FORM 9 (Rule 7)

Section 9 of Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011
Publice Notice on application to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAKE NOTICE that the Chapter of the Cathedral Church of:

The Cathedral and Metropolitical Church of St Peter in York

has on this date: 26th October 2026

applied to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for approval of the following proposal:
complete as on Form 8

A temporary sculpture, designed by Sir Antony Gormley, proposed to the West Front of the Minster. It is proposed that the sculpture be in place for a period of three years from March 2028, whereupon it will be removed. The period for which approval is sought therefore is to the end of February 2031 (thus approximately five years from an anticipated date of determination).

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]

A temporary sculpture, designed by Sir Antony Gormley, proposed to the West Front of the Minster. It is proposed that the sculpture be in place for a period of three years from March 2028, whereupon it will be removed. The period for which approval is sought therefore is to the end of February 2031 (thus approximately five years from an anticipated date of determination). Located to the niche to the West Front (to the north of the West Doors), the proposed sculpture will be made of two stacks of mutually supporting cast-iron blocks evoking two slightly over-life-size bodies that come together to form a single structure. Also proposed are conservation works to the stone plinth.

Plans, drawings, specifications or other documents

Copies of the plans, drawings, specification and other documents accompanying this application may be examined at the office of the Chapter of the Cathedral Church
Insert address and contact details

8-10 Minster Yard, York, YO1 7HH, c/o 01904 557226, works@yorkminster.org
or via the York Minster website at: https://yorkminster.org/about-us/statutory-applications/

Between the hours of:	08.00 – 16.00
From this day:	26th October 2026
and until:	23rd November 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 Cathedrals Fabric Commission:
c/o Cathedrals and Major Churches Officer
Church Buildings Division
Church House
Great Smith St
London
SW1P 3AZ
adrian.daffern@churchofengland.org, 020 7898 1678

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.*

23rd November 2026

DIRECTIONS TO CHAPTER

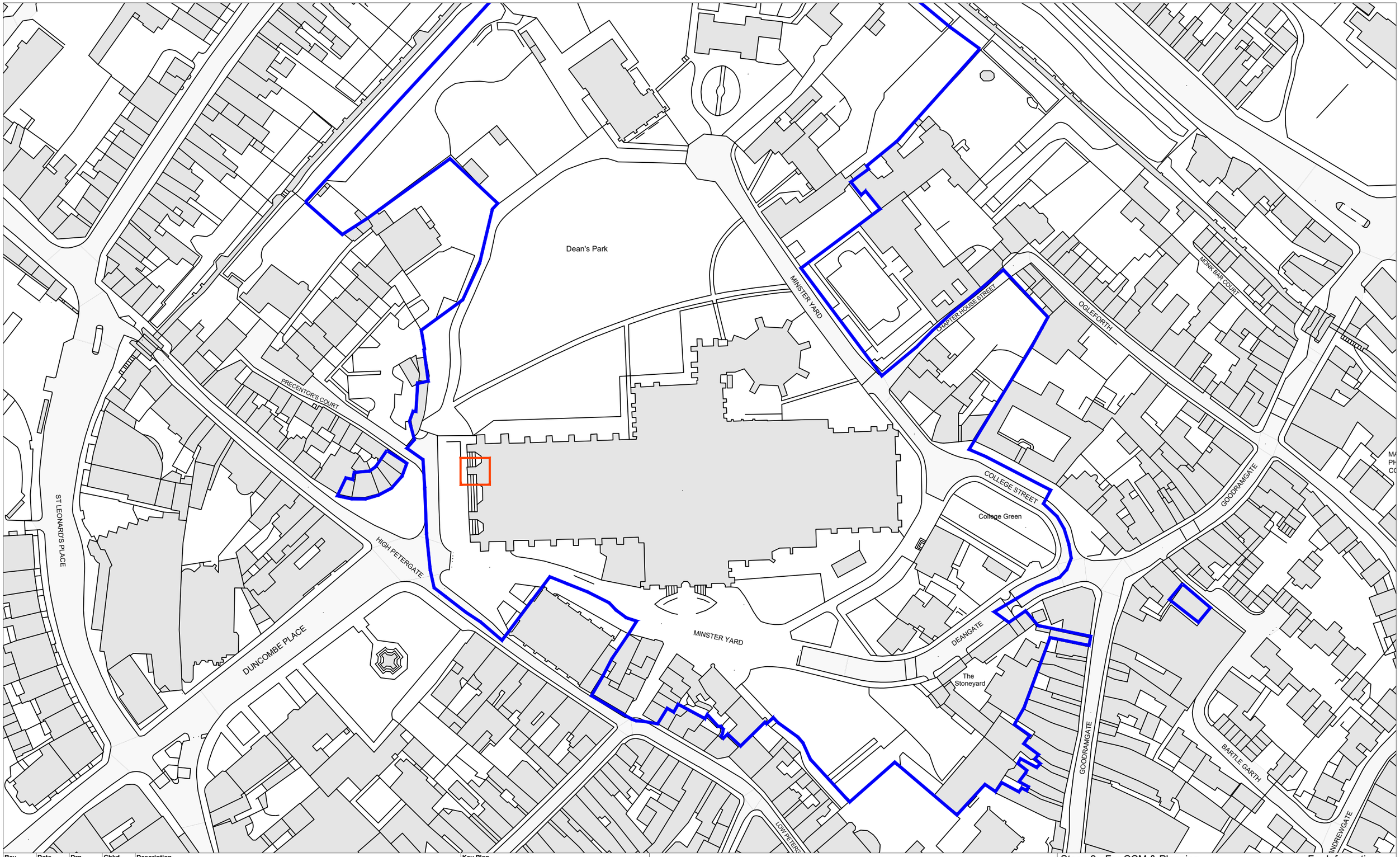
1. This public notice (or a copy of it) must be displayed for a continuous period of 28 days in a prominent position inside and outside your cathedral where it is readily visible to the public.

2. A copy of this notice must be sent as follows:

(a) to the Fabric Advisory Committee of your Cathedral Church
(b) to Historic England (formerly English Heritage)
(c) to the national amenity societies as applicable (see list on Form 8)

and

(*only if the proposal is for works as described in section 2(1)(a) of the Measure*)
(d) to the local planning authority.



Rev.	Date	Drn.	Chkd.	Description

Filename: 122-28 (EX)001 Location Plan.dwg
Printed: 2026-10-26 12:12 PM

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Key Plan

- Application Site
- Boundary of Cathedral Precinct

N

0 1:1250 125m

YORK MINSTER

Stage 2 - For CCM & Planning — For Information

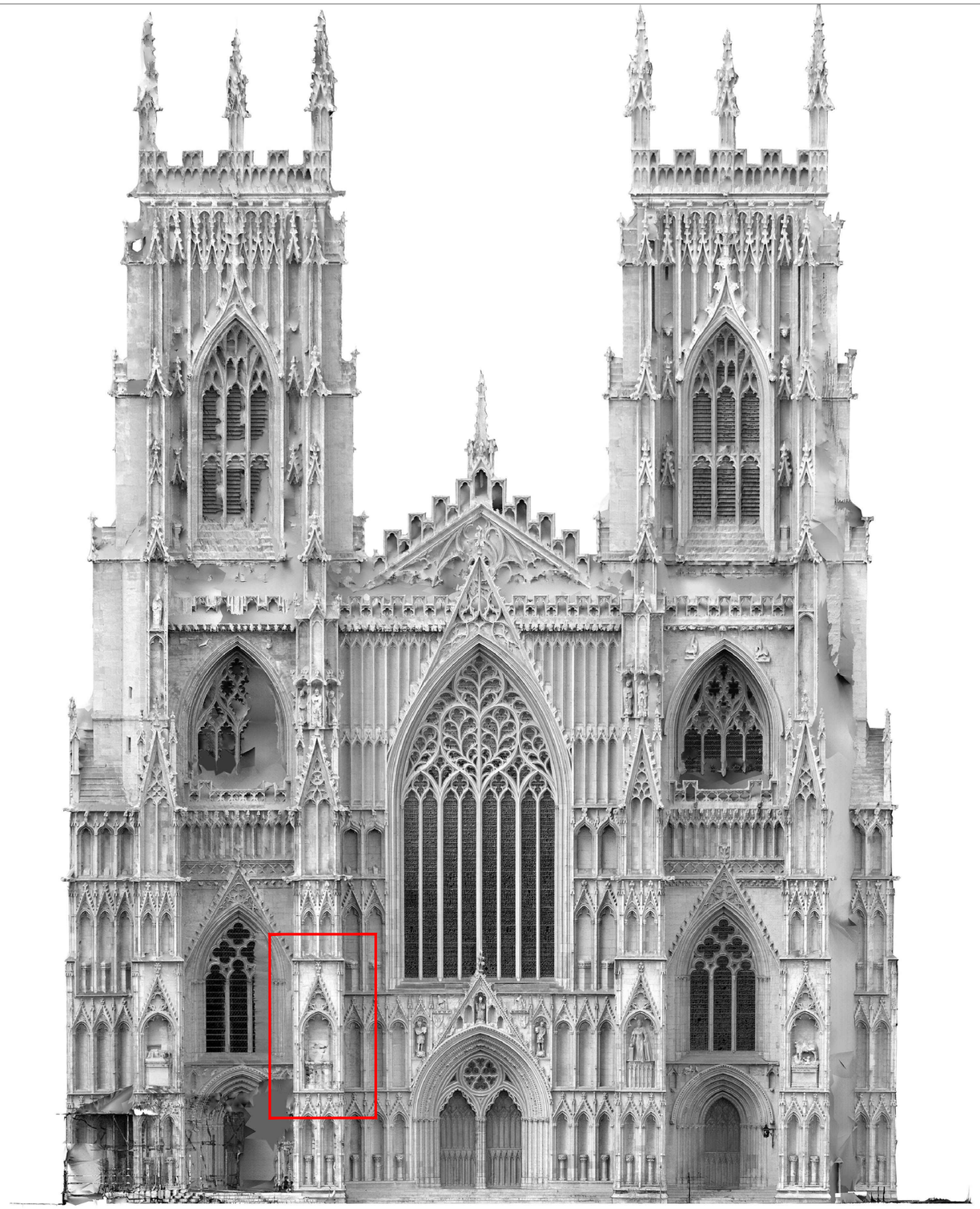
CLIENT: York Minster
SCALE: 1:1250@A3
DATE: 26.10.26
PROJECT: West Front Statue
DRAWN: CP
CHECKED: OC
DRAWING TITLE: Location Plan
JOB NUMBER: 122-28
DRAWING NO.: (EX)001
REVISION: 2.00

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The Surveyor's Office
St Paul's Cathedral
LONDON EC4M 8AD
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Rev.	Date	Drn.	Chkd.	Description

Key Plan

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YORK MINSTER

0 1:250 25m

Stage 2 - For CCM & Planning — For Information

CLIENT: York Minster
SCALE: 1:250@A3
DATE: 26.10.26

PROJECT: West Front Statue
DRAWN: CP
CHECKED: OC

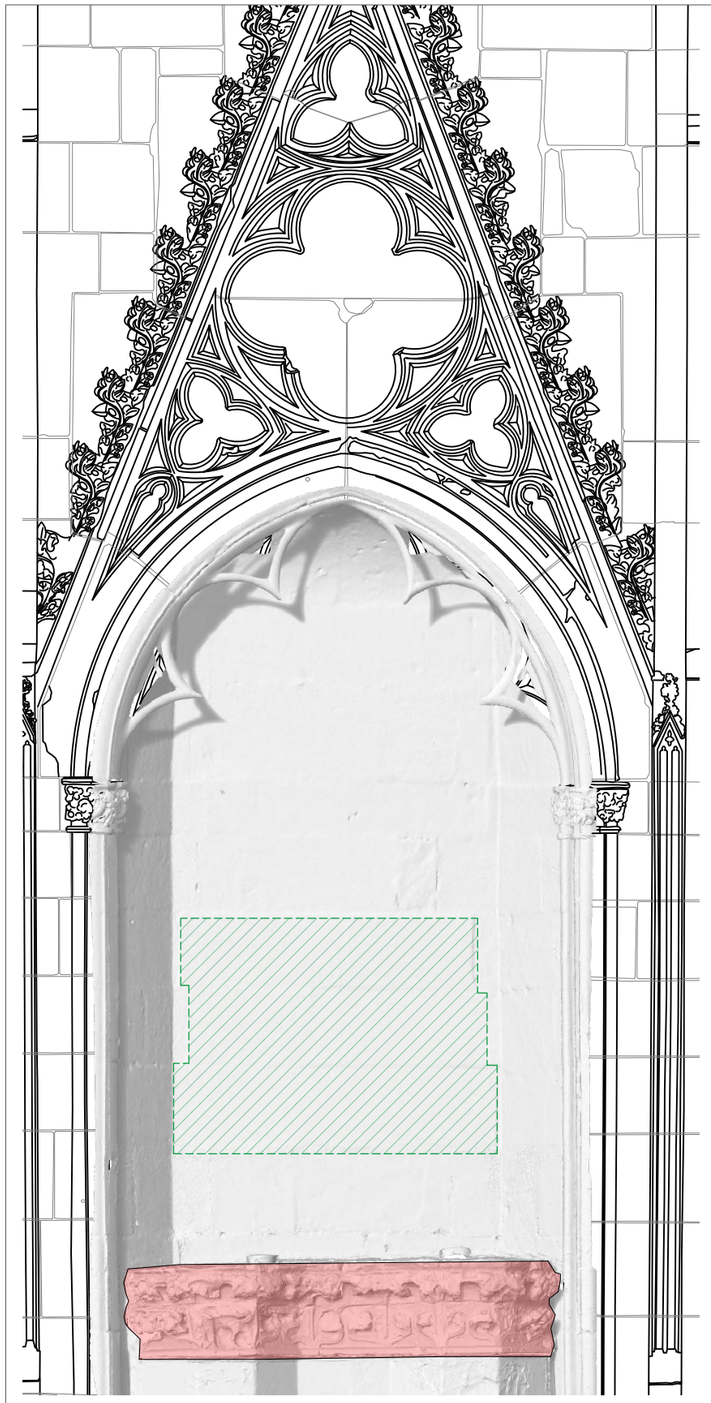
DRAWING TITLE: West Front Elevation Existing
JOB NUMBER: 122-28
DRAWING NO.: (EX)400
REVISION: 2.00

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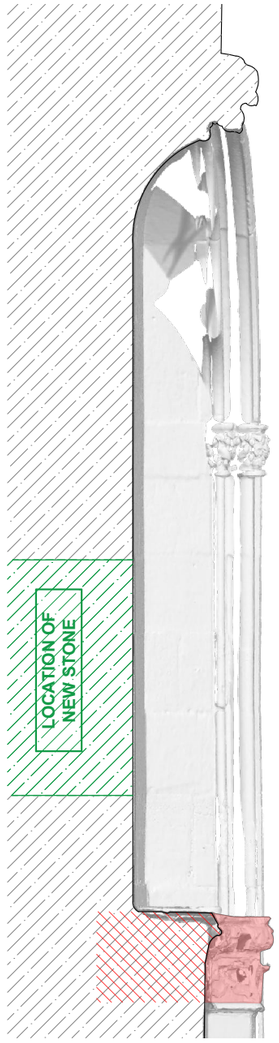
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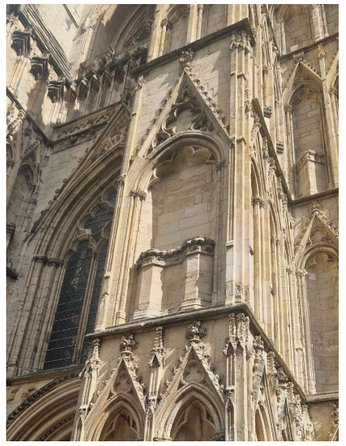
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West Front - North Niche
Proposed Elevation 1:20



West Front - North Niche
Section AA 1:20

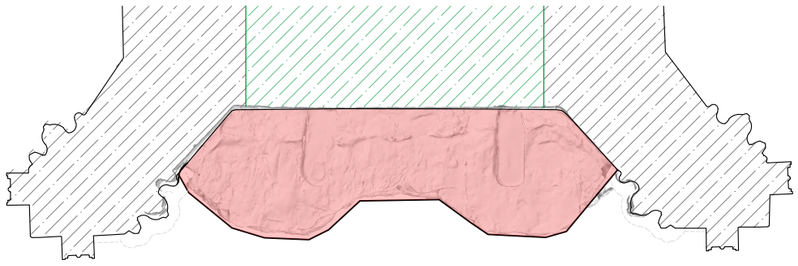






Clockwise:
Fig. 01: Elevation of North Niche to West Front
Fig. 02: Cope stone showing signs of deterioration, with fractures to top surface and leading edge
Fig. 03: Lead tabs to top face of cope stone

TMP Images



West Front - North Niche
Plan 1:20

Rev.	Date	Drn.	Chkd.	Description

Key Plan

N

0 1:40 4m

YORK MINSTER

Stage 2 - For CCM & Planning — For Information

CLIENT	SCALE	DATE
York Minster	1:40@A3	26.10.26
PROJECT	DRAWN	CHECKED
West Front Statue	CP	OC
DRAWING TITLE	JOB NUMBER / DRAWING NO.	REVISION
Exsting Niche Details	122-28 (EX)500	2.00

Filename: 122-28 (EX)500 Niche Details as Extg.dwg
Printed: 2026-10-26 12:11 PM

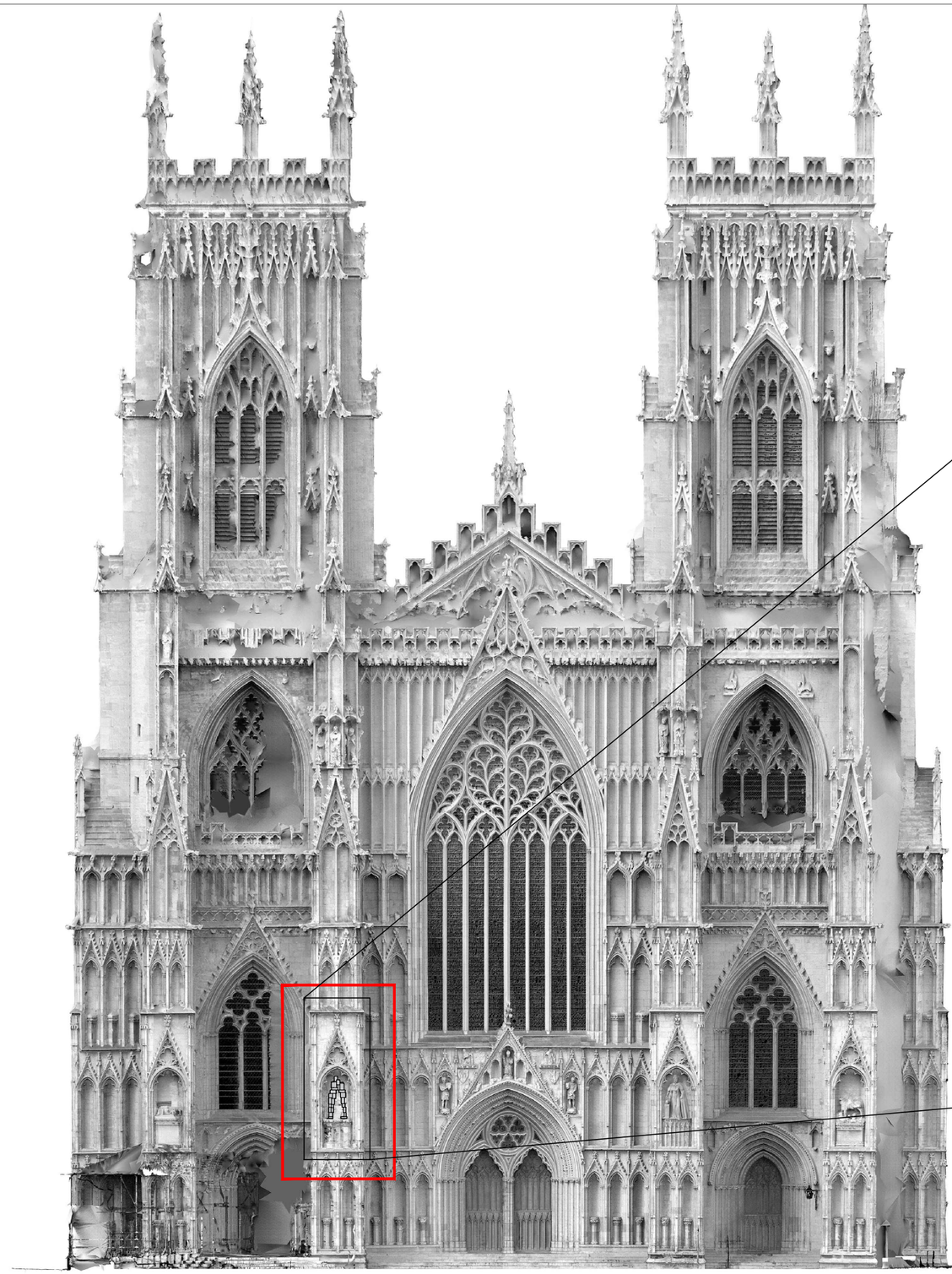
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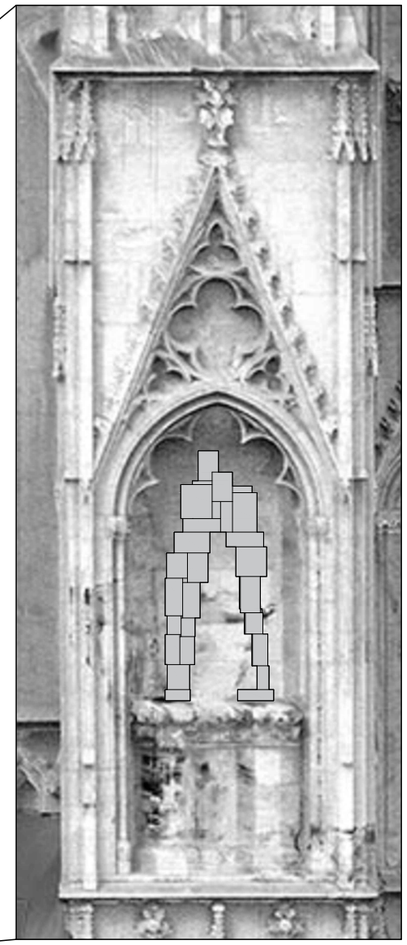
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West Front Buttress Recess with Photomontage of Proposal
Scale: 1:50@A3



Rev.	Date	Drn.	Chkd.	Description

Key Plan

N

0 1:250 25m

YORK MINSTER

Stage 2 - For CCM — Not for construction

CLIENT York Minster	SCALE 1:250@A3	DATE 26/10/26
PROJECT West Front Statue	DRAWN CP	CHECKED OC
DRAWING TITLE Proposed West Elevation	JOB NUMBER 122-28	DRAWING NO. (GA)400

REVISION 2.00

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Filename: 122-28 (GA)400 Elevation as Proposed.dwg
Printed: 2026-10-23 4:47 PM

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GENERAL NOTES:

Sculpture
We seek approval in principle for the installation of the proposed sculpture, entitled *Meet*, by Sir Antony Gormley in the North Niche of the West Front for a period of 3 years. For detail on materiality and preparation of the sculpture, *refer to appended document: Materiality of Sculpture.*

Fixings
Refer to (GA) 502 for details in relation the renewal of the stone cap.
Fixings are subject to conditions, and mock ups or samples can be supplied if required.

