figure 2: G. E. Street design for cross atop the South Transept (York Minster Archive). Note the annotation in Street's hand "the old fragment to be exactly copied by mason and carver as far as it remains".

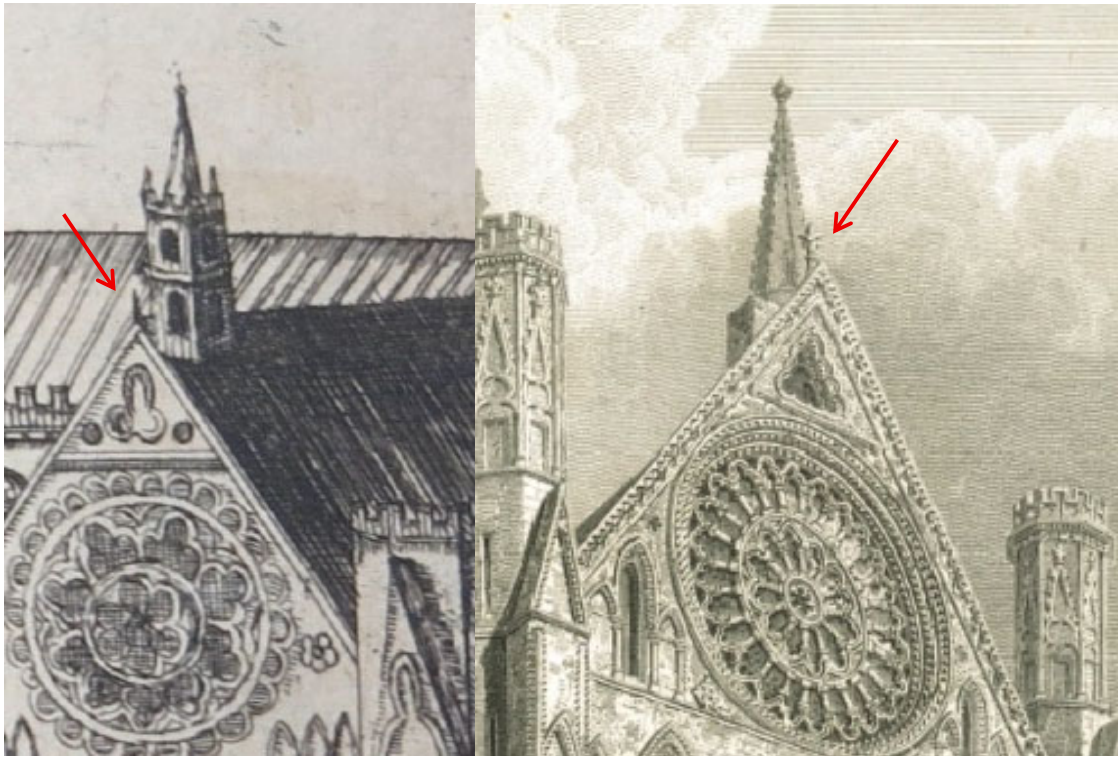


Figure 3: Two illustrations of the South Transept apex. Left: 1660-1670 by Daniel King (*The British Museum*). Right: 1819 by J. Britton (*History and Antiquities of York Cathedral*, 1819). Former cross location indicated with an arrow.

Street's full elevation of the South Transept also shows the outline of a turret behind the cross. This may suggest he had intended to re-build the 1750s transept gable spire. However, a photograph from 1891, shortly after the Street works (see figure 4) shows neither Street's rebuilt turret nor the earlier spire. The only rooftop ornament shown is the foliated cross.

Street's cross design was carved in magnesian limestone by mason George Walker Milburn. Milburn has also been attributed to the other carvings from the 1870s and 80s South Transept works; the animals to the Crossing Tower and bosses and capitals, turrets, finials, grotesques and string courses to the South Transept, as well as various carvings to the interior.¹¹ He enjoyed a national reputation and worked in 20 counties throughout the UK, including Lincolnshire, Kent, Shropshire, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, and Norfolk.¹² In addition, his firm worked at the cathedrals of Durham, Chester, Lincoln, Carlisle and Rochester. #Milburn appears to have been a specialist in the cross form and carved almost 50 memorial crosses in his lifetime.

