

## 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:**

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026

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

This application relates to the renewal of permission for the current temporary ramp between N Quire Aisle and the Upper Quire. The proposal requests for the ramp to remain in use until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2028 subject to funding of a permanent access solution in the South Quire Aisle to be brought to FAC and CFCE in 2027.

During this period, the Minster would undertake an access audit which would support the development of a holistic and integrated approach to access provision to the upper levels of the quire.

**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 application is being brought forward in response to a current and immediate liturgical and inclusivity need within the Minster. There is no additional physical change sought to the temporary ramp.

The original permission granted for the installation of the ramp between North Quire Aisle and Upper Quire is due to expire. This application requests the renewal of this permission until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2028.

It is proposed that during this period, a permanent design solution will be developed. This will be informed by an access audit which intends to review provision of access within the Minster, both physical and operational.

### **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:

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026

and until:

30<sup>th</sup> September 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.*

Sally-Ann Long  
Works Department  
4 Deangate  
York  
YO1 7JA  
[FAC@yorkminster.org](mailto: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.*

30<sup>th</sup> September 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.

# York Minster

## North Quire Aisle - Extension of Permission

*Requesting an extension to an existing permission for the temporary ramp within the North Quire Aisle*

Paper for CCM approval to FAC





## Introduction & Purpose

This CCM application to the FAC relates to the renewal of permission for the current ramp between North Quire Aisle and the Upper Quire.

The proposal requests for the ramp to remain in use until 31st August 2028 subject to funding of a permanent access solution in the South Quire Aisle to be brought to FAC and CFCE in 2027. During this period, the Minster would undertake an access audit which would support the development of a holistic and integrated approach to access provision.

This document includes a statement of need, a statement of significance and a heritage impact assessment.



*North Quire Aisle ramped entrance to the Upper Quire*

## Statement of Need

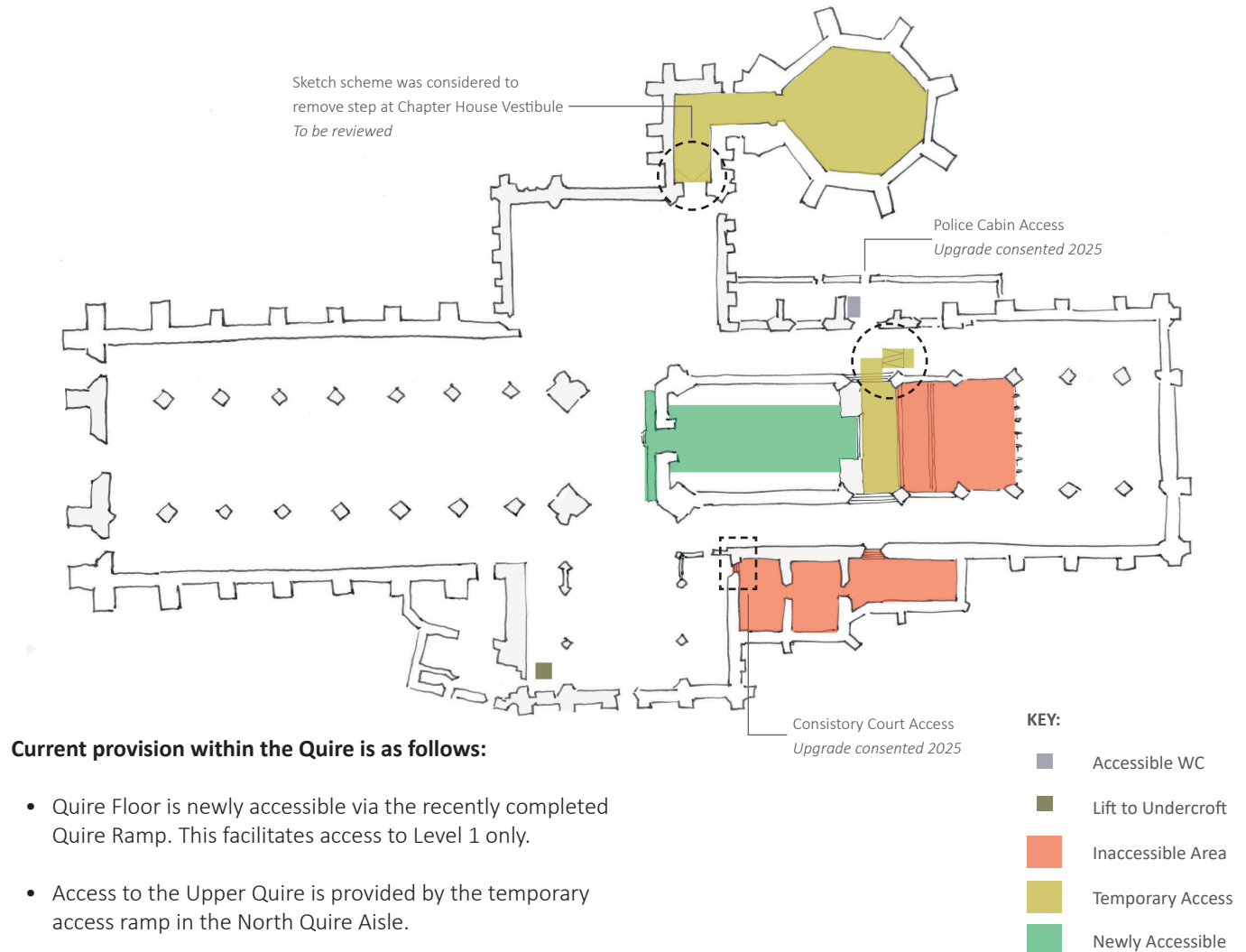
This application is being brought forward in response to a current and immediate liturgical need within the Minster.