Stone Capping
Refer to (GA) 502 for details in relation the renewal of the stone cap.

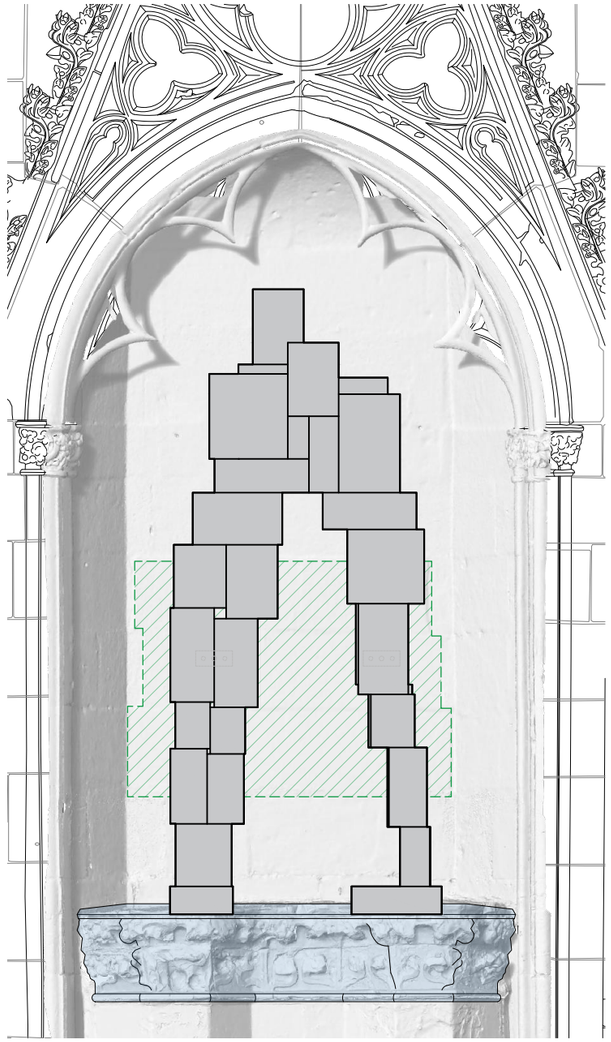
Bird Protection Measures
We seek approval in principle for necessary bird-protection measures, subject to consideration of details to follow. These may include installation of a discrete netting across the front of the niche in fine mesh, colour to be confirmed, with reversible fixings.

We do not intend to install this netting unless or until it is required. However with the grant of approval we are then able to respond immediately to prevent and anticipate a problem that would otherwise be aesthetically harmful to the Minster and the artwork.

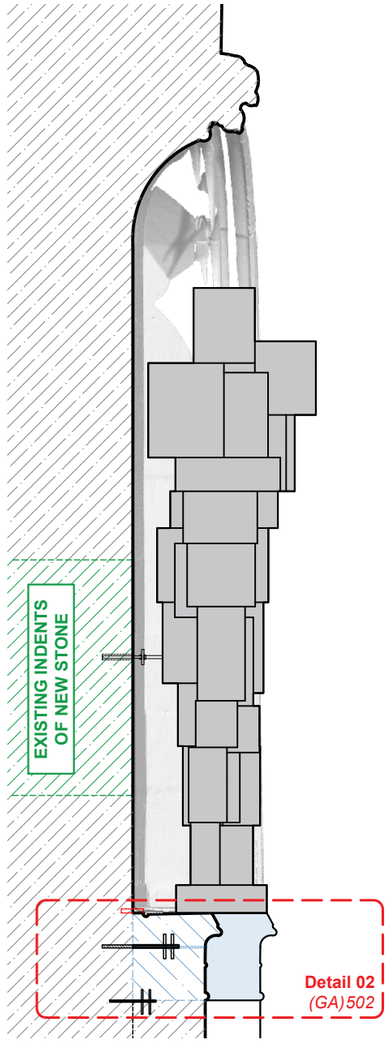
Repairs to the Existing Stonework & Plinth to the Niche
With access to the buttress and niche, there will also be a programme of minor masonry repairs. The niche stonework is broadly in a satisfactory and stable condition but we anticipate undertaking some conservative stone repairs and making good to the decorative capitals, the plinth tracery and other architectural elements, all in accordance with the current adopted Stone Practice.

These repairs will mostly comprise 'plastic' stone repairs using proven materials and methodology by our conservator-masons, potentially with some local poultice cleaning and carefully judged shelter-coating of any fragile weathering elements. The works will be specified and agreed under the direction of the Surveyor once full access is erected. The scope of these minor repair works will comprise the West-facing niche and the two side return niches of the buttress, which will be accessible.

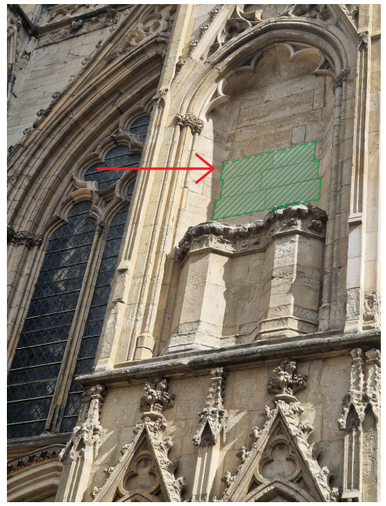
Remedial Works to Masonry
Following removal of the sculpture, remedial works to the masonry will include lime mortar plugs to any fixing holes made. Gentle cleaning of the masonry will be undertaken to remove any residual staining.



West Front - North Niche
Proposed Elevation 1:20



West Front - North Niche
Section AA 1:20



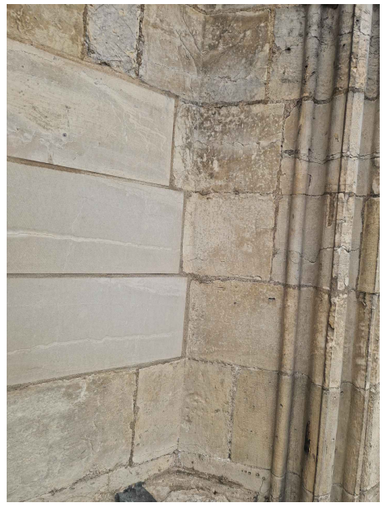
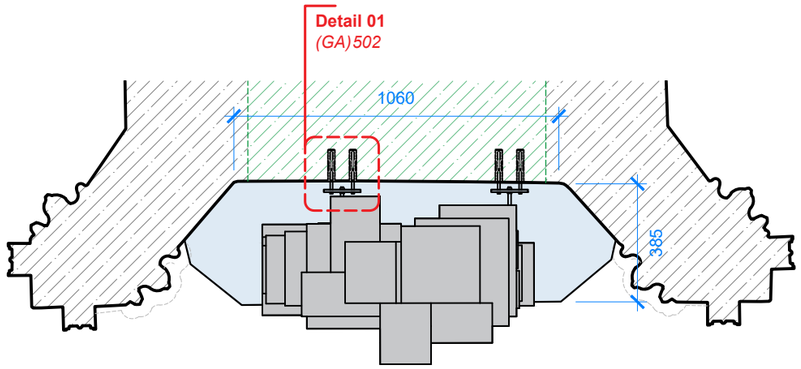
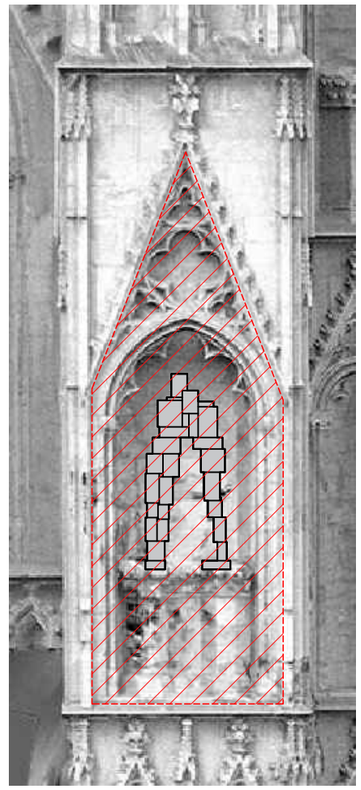


Fig. 01 & 02 - Existing indents of new stone visible
TMP Image



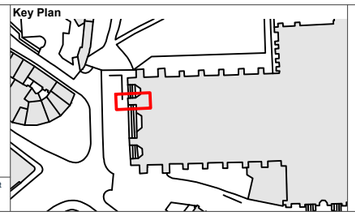
West Front - North Niche
Plan 1:20



Proposed Extent of Bird Protection Measures
Elevation NTS

Rev.	Date	Drn.	Chkd.	Description

Key Plan



N

0 1:20 2m

Stage 2 - For CCM & Planning — For Information

CLIENT: York Minster	SCALE: 1:20@A3	DATE: 26/10/26
PROJECT: West Front Statue	DRAWN: CP	CHECKED: OC
DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Niche Details	JOB NUMBER: 122-28	DRAWING NO.: (GA)500
		REVISION: 2.00

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Filename: 122-28 (GA)500 Niche Details as Proposed
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Figure 1 North Niche
As with the south (Queen's Statue) niche, the infill plinths are not bonded to the body of the wall. There is therefore a question about the load-bearing capacity of the shaft and capping for structural engineer to advise. This general view shows the extent of loss to the important decorative detail of the shaft capitals.



Figure 2 - Perceived joints
The poor condition and losses in the decorative detail shown close-too. Less clear, however, is that there are quite a number of unstable/debonding fragments of stone. There are three levels of intervention possible:

1. Minimal holding repairs and removal of detaching elements that cannot be pinned back. (5-10 year 'holding' state)
2. A more extensive conservation intervention, using mortar repair, consolidation and shelter-coating (up to 20 year longevity)
3. Stone renewal, based on recording and evidence, either in whole or part (75+ years longevity).

Both 1 & 2 approaches would benefit from added weather protection, which may inform the options for capping stones and fixing/support of statue

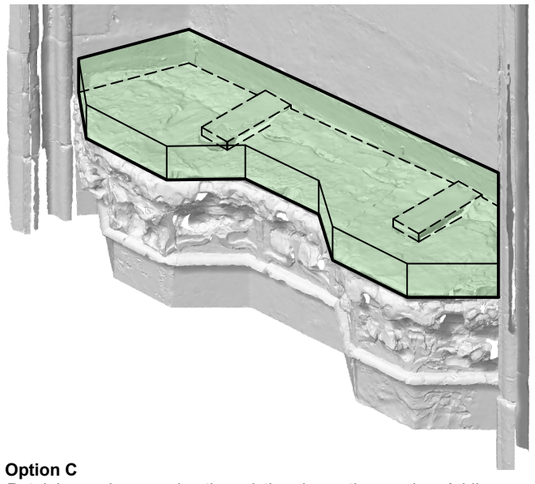


Option A
Full replacement of shaft capitals and decorative capping (which appears to be formed of 2 no. courses). Using the opportunity to remake the lower stone before loss of decorative detail renders this impossible. This would include removing the lead cased tabs and creating a suitable structural base for the statue. Added weather edge can direct any rust staining run off to back of niche.

This option selected.
Read with Heritage Appraisal



Option B
Partial replacement of top course of the decorative capping, removing the lead tabs and creating a suitable structural base for the statue - potentially adding support or bonding into the bed-joint. Includes conservation repairs to the lower course of decoration.



Option C
Retaining and conserving the existing decorative carving. Adding a laser-scanned 'scribed' capping stone sitting over the irregularities and lead tabs, with a new profiled drip edge for better protection of conserved details. Structural support to statue embedded into caping to detail.

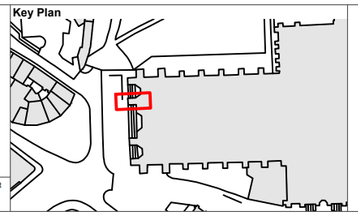


Option D
Capping stone, added above existing and extending beyond the lip of the existing stone to lap over the leading edge, to retain stone fragments and act as a protective drip, to conserved stone detail below. it. Top face profiled to drain backwards to direct any rust staining away from decoration. (Leading edge profile proposed not drawn for clarity).

West Front - North Niche
Options Appraisal for Cope Stone

Rev.	Date	Drn.	Chkd.	Description

Key Plan



N

0 1:40 4m

Stage 2 - For CCM & Planning — For Information

CLIENT: York Minster
SCALE: NTS@A3
DATE: 26/10/26
PROJECT: West Front Statue
DRAWN: CP
CHECKED: OC
DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Niche Details
New Cope Stone - Options Appraisal
JOB NUMBER: 122-28 (GA)501
DRAWING NO.
REVISION: 2.00

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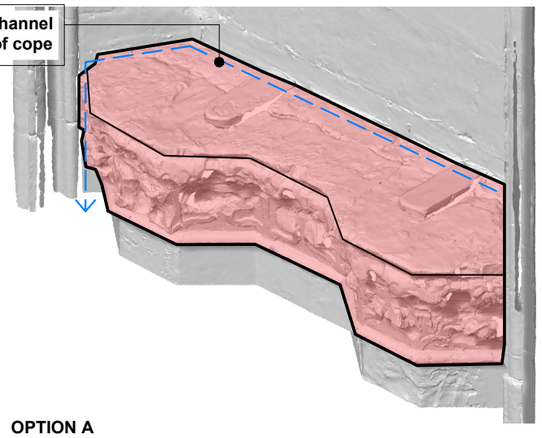
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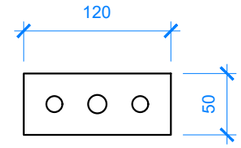
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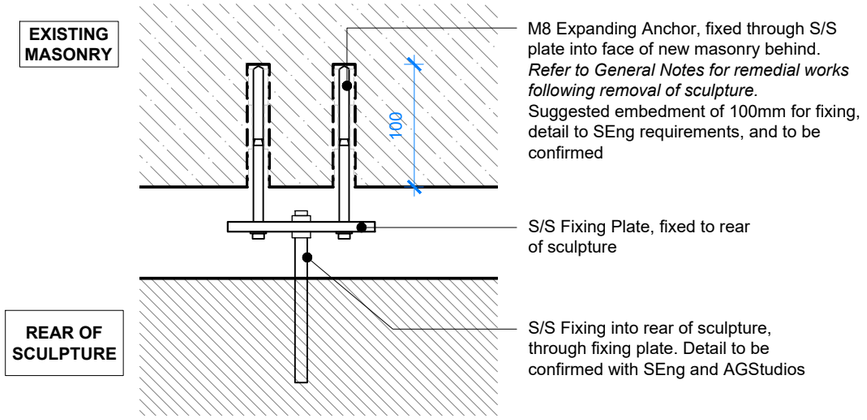




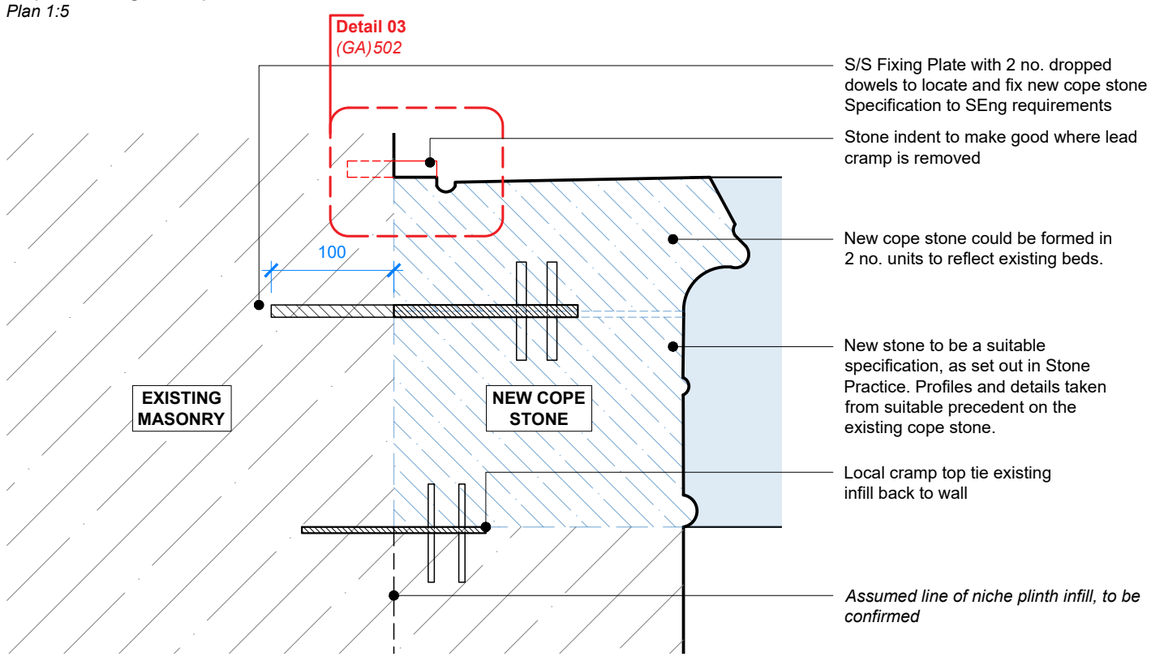
OPTION A
Proposed Cope Stone to Niche
Axo



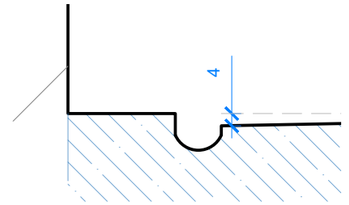
Face of proposed Fixing Plate
1:5



DETAIL 01
Proposed Fixing of Sculpture to Niche
Plan 1:5



DETAIL 02
Proposed Cope Stone to Niche
Section 1:5



DETAIL 03
Fall and Channel to cope stone
Call Out 1:2

Minor fall to top face of cope to encourage shedding of water via a channel at the rear of the stone. This is to control path of rainwater and any staining that may arise from the material of the sculpture.
The channel will run to a discreet location on the North side of the cope, *see Axo for indicative location.*

GENERAL NOTES:

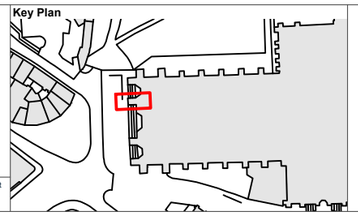
Stone Cope
Remaking of the existing stone cope proposed will be Lepine, also known as Lavoux, from the village of Lavoux near Poitiers.

This stone is specified for its durability and appearance. There is a precedent for using Lepine on the West Front (for the Great West Window tracery) and elsewhere on the Minster for specific purposes, in accordance with the Cathedral's stonework policy.

The most recent precedent was the carving of the Queens Statue for the West Front niche.