Other major changes in the nineteenth century include the creation of the opening to the Sacristy and the erection of the building between the Camera Cantorum and Nave (now a shop).

¹¹ Anthony Power, *Milburn Found: The Extant Works of George Walker Milburn* (unknown publication date).

¹² <https://yorkcivictrust.co.uk/heritage/civic-trust-plaques/george-walker-milburn-1844-1941/>



Figure 4: Photograph of the South Transept of York Minster from 1891 [also cover image] (Francis Frith Collection).



Figure 5: The surviving fragment of Street/Milburn South Transept cross, placed in storage after it was taken down after fire damage. The reverse face of the stone is fire damaged.

Although not directly linked to this CCM application for the new cross, the proposal is for the existing cross fragments to be retained in the Heritage Quad Lapidarium: the FAC will be asked in due course to decide whether the cross fragments should be introduced formally to the inventory.

The Twentieth Century to Present

In the twentieth century, major works affecting the South Transept included the reinforcement of the Crossing Tower in 1967 and the creation of the undercroft in 1967-72. The latter revealed a number of archaeological finds beneath the South Transept (including an Anglo-Saxon graveyard).

In 1984, a fire destroyed most of the wooden features within the South Transept and much of the roof. Repairs and roof renewal were required in the wake of the fire. Principal among them was the re-creation of the South Transept vault and roof structure. The Street cross, which had to be taken down for safety just after the blaze, survived but was not returned to the ridge (possibly due to safety concerns of it falling again). Instead, the apex was restored without ornamentation, and the cross was moved to storage where it remains (albeit damaged) to this day.

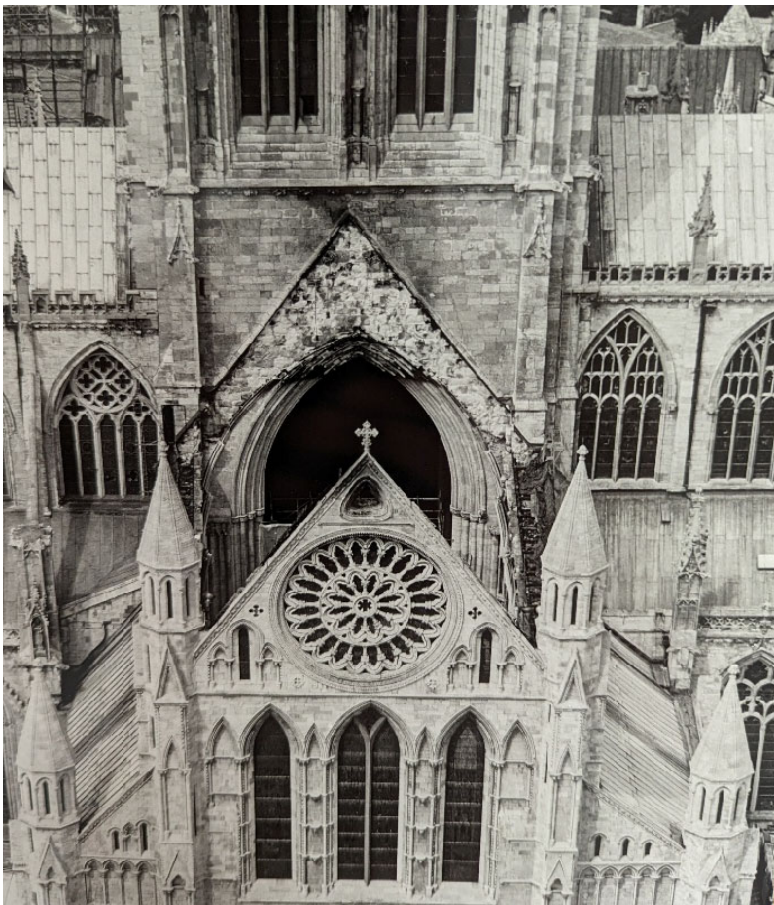


Figure 6: South Transept post-fire aerial, with cross still intact (York Minster Archives).