The original permission granted for the installation of the ramp between North Quire Aisle and Upper Quire is due to expire and, with no alternative access to the upper levels, the existing access route is needed for the continuation of service.

This application requests the extension of this permission for a further 2 years, until August 2028. It is proposed that during this period, a permanent design solution will be developed. This will be informed by an access audit which intends to review provision of access within the Minster, both physical and operational.

As noted in the following section; *Supporting Statement of Need*, by Revd Canon Tim Goode, the upper level of the Quire is a significant space within the Minster. It plays a role in many of the Minster's functions for both the public, as a gathering space during tours, as well as the clergy, as the location for service and worship.

Without the ramp between these spaces, the Upper Quire is entirely inaccessible to mobility-impaired visitors and staff. Access into the Quire is available by the new Quire Ramp, but traversing further towards the altar is prevented by a small set of steps.



### Current provision within the Quire is as follows:

- Quire Floor is newly accessible via the recently completed Quire Ramp. This facilitates access to Level 1 only.
- Access to the Upper Quire is provided by the temporary access ramp in the North Quire Aisle.
- The Retrochoir and High Altar remain inaccessible

ABOVE: Diagram describing current access provision within the Minster

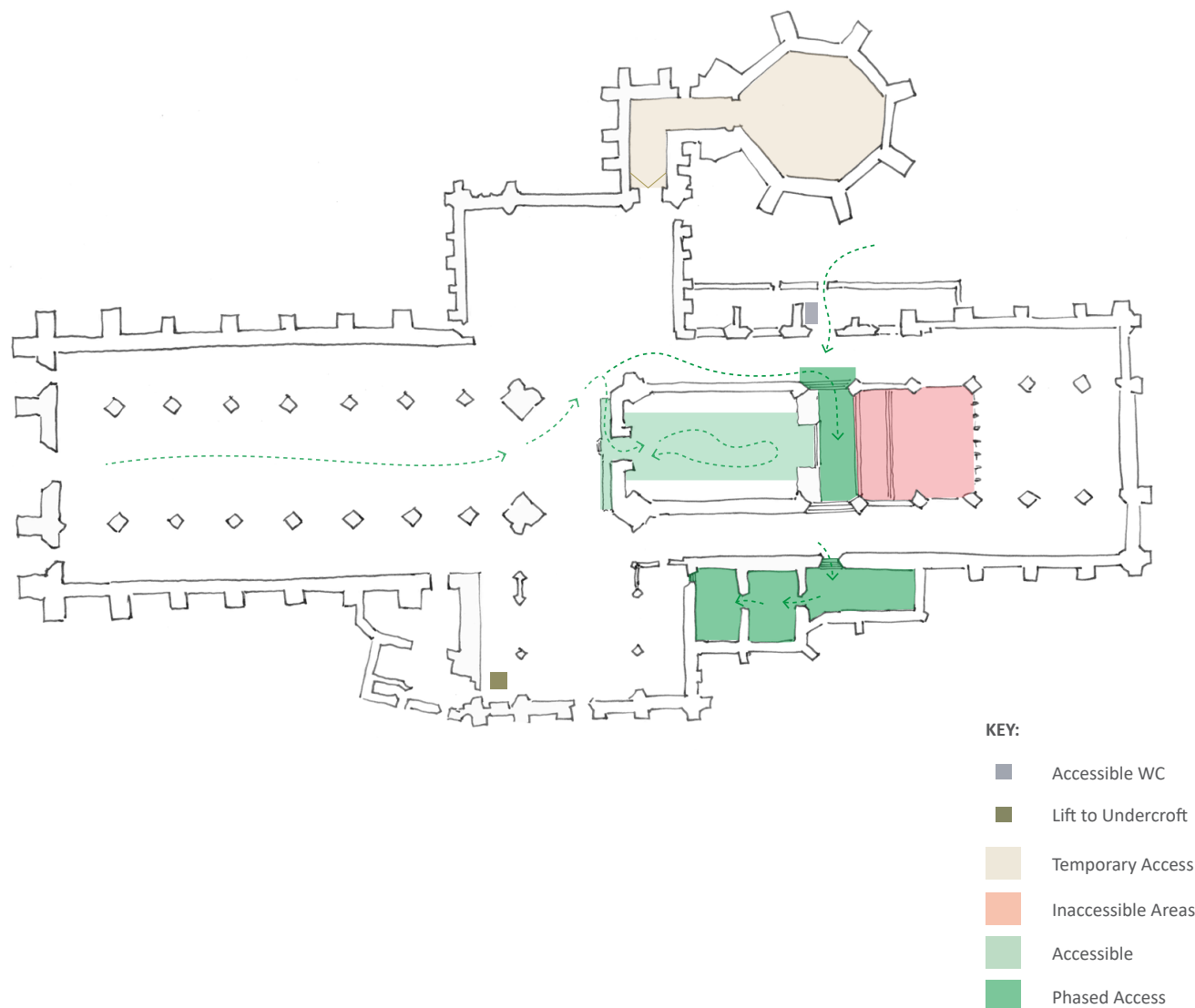
## Why Now?

The completion of the Quire Ramp has demonstrated the success and effectiveness of well-considered, integrated access solutions. In light of this, there is an ambition to complete an audit of the physical and operational access provision across the Minster to support the careful and considered addition of interventions.

The intention of this audit would be threefold:

- It would identify needs and, working in partnership with the Minster's stakeholders, could inform the testing of solutions