Rev.	Date	Drn.	Chkd.	Description

Key Plan



0 1:2 200mm

0 1:5 500mm

Stage 2 - For CCM & Planning — For Information

CLIENT: York Minster
SCALE: 1:5@A3
DATE: 26/10/26
PROJECT: West Front Statue
DRAWN: CP
CHECKED: OC
DRAWING TITLE: Proposed Niche Details Fixing of Sculpture and New Cope
JOB NUMBER: 122-28
DRAWING NO.: (GA)502
REVISION: 2.00

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Rev.: A01
Date: October 2026

York Minster

Design, Access, Planning and Heritage Statement

Proposed Temporary Sculpture to the West Front of York Minster

CCM & Planning Application



CAROE ARCHITECTURE

YORK MINSTER

1.0 Executive Summary

This *Design, Access, Planning, and Heritage Statement* has been prepared to accompany applications under the Care of Cathedrals Measure (CCM) and secular Planning Permission for a new, temporary sculpture to be introduced into a niche within the West Front of York Minster. It is proposed that the sculpture be in place for a period of three years from March 2028, whereupon it will be removed. The period for which approval is sought therefore is to the end of February 2031 (thus approximately five years from an anticipated date of determination).

The proposed sculpture, entitled *Meet*, is by Sir Antony Gormley. As a direct change to the fabric of the Minster, and one that materially affects its external appearance (albeit for three years only), the temporary sculpture requires both planning permission and an application for CCM consent made to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England. This report has been prepared for both sets of decision-makers.

Outside of the locus of these applications, but nonetheless important context for decision-makers, *Meet* is one of two sculptures proposed at the Minster by Sir Antony. The second, *Close*, will be located within the Minster itself. Due to its nature and location, this second sculpture requires a CCM application to the cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee only, which submission will follow in due course.

Meet offers a significant opportunity to present a new artistic work by a internationally renowned British contemporary artist at York Minster. It is expected to attract public and media attention, bring new and returning visitors to the Minster, and encourage wider engagement with worship, prayer, events, heritage and visitor participation. On close evaluation and assessment within this appraisal, we conclude that the proposal will deliver multifaceted public benefits.

With reference to the terms and principles of ecclesiastical decision-making under the CCM, the proposal speaks to the core purpose of the Minster as a focal point of worship and mission, and is found to provide wider public benefits to sustain this purpose into the future. In terms of heritage, the proposals have been carefully considered to respond to the significance of the Minster, minimising impact whilst also offering benefits to historic fabric to sustain the building.

Our conclusion is that a robust and sound case for the granting of a CCM consent is made out and justified.

Regarding secular planning permission, whilst temporary, the proposals have been carefully considered to minimise adverse effects and maximise benefits in line with policy expectations. Whilst in our appraisal we have found that there is a very low level of harm arising from one aspect of the scheme, this is considered justified and is clearly outweighed by the multiple public benefits that arise from the proposal in line with the objectives of neighbourhood, local, and national planning policy.

Therefore we also find, and submit to the decision-takers, that the case is made out for planning permission to also be granted.

We are very mindful that the consultees for both secular and ecclesiastical consents are broadly the same bodies and advisors. We hope and recommend that advice or comment with respect to both consent regimes can be issued to both the LPA and CFCE.

If there are any queries on any aspect of the proposals we will be glad to receive them and we are committed to sharing any response which is needed with both regulators.

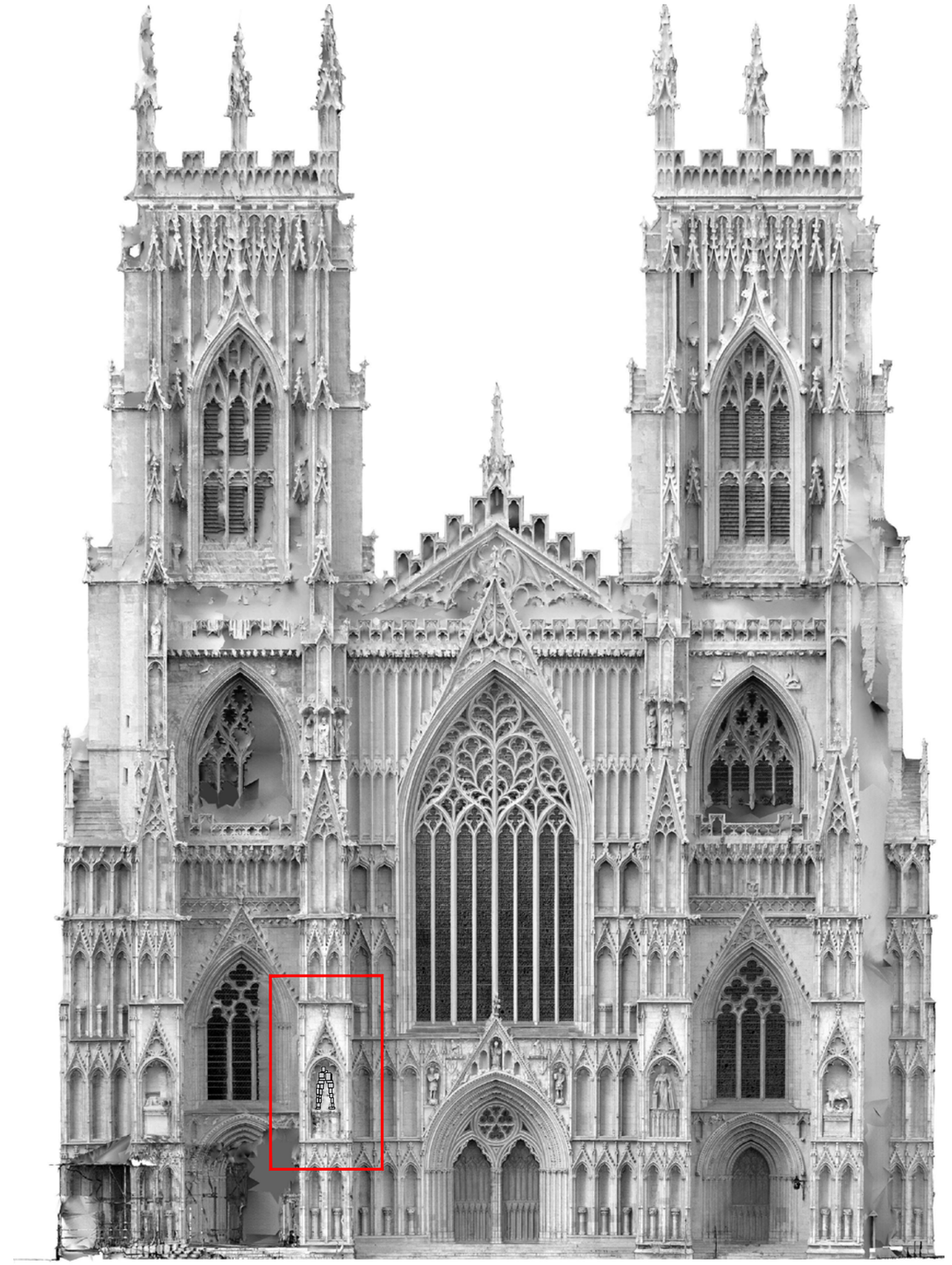


Fig. 1 Elevation of York Minster highlighting the niche which is the proposed location for the new sculpture.

2.0 Introduction

Introduction & Purpose of this Report

This *Design, Access, Planning, and Heritage Statement* has been prepared to accompany applications under the Care of Cathedrals Measure (CCM) and secular Planning Permission for a new, temporary sculpture to the West Front of York Minster. It is proposed that the sculpture be in place for a period of three years from March 2028, whereupon it will be removed. The period for which approval is sought therefore is to the end of February 2031 (thus approximately five years from an anticipated date of determination).

The proposed sculpture, entitled *Meet*, is by Sir Antony Gormley. As a direct change to the fabric of the Minster, and one that materially affects its external appearance, the temporary sculpture requires both planning permission and an application for CCM consent made to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England.

The aim is to provide a single report, submitted to both consents applications, that includes research, assessment, and conclusions relevant to all parties involved under a 'dual control' consents process.

Although outside of the locus of this application it is nonetheless important context for decision-makers to understand that *Meet* is one of two sculptures proposed at the Minster by Sir Antony. The second sculpture, *Close*, will be located within the Minster itself. Due to its nature and location, this second sculpture requires a CCM application to the Fabric Advisory Committee of the cathedral only, which will be separate application to follow in due course.

This report provides a 'Statement of Need and Public Benefit' which is intended to be helpful to both secular and ecclesiastical decision makers. The statement provides an overview of the design evolution of the scheme, including exploration of different options, which has informed matters of detail. In line with the Care of Cathedrals Measure guidance, and National Planning Policy Framework Policy HE5, it provides an assessment of the significance of those heritage assets that have the potential to be affected by the proposals. Moreover, our assessment within this report provides an assessment of heritage impact upon this significance, in line with the same policy and guidance.

The report concludes with two appraisals: a 'Planning Appraisal' of the proposals against the secular planning policy and legislative context of the site, also noting material considerations. We also provide an 'Ecclesiastical Appraisal', contextualizing the proposals against the duties and considerations imparted by the Care of Cathedrals Measure.

Prior Consultation

The Minster's Fabric Advisory Committee (FAC) has been consulted regarding the proposed sculpture. The FAC has indicated that it in support of the scheme, and the FAC will correspond directly with CFCE with the committee's advice.

Whilst no formal pre-application discussion has been sought with City of York Officers, informal discussions have yielded positive 'in principle' affirmations regarding the approach and proposed introduction of *Meet*.



Fig. 2 The West Front (source: TMP, from detailed site survey from cherry picker, October 2026)

3.0 Statement of Need and Public Benefit

Meet - A Sculpture for York Minster, by Sir Antony Gormley

Sir Antony offers the following statement regarding the artistic intent of *Meet* and also references the second proposed sculpture within the Minster, to be titled *Close*, which will be fashioned in limestone.

> *On the outside of the Minster, I would like to make a work called* **Meet** *for the empty double niche on the west façade. This work will be made of two stacks of mutually supporting cast-iron blocks evoking two slightly over-life-size bodies that come together to form a single structure.*
>
> *These sculptures do not attempt to illustrate but to indicate a space for compassion, allowing the contemplative projection of the viewer to occupy the sculpture. The elevation of the body is a common practice in the sacred spaces of Christianity. Singular vertical images outnumber those that depict meeting and togetherness. Bringing works that celebrate togetherness is a necessary antidote to the divisiveness of our present time.*
>
> *I want to make the relationship between the two forms, one horizontal and one vertical, and two materials, limestone and iron, meaningful. Sculpture uses matter to affect the mind. Bringing iron, the fundamental material of the Industrial Age, into a sacred context made of Permian limestone, is purposeful. The mechanisation of life has been made possible through the engineering of steel, and iron is its primary form. However, I would not argue for the relevance of the work in these terms but would like it to make us mindful of our dependency on all life forms, whether they share our species' morphology or not.*
>
> *I treasure the sacred spaces of our churches and cathedrals, and value their peacefulness that encourages reflexivity. They are in the world, but not of it, and allow us to see our own lives and our social systems from a point of withdrawal and distance.*
>
> *For me, this project is a precious and welcome opportunity to make a new work for a collectively made structure, a place that has provided the space for human imagination for millennia.*
>
> *Sir Antony Gormley*

Meet offers a significant opportunity to present new work by an internationally renowned British contemporary artist at York Minster. It is expected to attract public and media attention, bring new and returning visitors to the Minster, and encourage wider engagement with worship, prayer, events, heritage and visitor participation.

The proposal of the sculpture was developed, and then further refined through on-site discussions between Sir Antony Gormley and the Minster team, providing support and liturgical and faith context.

No precedent is being set by this application. It is now a well-established principle for cathedrals to display contemporary art installations both on and inside the listed building. Notable precedents include *Doubt*, the sculpture crafted by Sir Antony Gormley that adorns the West Front of Wells Cathedral (see also Section 4.0).

The proposal is for the work to be installed in March 2028, shortly after the unveiling of the restored Rose Window. This will launch contemporary displays grounded in historic craft skills within the wider context of long-term stewardship of the heritage of the Minster, and showcase each generation leaving its own mark, supporting the legacy of the 1400th anniversary as the anniversary year of celebration draws to a close and we collectively look to the centuries ahead.

Positioning one sculpture outside the Minster (*Meet*) and one inside (*Close*) for worshippers, pilgrims and sightseers alike, presents an engaging public offer with the potential to draw visitors to the City and Precinct and increase numbers entering the building, increasing both ticket sales and income streams as well as familiarity and engagement with York Minster's offerings. Visitors drawn by the sculptures may return for Evensong, worship and prayer; engage in events and activities; discover the cathedral's history and heritage; or simply feel welcome within this special place.

More broadly the proposals will raise the profile of York further, elevating its role in celebrating contemporary artistic endeavour amidst its rich history.

In terms of 'public benefit' as described by the three objectives of sustainable development within the secular planning system, the proposals would offer:

Social Benefits: The principle of public artwork of the highest calibre is important in broadening access to culture. As an active part of the cultural and social landscape of a place, public art can strengthen local social cohesiveness and civic pride. The proposals will demonstrably speak to cultural well-being, an important, integral strand of the NPPF's social mission. Specifically, *Meet* speaks to social cohesion itself, societal reflection, and the social value of congregation and compassion rooted in the heritage of the Minster. Fittingly located on the West Front, *Meet* also speaks of coming together, to hospitality and welcome.

Economic Benefits: Public Art may also serve as a contributor to the economic value and vitality of a place. High-profile, high quality, public artwork such as that proposed can foster engagement, strengthen visitor numbers and deliver economic uplift. In this specific example, the draw of *Meet* (and the associated profile-raising) will be aimed to entice more people to York, and the Minster specifically.

Environmental Benefits: As outlined within the heritage impact assessment (See section 8.0), the proposal respects the heritage significance of the Minster, the Conservation Area it sits within, and the surrounding heritage context. The proposed sculpture will also involve related conservation works and enhancements to historic fabric. The proposed public artwork will complement the broader aspirations for environmental improvements for Duncombe Place, in line with the future of the space as Queen Elizabeth Square.

These public benefits are discussed further and contextualised within relevant planning policy within Section 9.0. They are discussed in the context of ecclesiastical decision-making in more detail within Section 10.0.

Please note, unobtrusive bird netting is proposed as part of this application and is assessed within this report. This may be required to protect it from birds and bird droppings, and preserve the fabric, legibility, and artistic interest of the proposed sculpture. A proposal for this necessary netting is presented and evaluated in Section 4.0. The absolute requirement for such netting will be evaluated later in the process of installation, though it is included within this application for decision-makers to fully appraise possible impacts, and streamline the application process.

The Proposal

This section should be read alongside the drawings submitted as part of this application, in particular the 'New Cope Stone - Options Appraisal (ref: 122-28 (GA) 501)' which illustrates various options explored for the plinth.

The proposal includes the installation of a new artwork by Antony Gormley. This new artwork, Meet, is to be formed in cast iron blocks and depicts the form of two people embracing.

As part of this proposal, the works will include repairs to the stonework and plinth which is set within the niche; this is partly a necessity to provide a sound basis for the sculpture, but is also a conservation priority which must be addressed to preserve the fabric whilst there is access for the installation. An identical approach to deliver vital conservation of stonework was taken with the Queen's statue adjacent, to good effect.

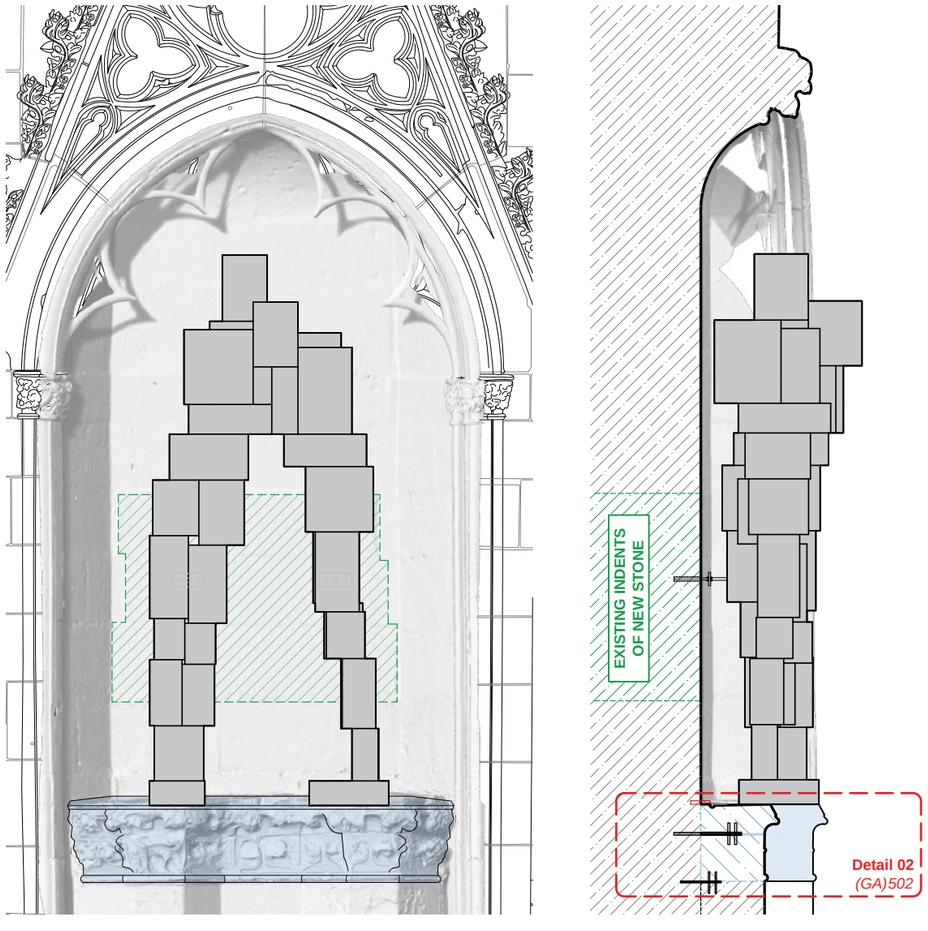


Fig. 3 The Proposal overview. Technical details of repairs and fixings are identified on separate drawings

Repairs Works to Existing Stonework

Refer to the Structural Evaluation by The Morton Partnership, appended to this document.

With scaffold access to the buttress and niche which is essential for making the installation, there will also be a period of survey and assessment of stonework condition and repairs will be undertaken.

Some, but not all of the niche stonework is in a satisfactory and stable condition. However the supporting infill stonework and double plinth is not in a sound condition.

Previous repair to the rear of the niche was undertaken in 1960s and is visible from ground level, with indents formed in a bright limestone.

Two lead tabs are present, which cover cramps, tying the un-bonded plinth stones back into the niche. It is unclear what embedment these cramps have into the masonry behind, but appears to be minimal.

It is anticipated that some conservative stone repairs and renewal of the decorative capital details will also be undertaken. This will include review and repair to the plinth tracery and other architectural elements, all in accordance with the current adopted Stone Practice.

Following a close-up inspection, facilitated by a cheery picker, it was found that some details of the capping stones were not secure - which presents a safety risk over the public open space of the forecourt. Closer inspection of the foliate details also showed that we are close to partial or complete loss of some of the decorative detail. Therefore, considering the needs of the application as a whole, we are applying for the sympathetic and accurate renewal of these stone components.

Other minor repairs will mostly comprise ‘plastic’ stone repairs using proven materials and methodology by our conservator-masons, potentially with some local poultice cleaning and carefully judged shelter-coating of any fragile weathering elements. The works will be specified and agreed under the direction of the Surveyor once full access is erected. The scope of these minor repair works will comprise the West-facing niche and the two side return niches of the buttress, which will be accessible for a limited period.



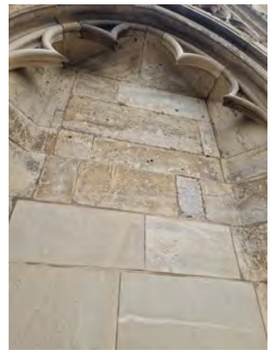


Fig. 4 North Niche of West Front
Fig. 5 Rear of niche with 1960s stone renewal clearly visible



Fig. 6 Existing plinth capitals: deterioration and loss of detail

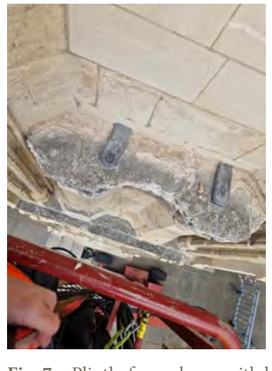




Fig. 7 Plinth, from above, with lead tabs (assumed cramps) visible
Fig. 8 Assumed rust-jacking which is lifting leaded iron cramps

Proposed New Cope Stone

Refer to supporting drawings appended to this paper, in particular 'New Cope Stone - Options Appraisal (ref: 122-28 (GA) 501)'

The plinth cope stone and capitals when surveyed close- to have been found to have deteriorated, with visible cracks and fissures. The leading edge of the plinth is also fractured and has an inconsistent or partially lost drip detail. Having evaluated a number of options (see later in this report) we have concluded that it is necessary and the right time to propose that a new cope is provided, formed in a suitable limestone. This will be embedded into the walling behind which gives the overall benefit of re-attaching the unbonded niche stones and allowing for a fully concealed support for the new sculpture. Profiles of decorative detail will be taken from suitable samples and will be subject to detailed design to replicate authentic detail between the Surveyor and Masons.