Figure 7: York Minster South Transept exterior today (CAL).

3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Methodology

The following section provides an overview statement of significance of the specific area of change and for the Scheduled Monument 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.

Significance of the South Transept: Exceptional

Evidential Value

The South Transept is the oldest surviving above-ground part of York Minster and therefore provides crucial evidence for the early development of the Minster and its precinct. Its inconsistencies and irregularities are highly important as evidence of early alteration and experimentation during design (later simplified and replicated in the North Transept). They include the springings of the aborted vault to the interior and the unusually-high rose window, with incomplete blocked half-lancets below, to the exterior.

The space is well documented through historic plans, drawings, and photographs, including records of the 1984 fire and subsequent repairs, providing a strong evidential basis for understanding changes over time. That being said, it should be noted that losses from the fire (and from stonework decay beforehand) have removed a large proportion of the historic fabric within the South Transept and this has had a negative effect on evidential value.

The site stands on a site of extremely high archaeological potential due to its continuous occupation since the Roman period, with possible findings relating to the Roman principia (legionary headquarters), a Saxon graveyard, and the foundations of the eleventh-century Minster. These layers highlight its importance as a site with continuous occupation from the Roman period onwards.

Historical Value

The South Transept reflects changing medieval religious practices. It was designed to accommodate additional altars for chantry priests and to provide access to the shrine of St William, illustrating changing liturgical and devotional needs in the thirteenth century. Its stained glass also depicts

important religious figures and donors, and commemorates contemporary political events (such as the War of the Roses).

The South Transept holds associative value through its connections to notable architects, including William Kent, George Edmund Street (particularly visible to the exterior), and G. F. Bodley. Together, their work reflects evolving conservation philosophies. There is also associative value derived from the craftsmen who realised their designs – George Milburn in the case of the 1870s and 80s Street works to the south elevation.

Aesthetic Value

The South Transept is an outstanding example of Early English Gothic architecture – both internally and externally. Its design contributes to the broader architectural narrative of the Minster, where multiple Gothic styles coexist. Inside, its scale, lighting, and detailing create a powerful sense of awe. Despite this, there are also gentler expressions of beauty, such as the coloured light cast from the windows at particular times of day.

Although the exterior composition of the South Transept is far from homogenous, with multiple phases of alteration visible up close, the overall composition becomes more harmonious from a distance, unified by the near-complete use of sandy-coloured magnesian limestone. The elevation is arranged in tiers, broadly reflecting the storey height internally (the clerestory and triforium are expressed to the aisles) However, the overwhelming impression of the elevation is one of verticality, with lancets, turrets and the triangular doorcase reaching skyward.

G. E. Street replaced much of the decaying thirteenth-century stonework of the South Transept with like-for-like replacements, in addition to some historicist ‘restoration’ based on his interpretation of the thirteenth-century elevation. Street therefore improved the aesthetic value of the elevation by making the mouldings more legible, whilst arguably reducing its evidential value.

Communal Value

The Minster as a whole holds strong communal value as a symbol of York and a busy place of worship with very high spiritual and communal significance. It serves a wide audience, including worshippers, visitors, and local residents, hosting services and major life events while maintaining a continuous religious tradition. This is particularly relevant for the South Transept, as this is principal entrance point for services and the historic access point for pilgrims. This contribution is further enhanced by the association between the South Transept and significant events in the history of the Minster, such as the 1984 fire and the reinforcement of the Crossing Tower - both of which symbolize resilience and innovation.

The Contribution of Setting

Finally, the setting of the South Transept makes a major contribution to its significance. The South Transept is the key part of the Minster which directly addresses the city. It towers above the surrounding buildings, offering a sense of scale unparalleled in York. This is particularly appreciable in glimpsed views along Minster Gates. This scale encapsulates ecclesiastical hierarchies, demonstrating York as the head of the Archdiocese and, furthermore, illustrates the importance of the church within medieval society as much as today. The clearances of the Minster precinct in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries enhance this spectacle, affording space to appreciate the elevations of the Minster. The surrounding buildings also contribute to this spectacle, many of them

connected to the usage or maintenance of the Minster. Together, the buildings of southern precinct are an excellent illustration of the deep multi-layered history of York and of the Minster itself.