- Offers an opportunity to phase interventions, feeding into an overarching plan, without creating piecemeal projects
- Allows for strategic response to needs, ensuring a cohesive language of the interventions

However, a period of time will be required to seek and review funding opportunities to undertake this work. Therefore this initial submission aims to raise the topic for discussion, whilst responding to an immediate need within the Minster to allow continued service.





## Supporting Statement of Need

### Access to the Upper Quire

*by Revd Canon Tim Goode*

York Minster seeks to provide permanent step-free access to the Upper Quire, replacing the present temporary ramp and ensuring that this part of the Minster can be entered by both Ministers and Worshippers with dignity, safety and greater independence.

At present, the Upper Quire is accessed from the south Quire aisle by steps without a handrail, with step-free access provided by a temporary ramp from the north Quire aisle. While this has enabled access for those unable to use the steps, it remains an interim solution to a permanent need.

The Upper Quire is an integral part of the Minster's daily life. It is used for a wide range of services, including elements within Choral Evensong, celebrations of the Eucharist when the Nave is unavailable, weddings, funerals, memorial services, and military services, and is the principal point of entry for those arriving late for Matins or Evensong. It is also used daily by visitor tours, providing a place where larger groups can sit while guides share the history and significance of the Minster.

Permanent ramped or lift access would therefore serve both worshippers and visitors, including wheelchair users, people with limited mobility and others for whom steps present a barrier. It would also remove the need for accessibility to depend upon a temporary or exceptional arrangement.

The need for step-free access therefore arises not from a desire to give the upper Quire a new or different function, but to make the existing uses of this space fully available to all.