To support the movement of water and to mitigate the risk of staining, we also propose that the new cope stone will have a slight gradient to its top surface. This is to encourage any surface water to a shallow channel at the rear of the cope where it can be shed discreetly down the side edge of the niche. This is to control the path of rainwater and any staining that may arise from the material of the temporary sculpture.

Remaking of the existing stone cap proposed will be Lepine, also known as Lavoux, from the village of Lavoux near Poitiers. This stone is specified for its durability and appearance. There is a precedent for using Lepine on the West Front (for the Great West Window tracery) and elsewhere on the Minster for specific purposes, in accordance with the Cathedral's stonework policy. The most recent precedent was the carving of the Queen's Statue for the West Front niche.

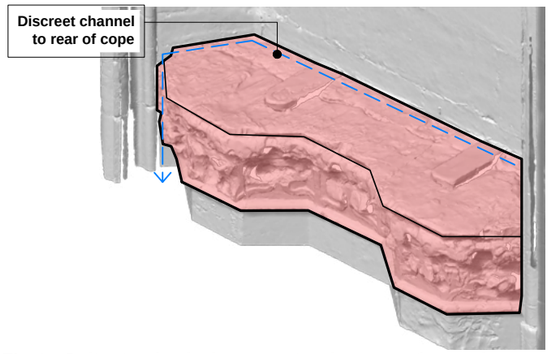


Fig. 9 Indicative sketch, demonstrating the extent of renewal suggested

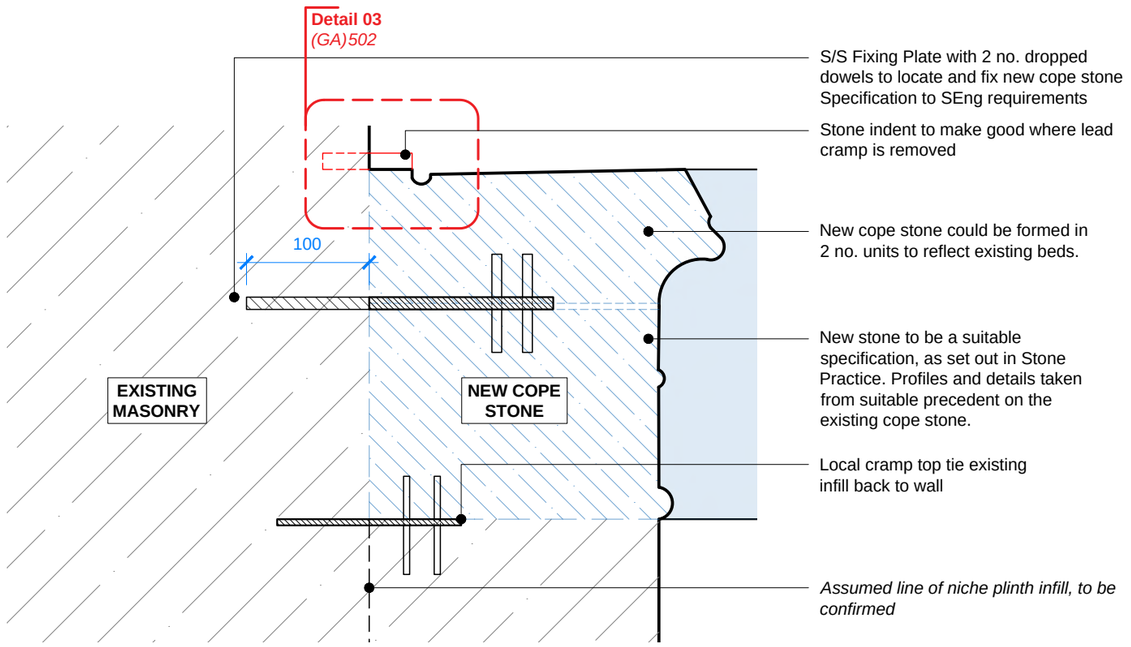


Fig. 10 Detail of proposed coping stone, weathering and fixings (read with options appraisal and technical details sheets.



Fig. 11 Mortar fillet to back edge of plinth - none of the niche stones are bonded in.



Fig. 12 Cracking running depth of plinth surface



Fig. 13 Deteriorated decorative detail which will be scanned, recorded and faithfully replicated for renewal.

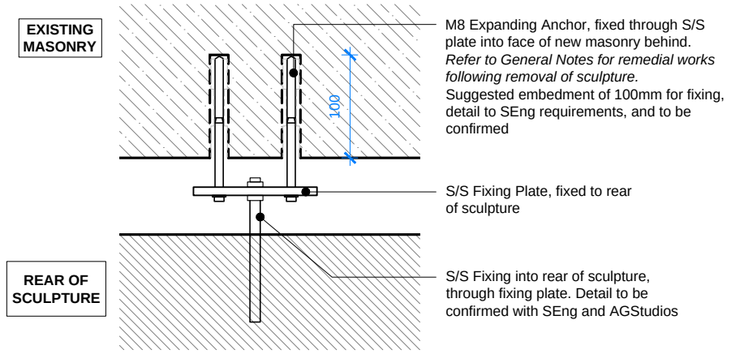
Proposed Fixings

It is proposed that fixings to restrain the sculpture are located in the face of the 1960s indents in order to safeguard the older surrounding stonework.

A stainless steel plate with counter directional fixings is proposed, this is subject to detail by the Structural Engineer and AG Studio.

To safely and securely fix the new cope stone a concealed stainless steel fixing plate with dropped dowels is proposed to bond the new stone back to the wall, also tying the plinth more robustly to the masonry structure.

Following removal of the sculpture, remedial works to the masonry will include lime mortar plugs to fixing holes made and gentle cleaning of the masonry will be undertaken to remove any residual staining by proven methods.



DETAIL 01
Proposed Fixing of Sculpture to Niche
Plan 1:5

Proposed Materials

Refer to supporting document 'Materiality' by AG Studios appended to this paper

The proposed sculpture will be formed in a patinated and partially sealed cast iron. It is intended to engage with the climate, shifting in appearance and gaining patina over time with exposure to weather.

With awareness of the risk of staining, it is proposed that the sculpture is treated prior to installation with a protective coating.

To support the maintenance of the stone work below, it is proposed that the niche plinth is gently cleaned regularly as part of general maintenance to the elevation to limit any permanent staining.



Fig. 14 Excerpt from (GA)502 showing proposed fixings to rear of sculpture
Fig. 15 Photograph by Jaewon Choi, Courtesy Museum SAN, Wonju

Accessibility

Both the physical and intellectual accessibility of this new artwork has been considered.

The sculpture will be viewed from the public space, in front of the West Elevation. There is universality and equality of means to appreciate the sculpture as all visitors will be viewing this from the same location.

Provision for intellectual accessibility, and for those with partial sight can be partly answered at this juncture. Chapter have digital interpretation for the Queen's statue (via the Cathedral's website and guidebook materials). The ambition would be for this interpretation to include a description of the new sculpture as well.

Accessibility for those with visual impairments is not yet certain. It may be that a 'VocalEyes' audio description of the sculpture could be included in the digital interpretation resources. We will reach out to the relevant stakeholders to explore the possibilities, so that there can be a best-practice approach to meeting the needs of all audiences.

4.0 Design of the Proposal

Bird Protection Measures

This application includes a proposal for the provision of bird protection/pigeon netting provisionally (and conditionally) within the request for approval. We recognise that the application needs to address - and regulators (secular and ecclesiastical) will rightly seek reassurance on - issues of maintenance and presentation of the sculptural installation into the west front of the Minster. Our thinking in relation to inclusion of this proposal for netting therefore runs as follows:

1. There are pigeon issues on and around the Minster - these vary and fluctuate over time, depending on the environment, food supply for birds and management practice in the city more widely. Bird nuisance problems can arise for the Minster due to actions (and inaction) outside the control of Chapter. Generally at present the problems are not too significant.
2. The control of bird nuisance for the Minster comprises a blend of forward-planning to address readily anticipated risk areas, with a reactive response to problems when they arise. Therefore a number of key external elements of the Minster are provided with pigeon netting.

   Zones of the Cathedral which would readily become roosting and nesting sites - such as the deep windows of the Quire clerestories; and the elaborate tracery of the Rose Window - are provided with netting which has been approved under the CCM – quite unobtrusively and effectively.
3. Expert advice on pigeon control emphasises the attritional nature of management practice - reducing opportunities for the bird population to get establish and thrive wherever possible, and then reacting when an issue moves or gets rooted into an area of the building with additional control measures.
4. We provided and installed netting for the Queen Elisabeth statue on the west front for two reasons; one was that the niche and statue form could provide obvious shelter and space for roosting and nesting; the other reason was that the significance and value of the statue was such that soiling and the visual impact of a pigeon infestation would not be acceptable. Therefore we elected to anticipate this risk; thus the netting was installed pro-actively.

Our reasoning for this current application is that:

- At present there are no signs that pigeons are interested in this niche in their occupation of the present environment around the Minster.
- However there is a risk that pigeons could roost on or around the new sculpture after installation.
- We recognise that netting – however discrete and carefully judged in detail - would not really be desirable for the building nor for the reading of the artwork. If it is not required, then we would much rather have no netting.
- BUT; we will not know if netting and pigeon management is required until the installation is completed and the natural environment of the birds discovers and responds.
- It is more than reasonably possible, therefore, that in the relatively short 3 years that the artwork will be in place, no pigeon problem will arise. We don't really want to provide for an eventuality that does not transpire or can be managed by other means.
- However, we also want to be able to respond swiftly and immediately if we do start to have a pigeon problem. Once they find a site favourable for roosting or nesting, they get established very quickly and the harm can be almost immediate from nesting materials and guano soiling. We are also hampered in any response by the law in that nesting birds cannot be disturbed or disrupted, so at the very least if nesting pigeons get busy, one faces at least one round of reproduction – which is messy. The niche is also directly above a primary entrance into the Cathedral, where the public queue so preventing the promblem as soon as it arises is essential.

Our request therefore is for planning permission and CCM to be granted for the artwork to include provision for netting against pigeons. We do not intend to install this netting unless or until it is required. However with the grant of approval we are then able to respond immediately to prevent and anticipate a problem that would otherwise be aesthetically harmful to the Minster and the artwork.

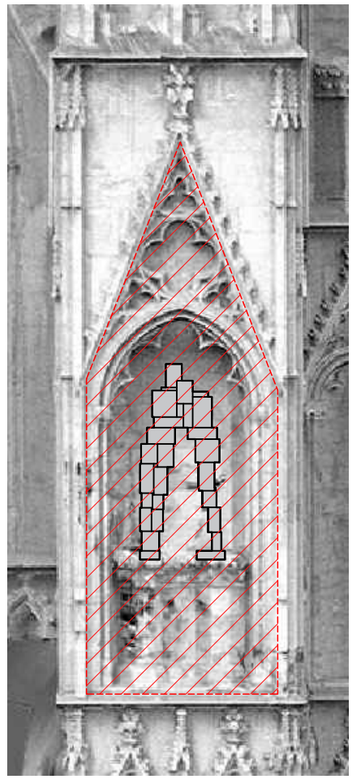


Fig. 16 Excerpt from (GA)500 showing indicative area to with bird protection measures may be applied



Fig. 17 Queens Statue, in situ with netting installed







Fig. 18 Indicative components might include: A fixing plug, hook eye, perimeter wire, crimps and tensioner(s) and netting material

5.0 Legislative and Policy Context

Secular Planning Legislation

Section 38(6) of the **Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004** and Section 70 (2) of the **Town and Country Planning Act 1990** outline the decision-making criteria for planning applications.

Specific legislation in England and Wales controls works that may affect designated heritage assets. This legislation was drafted to ensure that any proposals give due regard to potential impacts on the historic environment. Primarily, this legislation is derived from the **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.** Specifically, Section 66 and 72 are of relevance to this planning application.

Local Planning Policy

The City of York Council adopted the **City of York Local Plan** in 2025. The Local Plan includes aims, objectives and policies to shape the future of development within the boundaries of the Local Planning Authority. It is a key document in decision making. The most relevant policies within the Local Plan in terms of this application include:

- Policy DP1 York Sub-Area
- Policy DP2 Sustainable Development
- Policy DP3 Sustainable Communities
- Policy SS1 Delivering Sustainable Growth for York
- Policy SS3 York City Centre
- Policy EC4 Tourism
- Policy D1 Placemaking
- Policy D3 Cultural Provision
- Policy D4 Conservation Areas
- Policy D5 Listed Buildings
- Policy D6 Archaeology
- Policy D7 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Neighbourhood Planning Policy

The **York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan** was adopted by the City of York Council in 2022, and an updated version issued in June 2022. A community led planning document, the Neighbourhood Plan includes aspirations and policies that shape the direction of development within the Precinct. Of direct relevance to this application are the following policies:

- Policy A1 - Purpose and ambition
- Policy A2 - Sustainable Development
- Policy A3 - Spatial Plan
- Policy A4 - Design Excellence
- Policy C1 - Historic Environment
- Policy D1 - Wellbeing
- Policy E1 - Movement and Public Realm
- Policy E2 - Accessibility and Wayfinding
- Policy PA2 - West Front and Queen Elizabeth Square

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework August 2026 (NPPF) is the overarching planning policy governing development within England. It includes non-statutory 'National Plan-Making Policies' and 'National Decision-Making Policies' that are a material consideration in planning decision-making.

Of relevance to this application is:

- Policy DM1: Preparing development proposals
- Policy DM2: Information Requirements
- Policy DM3: Determining development proposals
- Policy S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy S4: Principle of development within settlements
- Policy DP3: Key principles for well-designed places
- Policy HE4: securing the conservation of heritage assets
- Policy HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
- Policy HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
- Policy HE9: Conservation Areas

National Planning Guidance

Prepared by the Government, this national guidance aims to facilitate the use of the NPPF in the decision-making process. The guidance has specific elements pertaining to heritage assets within the planning process, assessing harm, and defining public benefits (including heritage benefits). Of relevance is therefore paragraph 020, which discusses and defines 'public benefit'.

Ecclesiastical Legislation

The Care of Cathedrals Measure (2011). The formal wording of the CCM reads as follows:

2(1) Subject to subsection (2) and to sections 5 and 6 the Chapter of a cathedral shall not, unless it has been approved under this Measure, implement or consent to the implementation of any proposal—

(a) for the carrying out of works, including works of repair or maintenance, on, above or below land the fee simple in which is vested in the corporate body, being works which would materially affect—

(i) the architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic character of the cathedral church or any building within the precinct of the cathedral church which is for the time being used for ecclesiastical purposes, or

(ii) the immediate setting of the cathedral church, or

(iii) any archaeological remains in or under the cathedral church or within its precinct, or

(iv) any human remains in or under the cathedral church or within its precinct, or

(b) for the sale, loan or other disposal of any object the property in which is vested in the corporate body or which is in the possession or custody of the corporate body or to whose possession or custody the corporate body is entitled, being an object of architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic interest, including any object to which section 7 applies, or

(c) for the carrying out of any work to any such object as is referred to in paragraph (b) which would materially affect the architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic character of the object, or

(d) for the permanent addition to the cathedral church of any object which would materially affect the architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic character of the cathedral church.

(2) Subsection (1) shall not apply in relation to anything which—

(a) is done by the Chapter in furtherance of its duties under the constitution and statutes of the cathedral church with respect to the ordering of services or otherwise in furtherance of the mission of the cathedral church,

(b) is of a temporary nature, and

(c) does not materially affect the fabric of the cathedral church.

The Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010

6. The ecclesiastical exemption is retained for the following buildings subject to the Measure—

(a) any building within the precinct of a cathedral church for the purposes of the Measure and enclosed within the red line;

(b) any church building within the precinct of a cathedral church for the purposes of the Measure and situated outside the red line;

(c) any monument —

(i) within the precinct of a cathedral church for the purposes of the Measure and situated outside the red line; and

(ii) situated in a churchyard, graveyard or other land which is or has been used for the purposes of burial.

York Minster Internal Policies

The Conservation Management Plan prepared by Alan Baxter Associates includes the following directly relevant policies:

- Policy CM5 - All works which affect the special archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest of the Minster and Precinct, as defined by statutory designation and identified in this Plan, will be planned in accordance with Government, Local Authority and Church guidance on the historic environment.
- Policy CM8 - All applications to the CFCE will demonstrate compliance with this Plan and its policies.
- Policy MCR1 - All works to the Minster will be planned and carried out according to the highest appropriate conservation standards, and the assessment of significance and policies contained in this Plan.

- Policy MCR6 - Any proposals to restore missing elements of the fabric will require special justification and be based on authoritative evidence of the lost design.
- Policy 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 Survey.
- Policy ATE1 - York Minster will develop its access, tourism and education initiatives in partnership with other cultural providers in York and in the Leeds City Region.
- Policy ATE3 - The Dean and Chapter will seek to address the various barriers to visiting the Minster, and develop approaches to access, learning and interpretation which encourage a broader range of people, including children and family groups, to enjoy and learn from and through the building and its collections in ways which are meaningful to them.
- Policy DP1 - The Minster is a dynamic and important centre for spiritual, cultural, commemorative and educational life. In planning and executing changes to meet evolving functional requirements, the Dean and Chapter will ensure that the archaeological, architectural, communal and historical significances of the site are not irreversibly diminished or compromised.
- Policy DP2 - Any unavoidable impact on the fabric of the Minster, the Precinct and its structures, or below-ground archaeological remains, will be mitigated by appropriate programmes of research and evaluation.
- Policy DP5 - Any new construction adjoining the Minster or in its Precinct will accord with the appropriate ecclesiastical and secular guidance on historic buildings.
- Policy DP6 - New construction will not detract from and will seek to enhance the setting, views and character of the Minster and Precinct. Wherever possible, new construction will contribute directly to the furtherance of the Minster's role as a centre of worship and culture.
- Policy DP8 - The Dean and Chapter will work closely with the City Council to develop proposals to make Duncombe Place a better setting for the west end of the Minster.
- Policy DP10 - Development proposals which would have an adverse impact on the setting and views of the Minster and the Precinct will be strongly resisted by the Dean and Chapter.

6.0 Understanding: Historical Development

Historical Development: The Minster Precinct

Early History

The pre-conquest history of the Precinct is well-known. Forming much of the northern half of a Roman legionary fortress, parts of its headquarters (or Principia) are still visible in the crypt of the Minster. This historic Roman context is also preserved in-part in the street plan of the area.

Medieval

The present Minster was erected from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, replacing a Norman church which once occupied the site. A handful of surrounding buildings date from this period. Most of these have ecclesiastical associations, reflecting the nature of the usage of the site at this time. These include St Williams College, a former residence for chantry priests, and some parts of the Treasurer's house, once used as clergy housing. Both of these structures are relatively well-preserved. By contrast, the Archbishops' Palace, also dating to this period, has been mostly demolished, its chapel and ruined arcade to the north of Dean's Park are the only survivals. The precinct was enclosed during this period by a 12-foot high wall. Built in 1283, this was accessed through a series of gatehouses. Traces of this arrangement include the timber framed gatehouse on College Street, saved from demolition in the nineteenth century, and carriage arch, now blocked, surrounding the entrance of 52 Low Petergate. At this time, a sense of separateness would have characterised the area, contrasting with the arrangement today, where the boundary between city and Precinct, particularly on its south side, is permeable.

Early Modern

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the usage of the Precinct began to change. Commercial enterprises came to dominate the area, culminating in the first half of the seventeenth century when the arrangement was criticised by King Charles I. Reportedly, shops stretched to the walls of the Minster itself at this time. By 1660, only the Dean retained his personal residence, to the south of the Minster. The street of High Petergate came to be populated by wealthy laypeople, becoming one of the most fashionable parts of the city. The ecclesiastical separateness of the precinct was thus markedly changed.

Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The creation of space around the Minster developed through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many buildings were demolished, while those which remained were adjusted to complement the improved setting. Fine eighteenth century elevations remain visible on the south side of the Precinct, particularly those on High Petergate, and to the east, such as that of the Red House at No. 6 Minster Yard. Views of the north and west elevations of the Minster were created with the laying of Dean's Park and Duncombe Place in the nineteenth century, the latter linking the Precinct to the railway station and river crossing. During this time, some key structures were lost , such as the Precinct Boundary Wall, the Old Deanery and Warthill, a prebendary residence: thus largely establishing the relationship between the Minster and City which can be observed today. There were also notable additions to precinct buildings, including the Minster School in 1830-33 and the Gothic Revival 'New Residence' in 1824-7.

Twentieth Century - Present

The twentieth century saw the creation of Deangate as a roadway, opening up views to the south of the Minster. This main through-road was then pedestrianised in 1989, though the present carriageway remains in-situ. Proposals by Lord Esher to improve the area would have seen this road paved, though this was not implemented.

Key changes to the Minster environs in recent years includes one of the great achievements of the York Minster Revealed project in 2005, which improved the prospect of the South Transept with Piazza, by reclaiming from the highways to form a public space at the conjunction between Stonegate and the South Transept, and the creation of cycle route 658 which runs around the south side of the Minster.

Historical Development: The Minster

A detailed account of the historical development of York Minster can be found within the *Conservation Management Plan* prepared by Alan Baxter Associates (see sections 2.4 and 2.5).