Significance of the South Transept Roof: Some

The South Transept roof dates to the 1980s rebuilding post-fire. It is broadly a replica of its predecessor, adorned with a medieval-style ribbed vault. Some of the vault bosses were designed by children in a 1986 Blue Peter competition. The roof structure itself is highly complex and forms a feature of interest on the visitor route, thanks to the model displayed within the South Transept.

The South Transept roof is therefore of some significance as evidence of engineering debates and solutions in the 1980s, and of some communal value due to the community-spirited approach to the rebuilding. However, it has comparatively low significance in comparison with the medieval roof structures which survive elsewhere (for instance to the North Transept).

Significance of the South Transept Cross: Some but High as part of the nineteenth-century ensemble.

The South Transept cross is significant as a nineteenth-century interpretation of a medieval form. It serves as evidence for the former appearance of the South Transept's rooftop ornament from at least the 1660s (see figure 3). The cross also has significance as a survival of a prolific mason (George Walker Milburn) – well known for his cross designs and with extensive experience working on northern cathedrals – and for its association with G. E. Street, renowned for his national-wide ecclesiastical work in a Gothic Revival style.

The cross has aesthetic value derived from highly-crafted limestone details, a convincing invention on a medieval design. Finally, it completes the south elevation of York Minster as imagined by Street in the 1870s, which otherwise survives in-situ – contributing to an ensemble of group value.

However, the fact that the cross is currently no longer in its original location is harmful to its significance. The physical condition as currently also reduces significance (it is split in two), though most of the stonework survives and the carving is still legible.

4. STATEMENT OF NEED

The current absence of the cross results in incomplete representation of the South Transept's historic elevation and the overall design intent to the G.E. Street restoration.

The analysis above has demonstrated the weight of evidence which underpins our understanding of the G. E. Street works to the South Transept and the cross he designed for its apex. Drawn evidence in the form of elevations and detailed drawings allow for an understanding of how the cross looked when it was first carved, archaeological evidence (the fire-damaged remnant of the cross) shows how this was realised by Milburn in the late nineteenth century and subsequent photographs demonstrate how the cross looked as-built in-situ atop the South Transept. The decision not to return the cross to the roof in the 1980s therefore missed an opportunity to restore an elevation which otherwise survived intact.

Moreover, the unornamented apex at present offers a false understanding of how the South Transept has looked for most of its history, with decoration of the gable present as early as the

seventeenth century (figure 3). More generally, the omission means that there is currently no external cross present on the Minster building at all, which is unusual for an English cathedral.

The surviving cross cannot be returned to the roof due to its condition, but it can be replicated with a new piece of limestone and fixed in place with suitably designed structural fixings and support. In many ways, this approach follows the same principle as Street and Milburn in the late nineteenth century, who were themselves replicating an earlier design based on a surviving fragment. The fixings we need to provide will differ to those shown on the Street drawings.

In summary, we believe there is a strong case for returning a replica of Street's foliated cross to the apex of the South Transept elevation. This can be carved using the drawn, archaeological and photographic record to return the South Transept exterior to its pre-fire appearance.

5. THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to re-instate the foliate cross as designed by G. E. Street to the apex of the South Transept roof. The cross will be carved out of a new piece of french limestone which will exactly follow Street's detail and will copy the stonework detailing of the surviving cross which fell in the fire. The cross will be reinforced via a system of dowels set within the stonework and we are seeking a conditional approval of the structural details, which will be developed after the current gable stones are taken down and examined.

This proposal will therefore require the removal of the extant apex stone and the two stones below, to provide for the structural anchoring of the tie-rod. This gable stone was carved in 1984 as a post-fire replacement (the original apex stone is attached to the cross in storage).