*Temporary ramp installed between Quire and Upper Quire*



*South Quire Aisle entrance to the Upper Quire*

## Summary Statement of Significance

### York Minster

*York Minster is the principal place of Christian worship in York, Yorkshire, and the Northern Province of the Church of England, and a long-established place of Christian administration. The apparent presence of a Bishop of York at the Council of Arles in 314AD and the re-foundation 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 and civic focus for individuals and groups alike, providing a treasured environment for reflection and thanksgiving to its regular congregations, the Diocese and Province of York, local people, tourists, diverse organisations and 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 choir 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 includes buildings of national importance, not least St William's College. The northern part of the Precinct is a highly-valued and much used city centre green space. By contrast, the urban density south of the Minster forms the distinctive foil to the Minster that is experienced by most visitors. Like the Minster itself, the Precinct's archaeology and architecture are outstandingly important and unique evidence of the history and development since the Roman period of one of the country's most important urban centres.<sup>1</sup>*

**The significance of York Minster is considered EXCEPTIONAL.**

<sup>1</sup> Alan Baxter, York Minster Conservation Management Plan, Vol. 1 (Unpublished Report, 2001), p. 185.



## Assessment of Significance

### North Quire Aisle

The Gazetteer notes:

*Part of the second phase of work at the east end of the Minster, with the western half of the Quire, from c.1394 onwards. Built to the same width as the nave, which meant that the whole structure was wider than its predecessor. The setting out is not regular: there is some discrepancy in the bay widths. The Lady Chapel and Quire betray the advance of Perpendicular ideas in their details, but are otherwise very similar in feel to the nave. There are clear differences between the two: externally, the most notable is the omission of the external clerestory screen. The tracery is more explicitly Perpendicular, without the residual curves of the earlier work. Below, the aisle windows are wider than those in the Lady Chapel, necessitating some modification in the tracery.<sup>1</sup>*

And in terms of significance:

*The final part of the Minster to be completed (bar the Central and West Towers), adjacent to the Transepts, which were the earliest parts of the extant Minster that were built. The architecture of the eastern arm of the Minster is in some ways a simplified form of that seen in the nave (in that, for example, no stone vault was ever considered, so the buttressing is different) and yet in other ways a development of it (for example in the more overtly Perpendicular tracery).*

*The results have been described by Brown as ‘relatively introverted’ in their interpretation of the Perpendicular, and indeed their influence was limited. Nonetheless, Wilson has shown that the Lady Chapel formed an important influence on the design of the Bishop’s Throne (and the tomb of Bishop*

<sup>1</sup> Alan Baxter, Gazetteers, p. 26

*Hatfield) at Durham Cathedral, dating from c.1372.<sup>2</sup>*

The North Quire Aisle includes a temporary ramp to provide access into the important space of the Upper Quire. As noted within the Statement of Need, this is an integral part of the Minster’s daily life. Whilst the ram itself is mildly detracting, it facilitates this important use, central to the purpose of the Minster and its significance.

<sup>2</sup> Alan Baxter, Gazetteers, p. 28.

## Heritage Impact Assessment

The North Quire Aisle includes a temporary ramp, this application includes a request to extend the permission of the temporary ramp for a further 2 years, remaining in use until 31st August 2028.

The justification for the equal access measures to the upper quire is established within the Statement of Need earlier in this report.

The ramp does detract from significance, affecting aesthetic and historical values. However, it also facilitate important equal access supporting the key functions of the Minster (as per the Measure), functions which also contribute to its significance. The ramp is also entirely reversible.

Retaining the ramp for a further 2 years will ensure these essential functions continue, whilst providing opportunities to derive a holistic set of solutions for equal access across the Minster. This will dovetail with feedback regarding the temporary solution also proposed to the Zouche Chapel.

## Conclusion

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The proposal for extending the existing permission of the North Quire Aisle temporary ramp allows for meeting an immediate need within the Minster. It facilitates continued use of the Upper Quire for both public and staff, without which would members of staff would be unable to partake in their duties.

During this period, as noted in the paper, an audit would be undertaken to assess the current provision, develop a holistic set of solutions for equal access across the Minster, and set out a route to achieving this.

This measure supports the Minster's commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion. As noted by Revd Canon Tim Goode, it provides access and use for all, with dignity, safety and greater independence, in line with the duties imposed by the Care of Cathedrals Measure.

As such, we suggest that CCM should be granted.