To assist, the following excerpt is provided from the initial outline of architectural history (section 2.4.1):

> *York Minster is reputed to be the longest and widest medieval cathedral in England, and the biggest by volume. The present structure, of c.1225 to 1472, is described by the Buildings of England as '[telling] us a more consistent and complete story of the Gothic styles in England than any other building. Between c.1230 and c.1472, every style is represented, all of the highest quality'. It can be added that the Minster's Gothic, though representative of broader shifts (from Early English to Decorated to Perpendicular) offers a distinctive version of the style, one which was intended to position the Minster in relation to other cathedrals, not least Canterbury. Its distinctiveness found few direct followers, at least beyond the north of England.*
>
> *The present Minster is 249' (76m) wide and 524' (160m) long, and is located in the north-western part of the city centre, between Bootham Bar and Monk Bar. It replaced an Anglo-Norman structure begun in the 1070s, which in turn had replaced a Saxon structure that lay elsewhere in the vicinity (its exact location remains unknown). The present Minster, like its Norman predecessor, lies on a highly significant site, home to the Roman Principia, the Headquarters building of the legionary fortress. The move of the Minster in the 1070s to this site was surely an important symbolic act intended to connote the Norman church's power and ambitions.*

Archaeological Report on the West Front Sculpture at York Minster

Dr Stuart Harrison

2021

Please note, this research pre-dates the 2022 sculpture of the late Queen Elizabeth II, and was first prepared as part of submission material related to that statue. Nonetheless, it offers incredibly useful historical background regarding the West Front, pertinent to this application.

Background

Given the current proposal to install a statue of HM the Queen on the west front of the minster it was thought that a better understanding of the figural sculpture of the front might be useful. I was therefore asked to write a short summary of the scheme.

In doing so I have relied to a great extent upon the published and unpublished works of Professor Christopher Norton who studied the material in depth in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly when the west front was scaffolded for repairs. He also served on the cathedral FAC at the time. I am grateful for Professor Norton in supplying me with his unpublished typescript article on the west doorway and for a specially written summary of the evidence for the two equestrian statues, both of which are attached as separate documents for those wishing to enquire in more detail. Sarah Brown's 'York Minster: An Architectural History 1220-1500' also gives the current understanding of the development of the nave and west front.

The date & development of the West Front scheme

The west front as a design evolved over time and there is no dating evidence other than the contract to glaze the west window in 1337. Work to start a new nave commenced in 1291 but must have been in preparation for some years and the scheme dragged on well into the 14th century. It seems that archbishop Melton was likely to have been instrumental in pushing it to basic completion. Architectural embellishment focuses on the buttresses, the west doorway and the west wall flanking the west window **(Fig 17)**. From the beginning the front was conceived as a twin tower design replacing an earlier front of 12th-century date which also had twin towers. It was unfortunately never completed to the original overall design and construction dragged on for over 40 years.

The tower buttresses are decorated with niches that have pedestals for statues and in the lower zones conventional arch heads with tracery cusping and which are arranged in tiers which can be read across the front. At the level of the west window springing there is a distinct change in the niche arches to a nodding ogee design that projects forwards from the plane of the niche. Similar arches adorned the ends of the shrine of St William that stood at the east end of the nave and whose fragments are now in the Yorkshire Museum. For our current purposes the present western tower belfries should be ignored as they are a much later addition. We can also be certain that the original design and conception of the front as a unified design with belfries was never carried to fruition and that moreover the changes in architectural style at the time from geometric forms to curvilinear flowing tracery and nodding ogee arches were adopted as a change of design during construction.

Notably the crocket decoration to some of the internal gabled canopies of the blind arcades of the front appear to be in the same style as the crockets on the tomb canopy of archbishop Greenfield d.1315 which may give some inkling to the rate of progress of the works overall. Though Norton suggests that some of this arcading was damaged in the fire of 1840 and replaced.

The front itself suffers, as a piece of architectural design, from the great width of the nave so that despite the building being one of the tallest medieval structures in Britain, it is the width factor that dominates the overall scheme. One has only to compare it to Beverley Minster to see the difference where, because of the much narrower nave, it is a sense of verticality which dominates the overall design. This greater width at York did however allow of one advantage which was the immense size of the west window and greater area for the display of decorative glass. The master mason faced with large areas of wall decorated them with tiers of niches and tracery panelling both internally and externally **(Fig 17)**.

The three sculptural zones

The sculptural cycle can be broadly split into three zones or areas of focus in which each one displays its own specific sculptural cycle.

Lower Zone 1

The lower zone has four wider than usual niches set into the tower buttresses of which the two outer niches retain evidence for equestrian statues which were

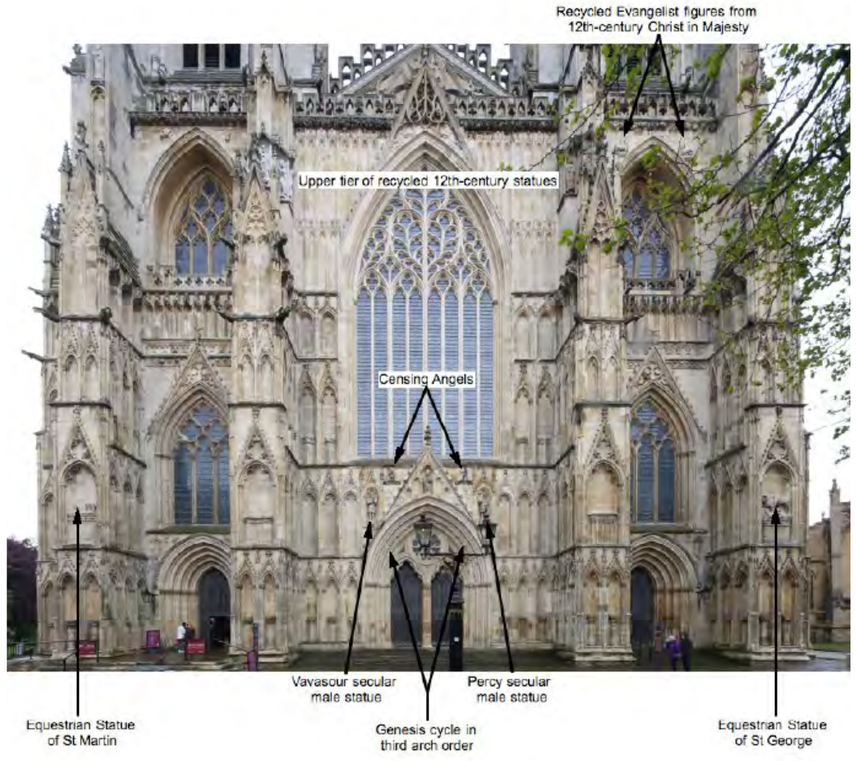


Fig. 19 The west front today showing the main elevation with its three zones of sculptural decoration.

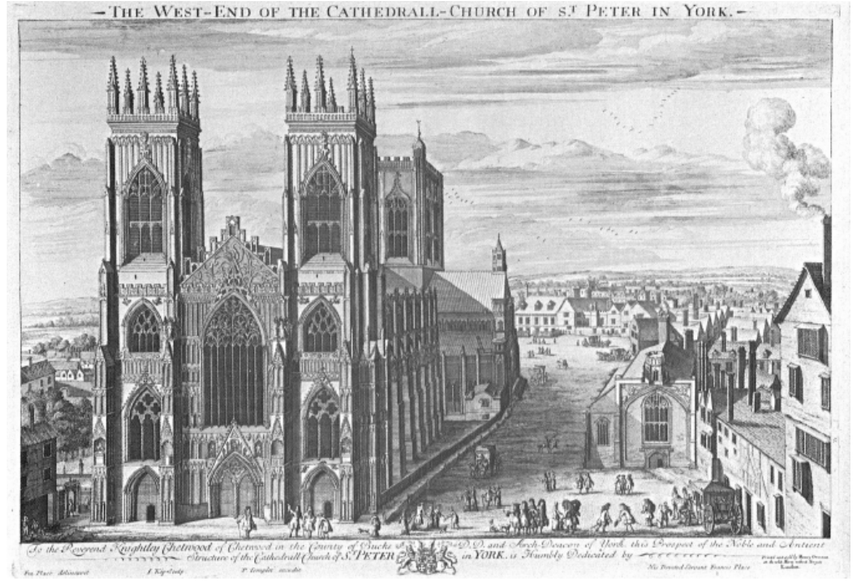


Fig. 20 The early 18th-century depiction of the west front by Kip after a drawing by Francis Place shows the two equestrian statues in more complete condition. This is very noticeable on the original print which is very large in size. YML Oversize prints collection

shown in more complete form in early 18th-century engravings of the minster such as that by Kip after a drawing by Francis Place **(Fig 18)**. Norton suggests that these niches are not the original arrangement because the pedestals are straight-jointed to the flanking wall structure and their decorative foliage matches that of the upper tiers of ogee-headed niches rather than the more conventional lower niches. He therefore suggests that they form an alteration dating to the 1330s in which the pedestals were raised in height. Notably no two of the pedestals have the same design and they show a diversity of decorative forms **(Fig 18)**.

He goes on to identify the northern equestrian figure as being St Martin, dividing his cloak and cites an early 19th-century drawing which shows the statue when it was more complete. This identification is already well known and has been generally accepted. Today very little of the statue survives **(Fig 19)** with only the feet of the beggar or poor man and the legs of the horse being identifiable. What remains suggests that the statue group was produced in coursed stone rather than a single block.

In the case of the southern statue, though there are more physical remains, there is less pictorial or written evidence but Norton identifies it as being St George and with that in mind it seems that what we now see is the much decayed remains of the horse and a much truncated horseman facing northwards in which he holds a lance whose shaft is angled down to engage with the jaws of the dragon's head lying side on at floor level **(Fig 21)** with a small figure to the right. That conforms to contemporary and later illustrations of the saint on a horse trampling down and piercing the dragon's head with a lance or spear. If this is a correct reading it tends to confirm Norton's identification of the figure. Norton seems to think that the evidence suggests that there were only ever the two equestrian statues and that the other two niches were always empty. This might well be the case and that the niches were provided as a matching group of four to achieve an architectural symmetry across the front of the buttresses.

Lower Zone 2

The second area of sculptural significance is also in the lower zone but restricted to the central section of the nave set between the towers and includes the west doorway and the sculptures set in niches around the area flanking the arch head **(Fig 22)**. The doorway is unusual in the context of English architectural design in that it incorporates a cycle of figure sculpture in the third arch order. Figure sculpture cycles in English medieval arch heads is relatively rare. In this respect the whole of the existing arch head which included remains of the medieval original fabric mixed with some replacement voussoirs put in by the minster master mason Shout in the early 19th century was replaced in the late 1990s. Norton recorded these and studied them in detail at the time and he discusses these voussoirs at length in an as yet unpublished paper which has unfortunately become delayed in the publication of a collection of conference papers.

He explains that at the time it was not clear which of the voussoirs in the arch head were original and which were by Shout as all were to some extent suffering from decay but once the arch was dismantled it was possible to identify which was which. This was especially so with the foliate carving more than the figurative. In terms of the figurative sculpture my own observations of the dismounted voussoirs shows that it is possible to identify by their style of carving which are medieval originals and which are figures replaced by Shout.

More importantly Norton has identified the sculptural cycle as a Genesis theme and which was then used to create a replacement sculptural scheme in the new arch head. So the doorway retains the original basic sculptural theme. He worked out that the arch order needed to be read from side to side by someone standing centrally in front of the doorway and looking up at the arch head. To understand how this works I have repeated his diagram of the voussoirs below:

L8 God sentences Cain
L7 Cain kills Abel
L6 The sacrifice of Cain/Abel
L5 Eve Spinning
L4 The expulsion of Eve by the angel
L3 Eve hiding in the garden
L2 Adam takes the apple from Eve
L1 Eve tempted by the serpent
R8 Cain driven out by the angel
R7 God calls to Cain
R6 The sacrifice of Abel/Cain
R5 Adam Digging
R4 The expulsion of Adam by the angel
R3 Adam in the garden
R2 The remorse of Adam and Eve
R1 Adam watches

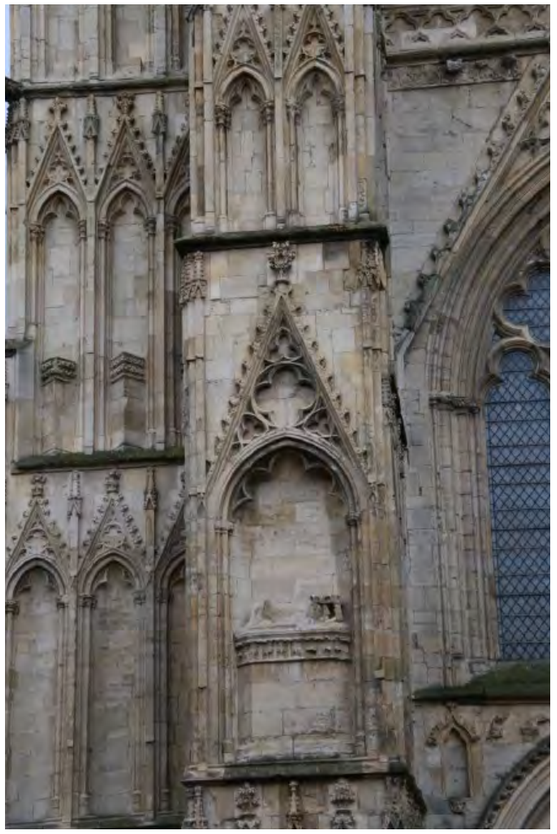


Fig. 21 The remains of the statue of St Martin now show only the lower part with the legs of the beggar and the horse



Fig. 22 The remains of the figure of St George identifiable through the lance piercing the dragon's mouth below the horse at ground level

As Norton points out this is an unusual arrangement in which the viewer has to alternately look left to right and back again and from bottom to the top to read the sculptural cycle in sequence. So start at L1 then R1 back to L2 then R2 etc. The story then makes sense but as Norton points out is also a rather truncated version.

Norton also discusses the design sources for the doorway overall with its open tracery tympanum and trumeau convincingly citing the earlier entrance into the chapter house at Westminster Abbey from its vestibule and also the angels flanking the entrance to the vestibule from the cloister alley as a possible prototype. He discusses how this influence also manifested itself in the York chapter house vestibule design of the 1280s before appearing in the modified form of the west front doorway.

He points out and discusses the various statues on the exterior flanking the head of the window. Two male secular figures set in niches flank the gable enclosing the west doorway arch head and are traditionally identified as members of the Vavasour and Percy families who contributed stone to the building. In their current form they are replacements for medieval originals put in between 1802-16 when Shout was restoring the front but thought to be by the sculptor Michael Taylor. They in turn were restored, as Norton points out, in the latest campaign in the 1990s.

Flanking the doorway gable above the secular figures are a pair of kneeling angels, also by Michael Taylor according to Norton, which are repeated by medieval angel sculptures on the interior face. The gable itself encloses the arch head and the tympanum formed between them is filled with five graduated niches. The central niche is now occupied by the statue of an archbishop, also by Michael Taylor, but Norton has suggested it was originally one of Christ or the Virgin. He also points out that the scheme should not ignore the treatment of the internal elevation which was also provided with statuary in niches though only two original angels now remain **(Fig 23)**. He thinks most of the rest is faithful restoration following the 1840 nave fire. The trumeau dividing the doorway into two is unusual in that it has a statue of St Peter facing towards the nave on the interior, instead of the exterior but which is now a modern replacement. Norton does caution that externally very little original medieval masonry survives, if at all, only in small areas within the gable and at the level of the seated angels at either side.

There are also two small figures flanking the arch head and contained within the lower section of the gable framing the arch **(Fig 23)**. They are constrained by the basically triangular space which they occupy and almost look like they are flying when in fact they are in attitudes of supplication. The left hand figure is very clear and has his arms raised in prayer and is clearly an archbishop, though Norton states the head is a replacement and both figures are by Shout. The second figure is damaged but almost a mirror image of the first, yet lacking the head so we do not know if it was another archbishop and as replacements for very worn originals the interpretation is questionable but Norton does suggest that they are a pair of archbishops. As potential donor figures they perhaps reinforce Norton's suggestion that the central gable niche image was of Christ or the Virgin and surely could not have been an archbishop.

The Upper Zone 3

The third part of the sculptural scheme derives from the 12th-century west front in which there was a large number of life-size statues of prophets, apostles, archbishops, kings and queens numbering at least 24 pieces. In addition there was also a Christ in Majesty composition featuring the central figure of Christ flanked by the four symbols of the evangelists of the winged lion, St Mark and winged bull, St Luke, the angel, St Matthew and eagle, St John.

Of these we have most of the life-size figure sculptures surviving either as the worn originals or as close copies done by Shout's workshop in the early 19th century. The four original evangelical figures also survive though the Christ is lost. One wonders, given Norton's suggestion of a figure of Christ originally in the niche above the central doorway, if that was the 12th-century Christ figure reworked and reused.

The evangelical figures were split into two groups with the angel and the eagle put inside flanking the apex of the west window arch and the bull and lion high up on the south-west tower where they have suffered badly from the effects of weathering. Plaster casts of the latter are in the Stoneyard architectural museum.

The 24 life-size figures were distributed around the upper part of the west front and sides of the western towers with a sub group filling the niches of the south nave aisle buttresses. A detailed summary account of them was given by Sophie Oosterwijk and Christopher Norton in the Friends Annual Report 1990 p.11-30 which included a reconstruction drawing by John Hutchinson of the Christ in Majesty composition. It also included a plan showing their distribution on the west front, towers and nave aisle buttresses **(Fig 26)**. As mentioned above they include a broad panoply of prophets, apostles, both holding books, kings, queens and archbishops. Some are identifiable from their attributes such as Moses with the tablets of the law and John the Baptist with the Opus Dei **(Fig 24)**. They also compare very closely with the more well-known life-size statues from St Mary's abbey.

This was not the first study of the kind as the late Paul Barker was the first to put together a reconstruction of the Christ assemblage and also did a great deal of work to identify the extent and dating of the life-size figures in the late 1970s. Unfortunately his work was never published at the time and largely forgotten. Both Barker and Oosterwijk and Norton to a greater and lesser extent identified which statues are original and which are in situ, which have been replaced by modern copies and which now survive dismounted from their original locations. Clearly they lost their original significance and context when they were salvaged from their 12th-century setting and redeployed on the new west front.

A number of the dismounted figures were featured in the inaugural exhibition of the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds in 1993 and a detailed catalogue and history was then published as an exhibition guide to this and other Romanesque sculpture elsewhere.

Today some figures of rather questionable quality (some might describe them as dire) stand in the place of the originals on the south buttress of the north west tower **(Fig 27)**. This particular grouping of statues is well known from Joseph Halfpenny's engraving of 1795 from his 'A Selection of the Gothic Ornaments of the Cathedral Church of York, pl.87' **(Fig 25)**. The appearance of the current group, put there in the 1970s is not helped by the fact they are in a very white Portland Stone which makes them stand out rather prominently.

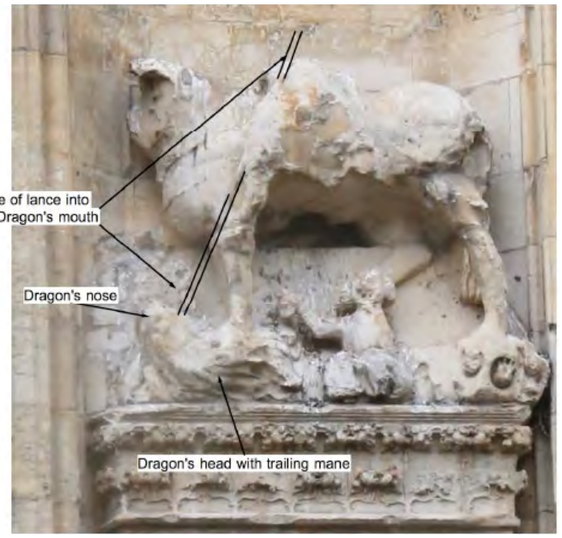


Fig. 23 The remains of the figure of St George detail showing the surviving sculpture with the line of the lance and dragon's head indicated. The dragon lies on its back and its front legs stand upright

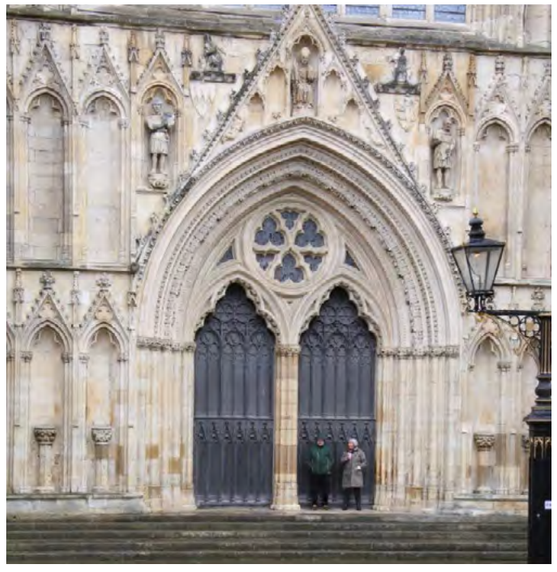


Fig. 24 The exterior of the west doorway showing the layout of the niches and the sculptures. The two secular male figures are restored replacements by Michael Taylor of the early 19th century as is the central figure of an archbishop. The two shields of arms flanking the figures are Vavasour left and Percy right

Conclusion

This brief discussion of the sculptures of the west front will hopefully serve as a summary of the main points relating to the design, context and distribution of the sculpture. Externally a great deal of the west doorway material is now restored copies of lost medieval originals with the last major intervention as recent as the 1990s.