We are seeking a conditional approval in relation to structural fixings which will be resolved once there is full scaffold access to the apex stonework. For the purposes of this application, as a minimum there will be a stainless steel core to the new cross; and an anchor for this rod into the masonry below the cap stonework.

In addition we are conditionally proposing that there may need to be an external stainless armature hidden to the back of the cross stonework as a supplementary support and as a safety measure for a feature that is expected to remain, maintenance free, for over 100+ years. The detail of all structural support to be agreed with reference to FAC members once full access has been achieved.

Works will be performed by the Minster's stonemasons and will follow the York Stone Practice Policy (excerpts of which are given below).

See appended drawings for further information.

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

Physical Considerations: No Impact

The current proposals will lead to a small loss of extant stonework. The apex stones will have to be removed for the new cross. The gable stone was carved in 1984 and is understood to be of no special heritage value of itself. The replacement will be a like-for-like replacement carved in French limestone.

If other fixings are required, these will be applied to the 1984 roof fabric. There will be no fixings through medieval roof timbers, stonework or lead.

Visual Considerations: Minor Positive

As discussed, the post-fire restoration of the South Transept elevation is incomplete without the foliate cross. The Francis Frith Collection photograph from 1891 (figure 4) offers a good sense of Street's work shortly after its completion. It shows five points of vertical emphasis, the four towers and cross, evenly spaced and creating a balanced rhythm to the elevation. Without the cross, the central emphasis is diminished and the rhythm is no longer consistent. Its omission also diminishes the energy of the central façade, which reaches upwards with its pointed lancets, buttresses and doorcase ornamentation, only to meet an abrupt end at the gabled roofline.

In addition to its contribution to the façade as a whole, the foliate cross has the potential to make a contribution to aesthetic value in its own right. The Street drawings and surviving remnant reveal a highly-crafted and detailed piece which will offer a point of interest to the façade.

Historical Considerations: Moderate Positive

The importance of the cross as a historical detail should be stressed. The South Transept roof, for much of its history, has been a lively architectural display, with some form of ornament to its apex from at least the early nineteenth century (complementing the pinnacle behind and possibly also the preceding bell tower). It is possible a cross in this location would have been an important marker of entry for pilgrims to the Minster in the thirteenth century. The current unornamented roofline is therefore a departure from the presentation of the structure's history. Its re-instatement has the potential to attest to the significance of the South Transept as the original entry to the Minster and to reflect its historic rooftop display; as well as G.E. Street's overall design concept for the restored façade.

Additionally, restoring the cross will enhance the significance of the Street work to the South Transept. The elevation as it is seen today is a result of his work (as recorded in his letter of 1876 cited above). His foliate cross was clearly intended to mark the zenith of his composition, and its value as a whole is therefore diminished by its omission. Moreover, as a Gothic Revival architect, medieval-style foliated details are important to the stylistic character of Street's work. The re-instatement of the cross will therefore enhance the association with Street and the completeness of the other surviving elements of his elevation.

Finally, George Walker Milburn is significant as a well-known carver with an impressive portfolio including a number of Northern Cathedrals. There are several surviving examples of his work to the South Transept elevation. However, his work on the foliate cross is the most important as he seems particularly well-known for his cross designs (having carved almost 50 memorial crosses in his lifetime, see Statement of Significance above). The restoration of the cross therefore has the potential to better reflect his skill as a carver in a context for which he was particularly well-known.

7. CONCLUSION

Overall, the proposal for the re-instatement of the foliate cross to the apex of the South Transept based on the surviving fragment and Street drawings will have a **Moderate Positive** effect on the significance of the South Transept.

The proposal will enhance the aesthetic value of the elevation by extending the energy of the façade above the roofline, creating a consistency of vertical emphasis and balancing the whole. It will make a large contribution to the historical value of the elevation by: completing Street's design; demonstrating the work of a prolific carver in the context of Northern Cathedrals in a form for which he was well known; reflecting the lively rooftop ornament atop the South Transept as was the case for much of its history; and by encapsulating the medieval significance of the South Transept as the original entrance for pilgrims, facing the city. The small amount of 1984 stonework loss is understood to be of no impact to the heritage value of the façade.