How most of the upper zone sculpture was salvaged material from the earlier front and spread across a series of niches not only around the tower sides, west front but also along the buttress niches of the south nave aisle. What we see today is also no doubt much reduced in originality by the ravages of iconoclasts who denuded some of the easier to reach lower niches of their occupants but it should also be borne in mind many niches were always empty and designed to be so. Brown has also pointed out that they may never have been filled as intended because of the cost and also the onset of the Black death in 1348, which effectively stopped further work on the front.

The reused life-size figures of the upper zone seem to have survived better, as they were essentially out of reach but were then ravaged by weathering over time, often into almost unrecognisable shapes.

The west doorway figurative Genesis scheme is unusual in an English context as figurative voussoirs are a rarity. We should also be grateful that though decayed the overall theme of the scheme was still recognisable.

Religious figure sculpture was also mixed with the arms and figures of two of the patrons of the church fabric which was typical of the period when architectural works were often adorned with shields of arms of an institutions principal patrons.

Available sources (but not appended) are:

- Professor Christopher Norton's comments regarding the identification equestrian figures
- Professor Christopher Norton's unpublished paper about the west doorway design and the decoration of the voussoirs and statues

Publications referred to:

Sarah Brown, "Our Magnificent Fabric" *York Minster: An Architectural History 1220-1500*, Swindon 2003

Sophie Oosterwijk and Christopher Norton, 'Figure Sculpture from the Twelfth Century Minster', *Friends of York Minster Annual Report 1990*, 11-30

Sophie Oosterwijk and Christopher Norton, *Romanesque: Stone Sculpture from Medieval England, Exhibition Catalogue*, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds 1993



Fig. 25 Below. The interior of the west front which also had sculpture, now sadly lost but the niches remain to show their former positions. The figure on the trumeau is of St Peter and a modern replacement of the original



Fig. 26 Above. Figures of Moses and John the Baptist thought to have been made by Shout's workshop in the early 19th century as replacements for weathered 12th-century originals and now in the buttress niches of the south nave aisle. From Oosterwijk and Norton 1990

Fig. 27 Below. The current assemblage of Portland Stone figure sculptures c.1970s now filling the upper niches of the southern buttress of the north west tower



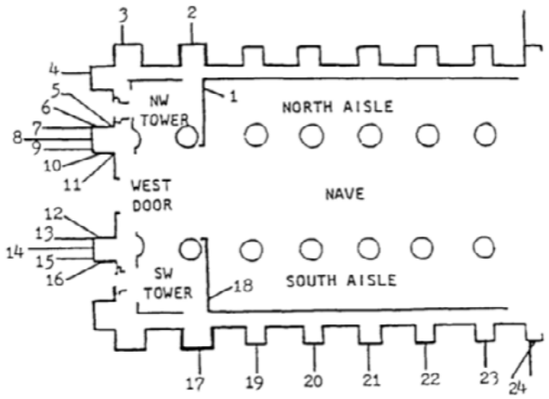


Fig. 28 Above. Plan of the distribution of life-size reused 12th-century figures. From Oosterwijk and Norton 1990

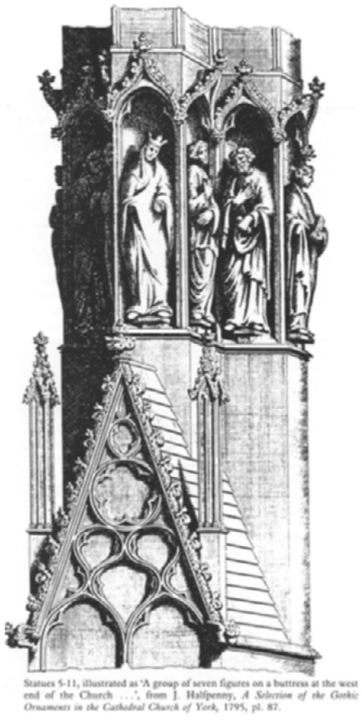


Fig. 29 Right. The engraving by Joseph Halfpenny of 1795 showing the statues in the niches on the south buttress of the north west tower. From Oosterwijk and Norton 1990

7.0 Assessment of Significance

How Significance is Assessed

Significance is the concept that underpins all current conservation philosophy and practice. Thus, it lies at the heart of this report.

The methodology used in this document follows English Heritage's *Conservation Principles*, with the basis of significance related to the conservation philosophy outlined in the Burra Charter (2013). This broadly aligns with the methodology and terminology within the Conservation Management Plan prepared by Alan Baxter.

Significance, according to our methodology, is defined as constituting 'evidential', 'historical', 'aesthetic' and 'communal' values.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE derives from the potential of the site to provide evidence of past human activity. The archaeological research and its potential capacity to respond to investigative analysis make a primary contribution to evidential value.

HISTORICAL VALUE derives from the way in which historical figures, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. This includes associative, illustrative and representational value, and encompasses among other things: rarity or survival, the extent of associated documentation, the ability to characterise a period and association with other monuments.

AESTHETIC VALUE derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. This includes not only formal visual and aesthetic qualities arising from design for a particular purpose, the experiential encounter with these, but also more fortuitous relationships of visual elements arising from the development of the place through time, and aesthetic values associated with the actions of nature.

COMMUNAL VALUE is vital to the significance, at the heart of which are the many layered meanings that a place may hold in contemporary society. Commemorative and symbolic values are founded in collective memory and historic identity, and social value can also derive from the contemporary uses of a place.

Each value is quantified based on a scale ranging from Exceptional to Detrimental. It is important to note that this assessment is the result of professional judgement and is undertaken on a case-by-case basis.

The aim of good conservation planning is to sensitively manage change to a place to ensure that its significance is not only protected, but also better revealed, reinforced and enhanced at every possible opportunity. It also seeks to remove or reduce risks to significance, sustaining the heritage asset into the future.

Conservation Principles uses heritage values to assess significance. These values can also be a means to interpret the archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic 'heritage interests' which underpin the notion of significance in the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF).

The heritage values used within this Heritage Statement can also be used to interpret the 'architectural and historic special interest' of a listed building, as enshrined within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT Archaeology, buildings and structures, gardens and parklands and setting and landscape.	**COLLECTIONS** Items, interiors and plants.	**RATING SCALE**
The place, asset, or elements of, are of Exceptional significance because they: • are the best or unique examples of their class. • can stand alone in relation to the overall significance of the place or asset. • may transcend international or national boundaries as important social or cultural phenomena.		**Exceptional** (4)
The place, asset, or elements of, are of Considerable significance because they: • are rare, very good representative examples of their class. • are major contributors to the overall significance of the place or asset. • may contribute to important national social or cultural phenomena.		**Considerable** (3)
The place, asset, or elements of, are of Moderate significance because they: • are unusual, distinctive or good examples of their class, although surviving examples are common. • provide context to the character and understanding of the place. • may contribute to important regional or local social or cultural phenomena.		**Moderate** (2)
The place, asset, or elements of, are of Little significance because they: • are commonplace, unexceptional or significantly altered without being visually intrusive. • may have potential to be more significant with better evidence. • may provide local context to the character and understanding of the place.		**Little** (1)
The place, asset, or elements of: • Neither contribute to nor detract from significance.		**Neutral** (0)
The asset, or elements of, are: • visually intrusive to the overall place. • obscure or may alter understanding of other significant assets and elements.		**Detrimental** (-1)

Fig. 30 Levels of significance (source: CAL)

Scope of Heritage Assessment

The proposals will directly affect the following heritage assets, which are scoped into proportionate assessment:

- York Minster, a Grade I listed building (The Cathedral Church of St Peter, York Minster, LEN: 1257222).
- The York Central Historic Core Conservation Area (specifically Area 9: The Minster Precinct).

The development site lies within the complex heritage context of York. As such, the proposals will cause a minor change to the setting of a number of listed buildings.

In line with Historic England Advice *GPA3: the Setting of Heritage Assets*, and the NPPF, a proportionate approach to assessment has been undertaken and these listed buildings are assessed as part of the conservation area, and are indicated on the plan opposite: those affected relate to the buildings around Duncombe Place, High Petergate, and Precentor's' Court.

The City of York Council does not maintain an active local list, though non-designated heritage assets (buildings of merit as identified within the *Conservation Area Appraisal*) are included only as part of the conservation area assessment.

The proposal will cause some change to the setting of the York Minster cathedral precinct: including Bootham Bar and the length of City Walls extending round the precinct up to Monk Bar Scheduled Monument (LEN: 1017777). However, given the nature of the significance of this asset, and the nature of the proposals, it is not considered its significance will be affected. As such, it is discounted from further assessment.



Fig. 31 Designations within the Precinct Character Area (source: York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal)

York Minster, Grade I Listed Building (LEN: 1257222): Statement of Heritage Significance

Our Statement of Significance for York Minster overall is drawn from the Alan Baxter Conservation Management Plan 2009. More specifically there is (at Appendix C) the related draft 2021 updated Gazetteer entry for the West Front. One does not have to look much further than these two sources to restate the Exceptional and International heritage significance of the West Front as a physical entity and the extraordinary power of the frontage architecturally and historically within the environs of the Minster and the City.

The following passages restate the significance of York Minster and this facade. We can also elaborate somewhat further on the significance of the architectural niches on the four great West tower buttresses derived both from Stuart Harrison's essay which follows and which summarises the evidence we have for the current and historic sculptural programmes of the West Front.

> *'The West Front incorporates four massive buttresses which support the western towers. Like the adjacent façade wall, these are ornamented with superimposed tiers of niches. The second tier up on the western face of each buttress consists of a single tall, broad niche, larger than any of the others. Each of the four niches contains a substantial square plinth. The surviving statues are to be found in the north and south niches. There is no evidence that the plinths in the other two niches supported statues. Likewise, the numerous other empty niches never contained statues. The two equestrian statues are therefore especially significant.*
>
> *As originally constructed c.1310, the four large niches lacked the square plinths. These were inserted later. They are not bonded in to the surrounding masonry, and their foliage decoration is comparable to some of the foliage on a higher level of the façade datable to c.1330. This is the date of the plinths and the two equestrian statues.*
>
> *The statue on the north side now consists of nothing more than a pair of feet and some hooves. However, early 19th-century drawings show that it represented St Martin dividing his cloak with the beggar. The other statue is better preserved but more enigmatic. It has been described as a camel; but the 'hump' is actually the remains of a rider. A small figure beneath the horse, and the remains of a wing in front of it, identify this as St George and the dragon. St Martin and St George represent the ideals of the charitable knight and the chivalrous knight, ideals that were particularly pertinent in the 1330s when York was the administrative centre for the Scottish campaigns.*
>
> *St Martin and St George are connected thematically to the other sculptures on the west front which, though largely restorations, preserve the original 14th-century concept.'*
>
> Christopher Norton: Unpublished note, cited by Harrison, 2021

Quoting from Christopher Norton's short appreciation of the two extant but fragmentary sculptures in the outer niches depicting St Michael and St. George, it is notable that Norton suggests that the niche that we are proposing as the site for this new sculpture may never have had a sculpture placed within it. Stuart Harrison's essay indicates that the niche may have been adapted in preparation for an unknown sculptural proposition, which could have been curtailed by the plague. To the extent that there is any confidence in this speculation, which Norton acknowledges is uncertain, raises a question as to whether or not it is historically significant that the niche was left unoccupied. Given the nature of the assessment we must undertake, the subjectivity of this discussion might allow us to acknowledge but not analyse further, the uncertainty before us. However, my starting premise is that we cannot reasonably argue that, because the niche is empty, there might be harm to the heritage significance by placing a new sculpture here.

York Minster generally; the West Front; the niche is of exceptional architectural and historical significance. The wider setting of the Minster and Duncombe Place is also highly important context in its parts, but is also recognized as having considerable potential for enhanced significance, if re-ordered as intended to become a 'world square' as envisaged in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The identity, representation and iconographic meaning of the sculptural programme within the West Front is also of considerable historic significance; Harrison's 2021 summary of this history, evolution and restoration indicates that there are themes which are powerfully spiritual, including the Genesis story and the emblematic significance of the St Martin and St George statues. There are also secular and temporal representations of powerful historical people of the church and city.

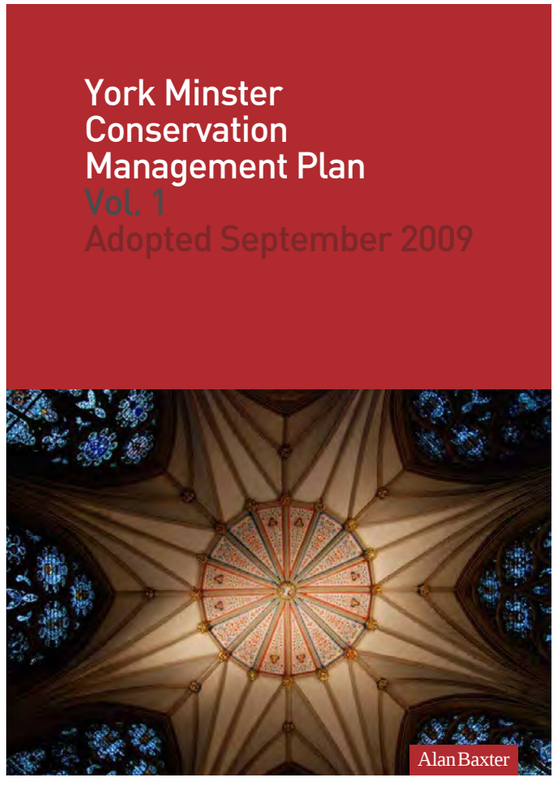
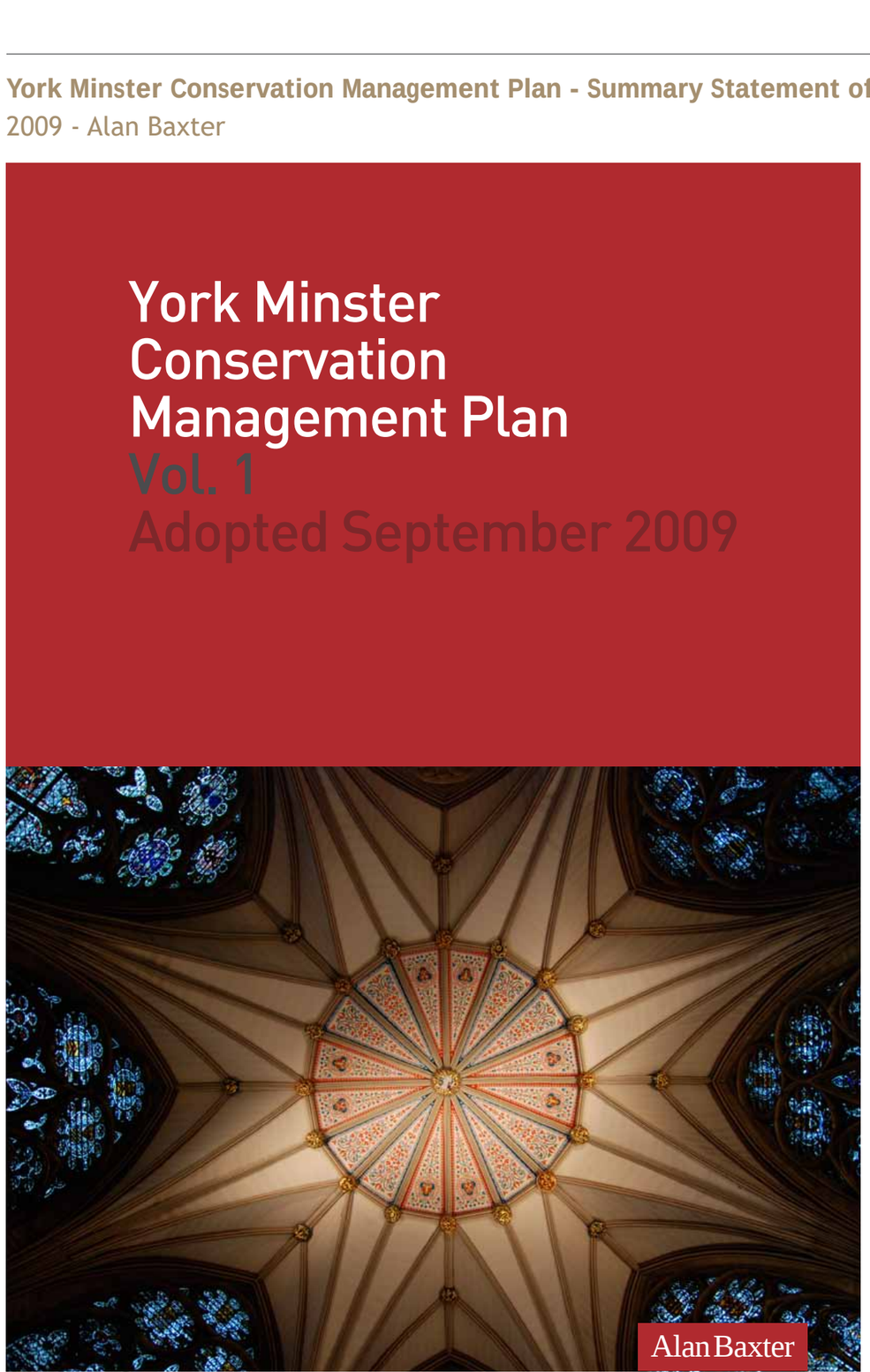


Fig. 32 Right: The Summary statement of significance for York Minster on the following page is drawn from the 2009 Alan Baxter CMP. This CMP is now in the process of being fully revised and re-edited. The Gazetteer from the draft 2021 CMP is appended which adds detail specifically on the heritage of the West Front.

York Minster Conservation Management Plan - Summary Statement of Significance

2009 - Alan Baxter

York Minster Conservation Management Plan Vol. 1 Adopted September 2009



Alan Baxter

CAROE ARCHITECTURE

3.2 Summary Statement of Significance

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.

York Central Historic Core Conservation Area and Associated Heritage Assets: Statement of Heritage Significance

The character and appearance of Character Area 9 stems from its architectural and historic special interest (an expression of aesthetic and historical values) as a distinctive Cathedral Precinct, inherently linked to the historic development of York Minster and the surrounding settlement. The *Conservation Area Appraisal* states that:

> *A Precinct is one of the defining features of the medieval English cathedral. It comprises an enclosure, filled by housing, communal facilities and administrative buildings. Originally subject to independent jurisdiction, they are often places of great charm and beauty. Some, notably Salisbury, are extensive and retain a strong sense of otherness behind their walls and gates. On the other hand York's Precinct has evolved into a less formal and less separate place, though one which nonetheless has a distinctive character of its own. It is also a place of contrast: whilst the north side retains much of its historic seclusion and is marked by green openness, to the south of the Minster the walls and gates have come down. Here the city comes right up against the Minster and the streets, cleared of traffic, throng in the summer with the millions who come to see one of the greatest buildings in Europe.*

The historical value (historic interest) of the character area is related to its time depth and unique history, communicated most prominently by the focal point of the Minster. The surrounding, attendant buildings within the character area also speak to this historical value, communicating historic strata of urban development dating back centuries.

The aesthetic value of the character area (and its architectural interest) is to a great part drawn from the variety of architectural expressions that can be experienced alongside one another, drawn form different eras. Again, the scale, mass, and architectural expression of the Minster acts as a focal point.

Of note to this assessment are the West Front of the Minster, and the surrounding urban area (Duncombe Place, High Petergate, and Precentor's Court). These also include the concentration of listed buildings identified earlier in this report.

Duncombe Place derives its present form from the Victorian era, with its creation opening up views of the west front and forming the end of an experiential sequence form the south. Its character is noted as part



Fig. 33 Opportunities and key views within the Precinct Character Area (source: York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal)

street, part public open space, though is negatively affected by traffic. Built form is mainly of larger blocks than elsewhere in the character area, expressed mainly through Gothic revival architecture.

High Petergate is more tightly enclosed, though also opens onto the open space outside the west front. The buildings on this corner were developed by the Minster. Parking negatively affects an appreciation of character.

Precentor's Court is more enclosed again, and of more domestic character, the route framed by seventeenth century brick houses and the stone garden wall.

The West Front of the Minster makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the character area, and thus its significance. It is a focal point in key views (including those along Duncombe Place, at the end of High Petergate, and along Precentor's Court). Within these, the Minster communicates aspects of the historic and cultural significance of the area through its scale, massing, and Gothic architectural detailing. These too contribute to the aesthetic value (architectural interest) of the conservation area, given their high quality and elaborate expression. In terms of urban form, the West Front is a focal point and regulating feature, the open space acting in contrast to the more densely grained historic streets further afield. This allows an understanding of the historical importance and evolution of the area.

In doing so, the West Front is also an important component of the setting of those listed buildings within the conservation area. It acts as a foil for their architecture in terms of scale and elaboration. It also acts in contrast to their urban form, allowing some indication of their historical value.

Context Photography: Experiencing the West Front and Surrounding Conservation Area



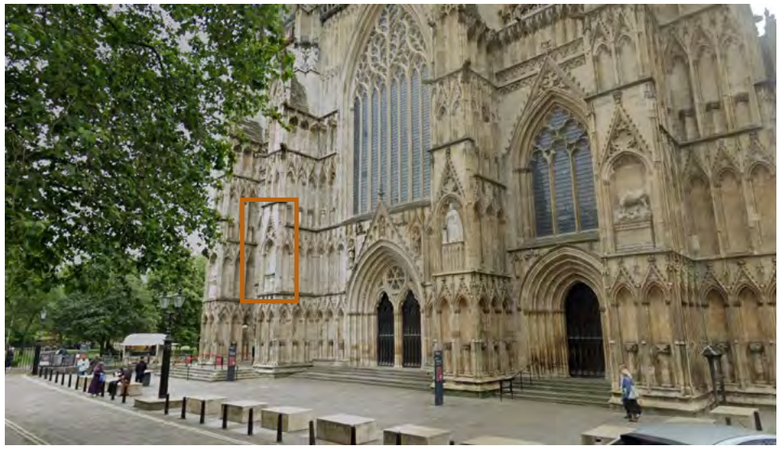
View 1 - View from Museum Street



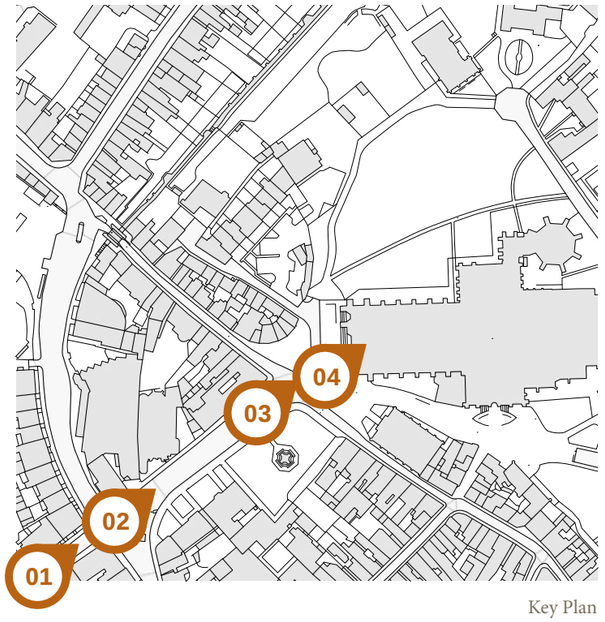
View 2 - View from junction of St Leonard's Place and Duncombe Place



View 3 - View from Duncombe Place



View 4 - Close view of the West Front



Key Plan

Fig. 34 Context Photography: Experiencing the Conservation Area (Images Sourced from Google Earth, Accessed: 23.10.26)

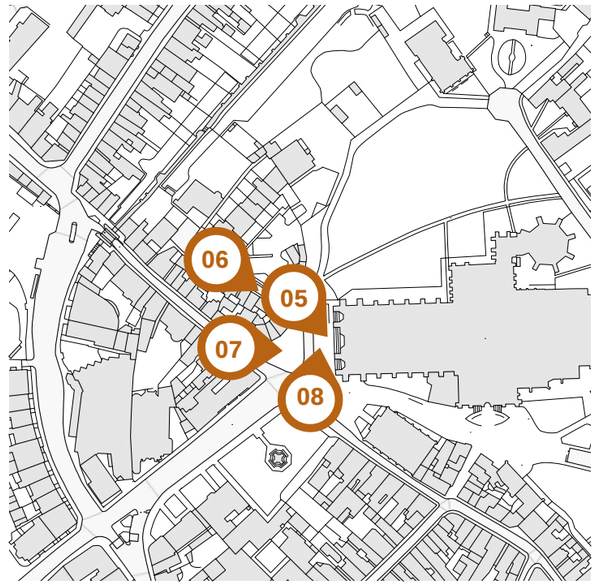
Context Photography: Experiencing the West Front and Surrounding Conservation Area



View 5 - View from east end of Precentor's Court (please note, this photograph was taken before the installation of the sculpture of the late Queen)



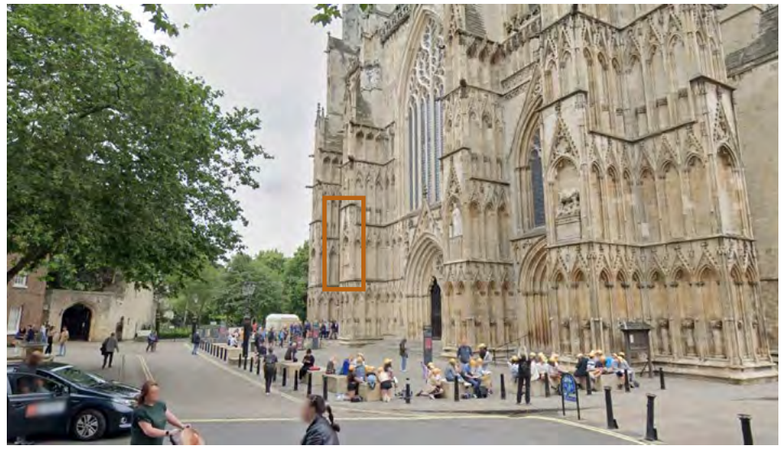
View 6 - View from Precentor's Court



Key Plan



View 7 - View from High Petergate



View 8 - View from High Petergate - Looking North

Fig. 35 Context Photography: Experiencing the Conservation Area (Images Sourced from Google Earth, Accessed: 23.10.26)

8.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

Methodology

The following section provides an assessment of the impact of the proposals on the significance of those heritage assets appraised in the prior section. In doing so, it satisfies CCM guidance and NPPF Policy HE5(2).

Impacts are discussed in relation to the heritage values of *Conservation Principles*, but clarification and summary is provided in line with the terminology of the NPPF. Further elaboration on heritage impacts in terms of the expectations of planning policy is provided in the planning appraisal later in this report.

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been informed by Historic England advice, principally *GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment*. Together with the baseline assessment of significance, and as part of the project development, it fulfils the steps laid out in GPA2:

Understand the significance of the affected assets:

This assessment of significance is laid out within the accompanying baseline.

Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance:

This is laid out in the HIA as per the categories in the table opposite.

Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF:

Mitigation has been considered over the process of design (within options appraisals) and is embedded within the proposals. This has involved a thorough optioneering process with ongoing dialogue with Historic England. This, along with any additional mitigation, is discussed below.

Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance:

This has been considered over the process of design (within options appraisals as noted in previous sections of this report) and is embedded within the proposals.

Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change:

Justification is provided within the Statement of Need, and the design appraisal within this report, and referenced within the overall planning appraisal. Justification in terms of adequately minimising input or seeking alternate ways of implementation has been developed through options appraisals.

Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected:

As elsewhere, this has been embedded in the design development of the scheme and will be furthered through the historic building recording where necessary.

As relevant, this assessment has also been informed by Historic England advice ***GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.***

High Positive	The proposed alterations or development would have a major positive impact to significance. The change would substantially better reveal and/or enhance several heritage values assigned to the heritage asset, or the contribution made by its setting to its significance.
Moderate Positive	The proposed alterations or development would have a considerable beneficial impact to heritage significance, the contribution of setting to significance, or the way in which significance can be appreciated.
Minor Positive	Minimal beneficial improvements to the significance of the heritage asset, or the contribution of setting to significance, would brought about by the proposals.
Neutral	The proposals would cause no impact to the significance of the heritage asset, or the way in which it can be appreciated. Significance would be preserved.
Minor Detrimental	A minimal negative impact would be brought about on the heritage value of the heritage asset. This is a low level of heritage harm.
Moderate Detrimental	The proposed alterations or development would have a negative impact, adversely affecting heritage significance and causing a moderate level of harm. This may be brought about to the heritage asset due to the cumulative minor detrimental impact on the heritage values.
High Detrimental	The proposed changes would have a serious negative impact on the significance of the heritage asset. This may include 'substantial harm' to a total loss of significance.

Fig. 36 Levels of Heritage Impact (source: CAL)

Heritage Impact Assessment

York Minster, Grade I listed building

The proposal will change the appearance and material of the West Front of the Minster, a Grade I listed building. The proposed sculpture therefore has the potential to affect heritage significances, as assessed earlier in this report.

Fabric Impacts Arising From Sculpture and Supporting Works

In terms of fabric, the impact of the proposals has been minimized and avoided as much as possible, whilst offering important heritage benefits in terms of conservation and repair work as proposed. This has been informed by an options appraisal undertaken over the process of design (see Section 4.0) in line with the justification required by planning policy and Historic England guidance.

The fixing to back of the niche has been located and designed to interface only with more recent stonework. In addition, options exploration has been undertaken to the plinth, to maximise the utility of the conservation works which need to be undertaken whilst there is physical access to the niche. Whilst there will be some renewal of stonework, the conservation works themselves will sustain the fabric and preserve features of aesthetic value that have been lost through weathering, **a heritage benefit.** This considered **an enhancement and would have a minor positive heritage impact.**

We also propose a programme of recording and monitoring as the works are undertaken to mitigate potential fabric impacts.

The proposed sculpture has been carefully designed to be entirely reversible, meaning that any residual impact can be readily ameliorated following removal. Additionally, design detailing includes measures to avoid the risk of staining arising from the sculpture. This will avoid impacts to the appearance and quality of built fabric in the long-term. The proposals have been carefully considered to avoid, minimise, and mitigate impacts to historic fabric and be entirely reversible with appropriate remediation works.

The fabric impacts required to install the sculpture are therefore considered of neutral heritage impact, however the associated conservation works will also give rise to **heritage benefit.**

Experiential Impacts Arising From Temporary Sculpture

The proposals will result in a temporary change to the appearance of the West Front, which has the potential to impact its aesthetic value (including architectural interest) and the way in which its historical value (historic interest) is communicated.

It is thought that the niche itself was never occupied by statuary. As such, the new sculpture will not be read as 'standing in' for any historic sculpture, thus avoiding negative connotations and possible impacts to communal value (an aspect of historic interest). Moreover, whilst this will temporarily introduce new sculpture to a historically empty niche, there is precedent for this change, as can be seen from the statue of the late Queen Elizabeth II. The principle of the location is therefore considered appropriate in terms of significance.

The proposed sculpture has been designed and located to avoid occluding or otherwise disrupting an appreciation of features of aesthetic value (architectural interest) found to the West Front.

In terms of the design of the sculpture itself, the proposal will act in contrast to the host building in terms of aesthetic expression, and indeed to the statue of the late Queen opposite. However, this is an intended part of the artistic intent, integral to the symbolic meaning and artistic purpose of the artwork itself, highlighting its wider interpretive value, and indeed the multifaceted values of its architectural setting. Contrast is also provided in terms of materiality, however the material proposed does respond to the hues of the magnesium limestone it is set within. The choice of material is also justified by the artistic intent (see Section 3.0).

Aspects of the symbolic meaning of the sculpture are discussed within the statement of need. The sculpture is intended to indicate a space for compassion, with responds to the core historical and communal values of the Minster (an aspect of its historic interest) as a place of spiritual understanding. Represented by two mutually supporting figures, the proposals also indicate togetherness, which also responds to the Minster's historical role, and its place in the collective memory and identity of those who value the building and the faith it historically symbolises. The sculptural intent in terms of peacefulness and societal reflection also engage with the significance of the Minster.

The temporary sculpture itself is therefore considered an appropriate response to the heritage value of the Minster. The sculpture will therefore have a **neutral impact** on the significance of the building, preserving its special architectural and historic interest. Considered a thoughtful and appropriate response to significance, the proposed sculpture also provides a **wide variety of public benefits** (see planning appraisal in Section 9.0).

Impact of Bird Netting

The proposed sculpture requires netting to avoid damage, disruption of the intent of the artwork or visual disfigurement by birds. This proposed netting may result in some n**egligible level of harm** of the lowest level to aesthetic value (architectural interest) due to visual change, minimised through the lightweight design of the netting, and the precedent by similar visually recessive netting found elsewhere to the West Front (i.e. the statue of the late Queen).

There will also be a **negligible, very low level of harm** due to physical interface with historic fabric, but again this is on the lowest end of the spectrum, and has been minimised as much as possible whilst still delivering the core purpose of the netting (see Section 4.0). This impact is considered clearly and convincingly justified, as outlined in section 4.0 and required by NPPF Policy HE4(2). As such, NPPF Policy HE6 4 is engaged, requiring this very low level of harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. This is undertaken in the planning and ecclesiastical appraisals that follow (Sections 9.0 and 10.0).

York Central Conservation Area & Associated Heritage Assets

The proposals result in a minor alteration to one part of the conservation area, appreciable from the area adjacent to the West Front of the Minster. Nonetheless, it is accepted that the proposals do alter a historic and architectural focal point of special interest within the conservation area. It has therefore been designed accordingly (see Section 4.0). Clearly a key intention of the sculpture is that it is visible and does engage the viewer.

For the reasons noted above with respect to the significance of the Minster itself, the proposal has been designed to respond to the contribution of the Minster to the heritage value of the conservation area. As such, it is considered the proposed sculpture represent a temporary, and appropriate, addition to the conservation area that would preserve its significance, character, and appearance.

The proposed bird netting may cause a minimal change when the conservation area is considered as a whole. Importantly, this change would not disrupt the ways in which the Minster contributes to the overall significance, character, and appearance of the conservation area (especially due to similar netting found elsewhere). As such, this is considered a **neutral impact** to the significance of the conservation area.

The proposal results in a minor alteration to the setting of those heritage assets, identified earlier in this report. Again, due to the reasons noted above, this would have no impact on the contribution of the Minster to the significance of these heritage assets, as part of its setting. The proposal does not cause harm to the significance of the surrounding relevant heritage assets, which we evaluate as a **neutral heritage impact**, preserving the special interest of those surrounding listed buildings.

Introduction

This section provides an appraisal of the proposals for temporary sculpture in the context of the planning legislation and policy identified in Section 5.0 of this report, and any other material considerations.

Principle of Public Art to the West Front of York Minster

High quality, thoughtful public art has a role to play in achieving sustainable development, delivering multifaceted public benefit, and meeting the ambitious standards of excellence described within neighbourhood, local, and national policy.

The public benefit that would be delivered by the proposals is outlined in detail within the 'Statement of Need and Public Benefit' in section 3.0 of this report. This meets the three objectives of sustainable development outlined at paragraph 17 of the NPPF. These are reflected in the objective of Chapter 4 of the NPPF, echoed within Neighbourhood Plan Policies A1 and A2, and expressed within Policy DP2 of the City of York Adopted Local Plan. In the context of the Minster, all seek to deliver a flourishing Precinct, delivering social, economic, and environmental benefit. The proposals will further these aims.

The potential for public art specifically to deliver multifaceted benefit is recognised through local planning policy, which supports the case for the proposals. Within the City of York adopted Local Plan, Policy D3: Cultural Provision notes that proposals will be supported where '*they are designed to sustain, enhance, and add value to the special qualities and significance of York's cultural character, assets, capacity, activities, and opportunities for access*.' The proposed sculpture meets all these criteria whilst delivering important public benefits.

Moreover, the proposals speak to the aspirations of the *York Cultural Strategy*, adopted in March 2026. At its core, this strategy seeks to ensure that culture is accessible to all, seeking a forward thinking, inclusive city. Combining the best of York's rich heritage, with thoughtful and meaningful artistic endeavour, the proposals speak to the strategic priorities of the Strategy and the aspirations of *York's Prospectus – Going for Good Growth with Innovation, Culture and Heritage at our heart*, adopted by the Council in 2025.

The location of the proposals is also appropriate in terms of neighbourhood and local spatial policy. Located to the West Front, the proposals lie within the West End Character Area as identified within the Neighbourhood Plan. In particular, the sculpture accords with the opportunity identified within the Neighbourhood Plan to enhance the quality of public space, whilst also complimenting the view towards the Minster's West End (3.3.2, p. 22). The proposal therefore responds to the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan in relation to creating a safe and welcoming Minster Precinct, with a public realm of exceptional design quality that reflects the special character of the Minster Precinct (see 5.2.1).

The proposed temporary sculpture responds to the spatial vision as outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan and enshrined in Policy A3. Located to the West Front, the proposed sculpture will contribute to the character of Duncombe Place, in line with the aspirations for this area as the future Queen Elizabeth Square. Here, public art such as that proposed can play an important role in laying the groundwork for the '*cohesive, civic square*' as outlined within the spatial vision (see 5.3.2). Whilst the proposals will have likely been removed by the time of the full maturation of Queen Elizabeth Square parameters and policy aims, they are indicative of the direction of travel and the positive vision for this space. The proposals therefore accord with the spirit of Policy PA2, West Front and Queen Elizabeth Square, and the aspiration of an improved and enhanced public realm at its heart.

Within the Local Plan, the Minster is considered of strategic importance, and a key consideration in delivering enhancement and growth (see paragraph 1.52). Moreover, the cultural well-being of the city, including its multi-functional public realm, is also included within this strategic list. This is reflected in Policy SS3: York City Centre. In compliance with this policy, it is considered that the proposals will *conserve and enhance the existing historic character of York City Centre whilst encouraging contemporary high quality developments that add to the sense of place and create a prestigious and desirable location for thriving businesses* and *enhance the quality of the city centre as a place and rediscover the outstanding heritage of the city with reanimated and revitalised streets, places and spaces and with improved settings to showcase important assets such as the Minster and Clifford's Tower*.

As such, it is considered the principle of public art within this location, carefully considered to respond to context, is established. Moreover, it would deliver a variety of public benefits.

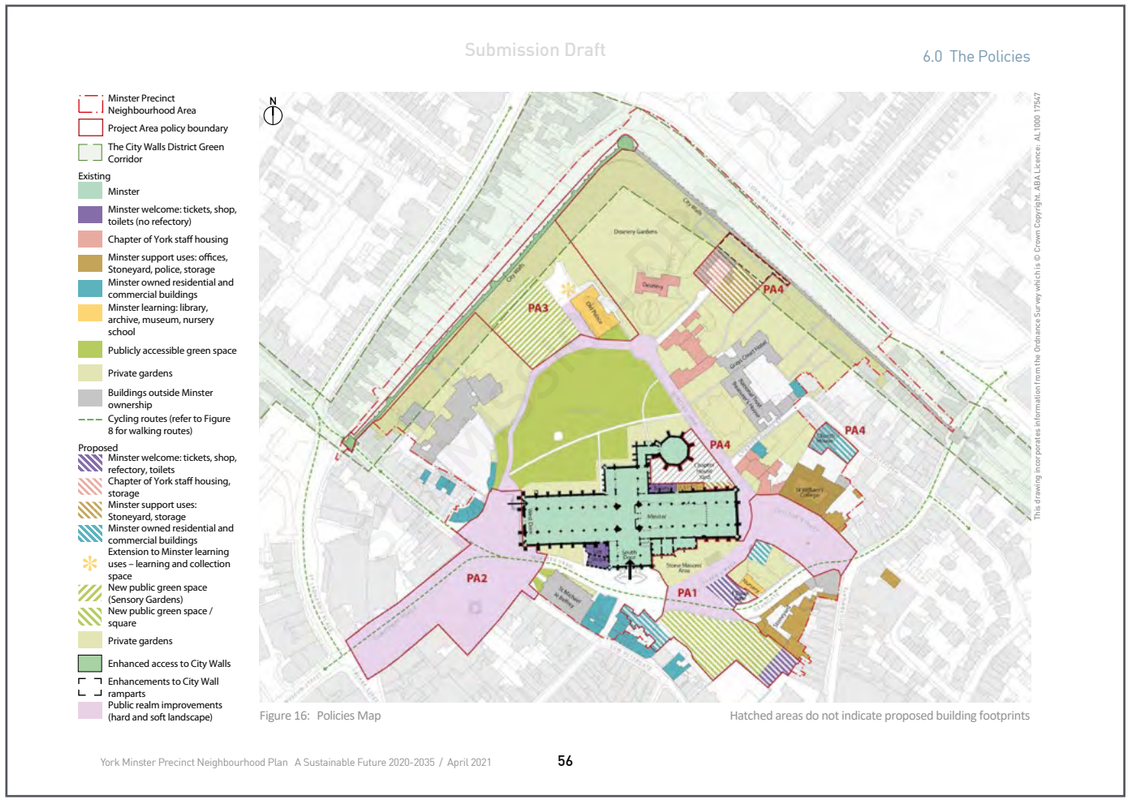


Fig. 37 The York Minster Neighbourhood plan policy areas. PA 2 is the proposed Queen Elizabeth Square (Source: YM Neighbourhood Plan)

Heritage

Heritage considerations have informed the concept, location and design development of proposals. The proposal seeks to preserve and respond to the unique and exceptional heritage significance of York's historic environment, realising the objective of national, local, and neighbourhood policy in positive role of heritage in delivering sustainable development.

An assessment of the significance of those heritage assets relevant to the proposals is provided earlier within this report, complying with NPPF Policy HE5 (1). The Heritage Impact Assessment undertaken as part of this application follows Historic England methodology (specifically *GPA2: managing significance in decision-taking in the Historic Environment*) and GPA3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets*), and comply with NPPF Policy HE5 (2).