This aligns with the York Stone Practice policy (para. 50) which states that 'recognising and sustaining the architectural heritage significance of the Minster is an important conservation management goal, informing replacement and re-carving of 'relict' decorative features.'

We have expressed this analysis in terms of heritage values that are evidential, historical and aesthetic in nature. It is equally important to highlight the spiritual/communal/social value of the reinstatement of the cross. Clearly the spiritual value is an essential expression of the confidence of the Cathedral church, its values and purposes, as seen in this most civic and prominent façade.

We commend this application to the FAC and consultees for approval, with a condition relating to the final detailing of structural support for the new cross.

APPENDIX 1: CONCISE SUMMARY OF RELEVANT POLICIES

York Minster CMP (draft issue, March 2026)

MCR9 The Minster will continue to adhere to a Stone Practice Policy when planning and implementing all works, and the policy will be reviewed as part of each Quinquennial Inspection.

MCR10 Chapter and the Surveyor of the Fabric will revise the Stone Practice Policy to codify the role of stone conservation in the planning of future repair works.

MCR11 Chapter will seek to ensure a supply of suitable, high quality Magnesian Limestone

York Minster Stone Practice Policy (March 2024)

Replacement and Renewal with New Masonry Items

38. Where stone cannot be conserved as described nor consolidated or repaired as detailed, they then become likely renewal candidates. This is always the last choice. In some cases the structural engineer may consider stones on structural elements to be in unsafe condition, requiring them to be renewed in part or whole or be dismantled and rebuilt for stability. The decision to replace stone, and especially weathering or decorative features, will first consider function (especially structural performance, the safe framing of glass and water-shedding) and the heritage significance of components which evidence the architectural history and aesthetic significance of the Minster. Longevity and return periods - weighting access considerations into judgements. [...]

Replacement

40. Renewal occurs on a like-for-like basis on bond, size, moulding, finish and joint widths wherever possible. Sometimes bed-heights cannot be obtained for longer tracery elements. Adding bed joints is a necessary judgement from time to time. (There is a permissible conversation about face-bedding stones from time to time – there are examples in the right place and for the right reasons.)

41. Where stone is not doing its job structurally (which is rare) or where broken, split or with a fissure line in such a distribution that it cannot be pinned, or is unsafe and at great height making it a safety issue, the stone may have to be renewed. [...]

45. Replacements may be considered if a decayed stone is the last evidence of a particular moulding or design, but the stone will be recorded, removed and stored if in very delicate condition. [...]

50. Recognising and sustaining the architectural heritage significance of the Minster is an important conservation management goal, informing replacement and recarving of 'relict' decorative features. Even so where stone detail is completely lost, the Archaeologist may identify a stone as of such import to be left even when all detail is lost. Carvings with fragments can be preserved by record (scanning) and/or retained in our lapidarium [...]

Carved Stone Replacements

55. The basis for replacement carving is from research, including photographic and archival sources. There are photos from the 1820s which are referenced; Britton's & Halfpenny's drawings are reinterpretations/representations which are not reliable but indicative of carving forms. the "Stone

Bank" and castings which are retained in the Stoneyard are also a good source. Source and reference comes from observing neighbouring carvings of the same date or element. Usually the stone is cut to a maximum size agreed between leading masons and Surveyor. The carver works creatively under the direction of the leading masons, with reference and in consultation to the Surveyor and Master-Mason Emeritus. Some of the carvers sketch, some carve straight out, having looked at examples of comparable carvings at the Minster and recording their research. The stoneyard also now employ the skills of a 'Master Carver' (Martin Coward) who has a deep knowledge of the Minster and, in consultation with the lead mason team and Master Mason, will prepare exemplar pieces on forms and details. These can either be scanned and deployed within a digital production workflow and/or adopted for following (not slavish copying) by junior masons. Architectural ornament is replaced on the basis that it must be a scrupulous and scholarly replica of the original with no contemporary addition or embellishments. This is to ensure that the original design is preserved.