Assessment has confirmed that the proposed sculpture itself will have a neutral impact on the significance of the Minster, whilst offering significant public benefits.

The proposals also offer important conservation works to the listed building, sustaining its significance and reducing future risks. These are therefore considered **heritage benefit**s, in line with in line with the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guidance (paragraph 020) prepared by HM Gov.

One aspect of the scheme, the proposed bird netting, may cause a very low level of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed building. This impact is considered clearly and convincingly justified, as outlined in Section 4.0 and required by NPPF Policy HE4(2). As such, NPPF Policy HE6 4 is engaged, requiring this very low level of harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme, which may include heritage benefits. This balancing exercise is undertaken below (see public benefit balance and conclusion).

In addition, the proposal has no impact on the overall significance of the York Central Conservation Are, preserving its character and appearance. The significance of the surrounding relevant heritage assets would also be unaffected.

Design and Amenity

As noted earlier within this report, the proposals have been crafted to the highest design standard. Both the sculpture itself, and the surrounding facilitating works, have been thoughtfully considered to be of the highest design quality whilst ensuring reversibility.

As noted above in terms of Duncombe Place, the proposals will enhance the amenity of the area through reintroduction of thoughtful public artwork by a world renowned sculptor.

The design quality of the proposals will therefore be in line with the aspirations for exceptional design, and the amenity of the public realm, as enshrined within neighbourhood, local, and national policy.

Balance of Public Benefits and Conclusion

NPPF Policy S4: Principle of Development within settlements states *Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework*.

NPPF Policy S3 also states that *in all locations, development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.*

Moreover, NPPF Policy HE6 (4) states *where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal*.

One aspect of the proposals, the proposed bird netting, will cause a very low level of harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Minster. However, the proposals will deliver a wide variety of public benefits, delivering on the social, environmental, and economic objectives of the NPPF and other tiers of policy. These include heritage benefits to the Grade I listed Minster itself. The public benefits of the scheme are laid out in section 3.0 of this report.

As such, it is considered that the public benefits that will arise due to proposed development are more than sufficient to outweigh the very low level of harm that would be cause by one element of the scheme. It is considered that the benefits of approving the proposals far outweigh the very limited adverse effects, and therefore the proposals are in accordance with neighbourhood, local, and national policy. We therefore consider that, in our opinion, planning permission should be granted.

We suggest that a condition with an approval for the proposed temporary artwork should be in position up to February 2031 (a period of three years from March 2028).

10.0 Ecclesiastical Appraisal

Introduction

The proposals require consent under the Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011. The following considerations are relevant to ecclesiastical decision-makers and consultees.

Duty to Have Regard to Cathedral's Purpose:

The proposals speak to important aspects of the purpose of the Cathedral, delivering real benefits in terms of worship and mission, and sustaining the building in this use.

As noted within the Statement of Need (see Section 3.0), the sculpture is intended to invite space for compassion. This is central to the Christian faith, and is recognized through the third Anglican Mark of Mission, to *respond to human need by loving service*. Depicting two figures coming together in mutual support, the sculpture also reflects the purpose of the Minster as a place of congregation and togetherness, and as outlined in the Statement of Need, is intended as '*an antidote to the divisiveness of our present time*'. This also reflects the fourth mark of mission, to '*transform unjust structures of society, challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation*'. Moreover, the sculpture is also intended to '*make us mindful of our dependency on all life forms*' inviting comparison in line with the fifth mark of mission, to care for creation.

Moreover, the wider public benefits of the proposals (see planning statement) will also assist in elevating the public realm to the West Front and increasing the attractiveness of the Minster to visitors. In doing so, and in contributing more broadly to economic uplift and the place of the Minster in the cultural fabric of the city, the proposal will help sustain the core purpose of the building in terms of worship and mission.

Duty to Have Regard to the Desirability of Preserving:

The fabric of the cathedral church and any features of architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic interest which it possesses;

As per standard practice, 'architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic interest' is here interpreted as heritage significance and is expressed earlier in this report using Conservation Principles' heritage values.

The heritage impact assessment earlier in this report (see Section 8.0) identifies that the temporary sculpture itself is considered an appropriate response to the heritage value of the Minster and therefore has a neutral impact on the significance of the building, preserving its special architectural and historic interest.

Whilst there would be a low level of harm arising from one aspect of the scheme (the bird netting), this is considered justified and has been minimised as much as possible.

Considered a thoughtful evocative artistic statement, the proposed sculpture also provides a wide variety of public benefits (see Section 3.0).

In addition, the associated works involved with the project offer heritage benefits in terms of conservation works.

The immediate setting of the cathedral church;

The proposals will not affect the setting of the Minster, though the sculpture will be appreciable from its setting. As noted above, and as described in greater detail within the heritage impact assessment, the proposed temporary sculpture preserves the heritage significance of the building as appreciated from its setting.

Moreover, the proposal will enhance the amenity of the public space to the West Front, offering a number of public benefits.

Any building within the precinct of the cathedral church of architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic interest;

As noted within the accompanying heritage impact assessment, the proposed temporary sculpture will cause a change to the setting of some of the buildings of heritage interest within the Minster Precinct. However, due to the nature of the proposal, this ill not cause harm to their significance, or the way in which their significance can be appreciated. As such, the special interest of these buildings will be preserved.

Any archaeological or human remains in or under the cathedral church or within its precinct; and

The proposals will not affect any below ground archaeology or human remains.

Impacts to built fabric have been managed and mitigated through the design (as discussed within the heritage impact assessment). In terms of buildings archaeology, potential impacts to fabric could be managed through archaeological recording and monitoring as the works take place.

Any objects referred to in section 2(1)(b).

The proposals will not impact any objects referred to in section 2(1)(b) of the Measure.

Conclusion

The proposal speak to the core purpose of the Minster as a focal point of worship and mission, whilst providing wider public benefits to sustain this purpose into the future. In terms of heritage, the proposal has been carefully considered to preserve the significance of the Minster, and the heritage value of the surrounding Precinct. Whilst there is a very low level of potential harm which may arise with the bird protection measures, this is considered justified and very minimal. It is also considered that such impact is clearly outweighed by the benefits the scheme would bring for the Minster.

As noted, there is also precedent for this work. A number of Cathedrals display contemporary art both within and outside of the building. Specific comparison can be drawn to the work of Sir Antony Gormley at Wells Cathedral, with his work *Doubt*.

As such, we suggest that CCM Consent for the temporary sculpture should be granted, with the sculpture remaining in place up to February 2031.

11.0 Conclusions

The proposed sculpture, entitled *Meet*, has been designed by Sir Antony Gormley and is proposed to be in place for a period of three years from 2028 to 2031. As a direct change to the fabric of the Minster, and one that materially affects its external appearance, the temporary sculpture requires both planning permission and an application for CCM consent made to the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England.

Outside of the locus of these applications, but nonetheless important to context for decision-makers, *Meet* is one of two sculptures being proposed at the Minster by Sir Antony. The second, *Close*, will be located within the Minster itself. Due to its nature and location, this second sculpture requires a CCM application to the Fabric Advisory Committee only, which will follow in due course.

Meet offers a significant opportunity to present new work by an internationally renowned British contemporary artist at York Minster. It is expected to attract public and media attention, bring new and returning visitors to the Minster, and encourage wider engagement with worship, prayer, events, heritage and visitor activity. It will deliver multifaceted public benefits.

Positioning one sculpture outside the Minster (*Meet*) and one inside (*Close*) for worshippers, pilgrims and sightseers, presents an engaging public offer with the potential to draw visitors to the City and Precinct and increase numbers entering the building, with the potential to increase both ticket sales, income streams and familiarity and engagement with York Minster's multifarious offerings. Visitors drawn by the sculptures may return for Evensong, worship and prayer; engage in events and activities; discover the cathedral's history and heritage; or simply feel welcome and inspired within this special place.

More broadly the proposal will raise the profile of York further, elevating its role in celebrating contemporary artistic endeavour amidst its rich history.

In terms of ecclesiastical decision-making, the proposal speaks to the core purpose of the Minster as a focal point of worship and mission, whilst providing wider public benefits to sustain this purpose into the future. In terms of heritage, the proposal has been carefully considered to respond to the significance of the Minster, minimising impact, whilst also offering benefits to historic fabric to sustain the building. It is considered that CCM consent should be granted.

Regarding secular planning permission, whilst temporary, the proposal has been carefully considered to minimise adverse effects and maximise benefits. Whilst there is a very low level of harm arising from one aspect of the scheme (the netting) this is considered justified and is clearly outweighed by the multiple public benefits that would arise from the proposals, in line with the objectives of neighbourhood, local, and national planning policy. It is considered that planning permission should be granted.

Appendix A:
The Morton Partnership Structural Evaluation

The Morton Partnership
Structural Engineers

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WEST FRONT NICHE - GORMLEY STATUE, YORK MINSTER

Site Investigation Report – 10.09.2026

Attendees:

Robert Ratcliffe (RGR) - TMP

General

- Site investigation took place Thursday 10 September 2026 to review the condition of the niche and plinth to the West front of the Minster in relation to its suitability to site the proposed Antony Gormley Statue.
- It is understood that the area was underpinned in the 1960's and as a result there are a number of replacement stones within the niche that were replaced to facilitate the needling support process. It is considered that these stones are to a depth of roughly 4".
- At higher level to the niche it is understood that this area features 1880 stone replacements, however the stone depth is unknown. It is also unknown whether the niche has ever housed a statue.
- From review of the current statue proposals, it is understood that this is to be of circa. 1700kg and made in cast hollow cast metal. The benefit of the metal construction being that it will be able to better spread its weight over its two feet positions, its structural stability is also greater than that of stone construction, however a greater weight applied onto the existing structure.
- It is considered that a fixing is required from the heads into the backing stone of the niche to provide it with lateral stability mainly against wind load, although the dead weight of the statue will of course help this.

Investigations

- As part of the visit, the York Minster team facilitated high level access with a cherry picker in order to provide up close investigation of the plinth and niche.

Observations & Considerations

- Plinth Top Surface:

Observations	Considerations
- The surface is not level and clearly slopes to the North	- It is understood that a new plinth stone capping to sit over the existing with a profiled bottom face to suit will be formed. This will also sit back from the front face of the plinth so that it is not visible from ground level.
- 2No. Cramps are present which has been covered over with molten lead. These have been installed to tie in the plinth to the niche	- As discussed with AMcA a new plinth capping stone would have 2No. pockets formed to its

behind (10” long). The embedment into the niche is not clear due to the lead, however it looks quite minimal.	underside to house and accommodate for the existing cramps.
- To both cramps, in particular the Southern, rust jacking has taken place that has lifted the lead away from the plinth top. This corrosion will be an ongoing process and therefore present a risk for interacting material. It can be noted that the mortar infill that the cramp looks to embed itself in to the rear of the plinth has no sign of defect.	- Options: - Form pocket detail to underside of plinth with a tolerance for potential future expansion of the cramp. Consideration for risk required if statue to remain in perpetuity. - Remove the lead then clean and treat the cramp and then re-lead. This deals with the section most vulnerable to future corrosion, although doesn't get rid of the risk completely. - Removal - A trial removal of the southern cramp could take place. This would enable us to understand embedment depth and how difficult an operation removal may be of both cramps as part of a scheme. There is obvious risk in damaging the plinth stone, as well as the niche. A replacement restraint measure would be needed between the plinth and the niche i.e. stainless-steel pinning or similar. This would definitely present the most intrusive option.
- To the leading edge, there is a small drip detail with an approximate 2” overhang as part of the detailed band. This presents a weathered condition with some fracturing noted to stonework, which will required repair.	- Care will be required to not place point loads too close to the edges of the plinth, as this is clearly vulnerable to shear failure. The recessed position of the capping stone mitigates this risk. - A new plinth stone capping to sit over the existing will be of benefit to further spread the weight of the statue. - Any repairs will have to be carried out prior to the formation of the plinth stone capping as advised by Minster mason/conservators.
- To the back face of the plinth adjacent to the niche an approximate 2 – 3 ½” depth of mortar infill is present. So, the plinth stones are unlikely to bond back into the niche other than through the cramp detail. There is no sign of movement to this mortar.	- The statues cast metal construction, as well as a new plinth stone capping to sit over the existing will be of benefit to further spread the weight of the statue. Overall, we are not overly concerned with the 16.7kN load, which would be spread

- There is a limited amount of stone to bear the statue upon, centrally 7" and to each side thickening 9 ½ – 10".	with capping stone to around 3.4kN/m.

- Plinth:

Observations	**Considerations**
- The plinth has straight joints to it top face, as well as both south and north sides as it meets the niche. It is therefore unlikely tied or bonded into the niche other than through the 2No. cramps at its top face, as well as the mortar bonding.	- As part of the scheme, it presents an opportunity to improve the bonding between plinth and niche through use of stainless-steel helical ties or similar. This would not be considered a critical structural measure however.
- To the south and north construction joints, these were in good condition, with the southern opening up slightly against the niche to approximately 1mm.	- The southern joint could be repointed in coordination with the works, with any movement noted acting as a tell-tale.

- Niche:

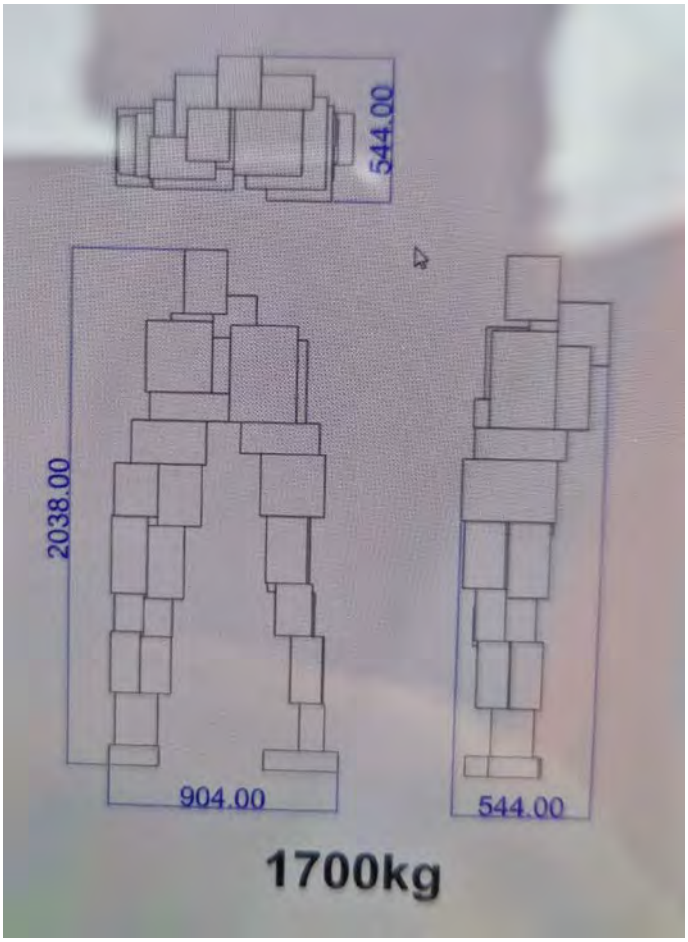
Observations	**Considerations**
- The niche ashlar is to an unknown depth with rubble mortar infill in behind through the buttress. We would make the assumption that this is around a 4" depth as a conservative judgement.	- Trial investigation through removal of a small stone section at higher level to the niche would provide further insight. - The ashlar stone profile looks to be sound and in generally good condition to enable restraint fixings from the statue back into the fabric to manage wind loading. - Bimetallic corrosion will have to be considered between the statues cast iron metal and any metal ties/restraints formed from the statue into the niche (Assume will be a threaded rod tapped into the cast iron). Care in the design process will be needed to ensure no adverse effects to the fabric of the minster and/or statue. AG studio to advise on what they may prefer to avoid this.
- The stone structure generally bonds itself well around the corners of the buttress, so the niche ashlar can be considered well restrained.	

- The ashlar mortar joints are fine and within the region of 6-8mm.	- Utilisation of the joints between the ashlar is more limited for creation of ties, which would potentially mean more are required to restrain the statue.

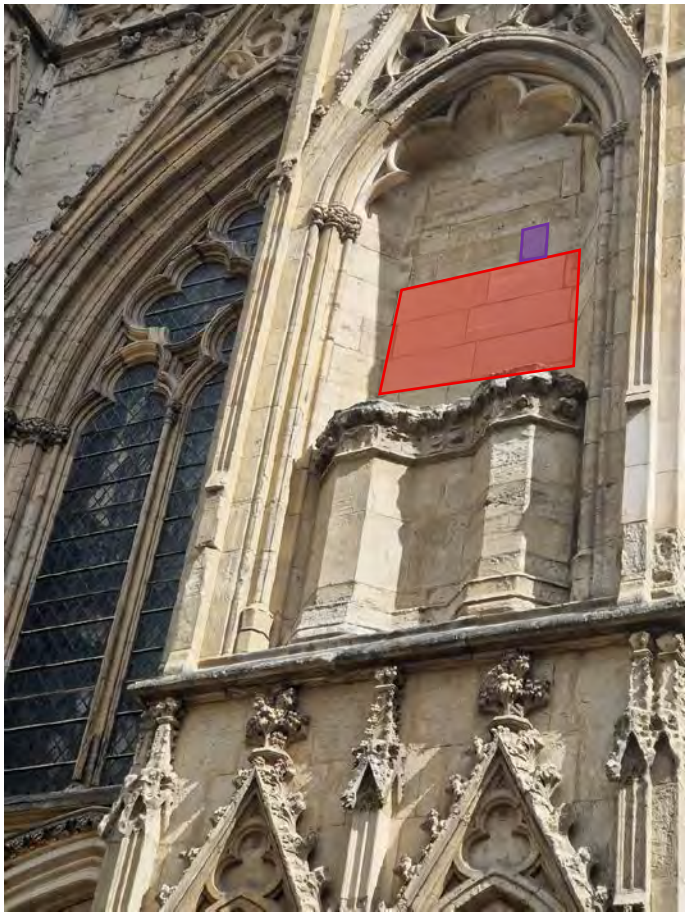
- Internal Sculpture:

Observations	**Considerations**
- The load from the lying sculpture is spread over a reasonable area of paving, which from review is equivalent to less than normal crowd loading at 1.5-1.6 kN/m²	- Level nature of the proposed siting ground surface to be considered to avoid any localised pinch points of stress from the applied weight of the sculpture. Assume that a flat and level ground profile will be present.
- No barriers are currently proposed around the sculpture, but it is understood that there are concerns that people may interact i.e. sit on or try to move sculpture.	- Some limited pinning may be necessary between the sculpture and the substrate below. This would be quite simple; with lateral design loads justified through shear testing if necessary.

Photographs



Photograph 01 – Outline detail of Niche statue proposals.



Photograph 02 – Plinth and Niche, with 1960's replacement stone highlighted in red, with stone section that could be removed through investigation in purple.



Photograph 03 - Looking at top face of plinth, Green Arrow – Rust Jacking at cramp position, Blue Arrow – Fractured section of stone, Purple Arrow – Mortar infill at rear of plinth



Photograph 04 – Rust jacking to lead covered cramp at South side of plinth.



Photograph 05 – Further fractured stone section to south side of the plinth top. Sensible to pin – Masons to advise.



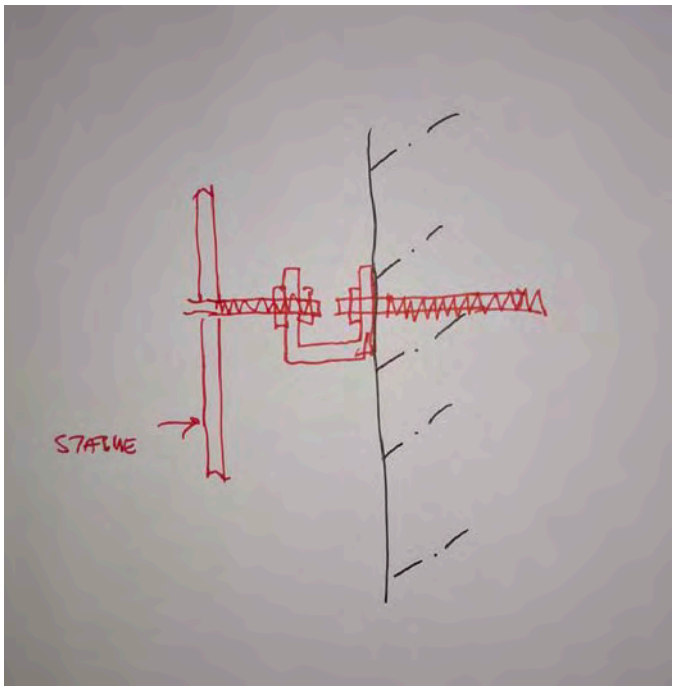
Photograph 06 – Construction joint to the south side of plinth against the niche. Noting a small amount of opening up to the mortar joint.



Photograph 07 – Weathered front edge of the plinth apparent. Also noting the unlevel nature of the plinth top with a northward fall (see red shading). Rust Jacking movement also apparent to both cramp details, southern more pronounced.



Photograph 08 - Construction joint to the south side of plinth against the niche. Retains good condition.



Photograph 09 – Outline restraint fixing detail from statue into niche:

1) Drill hole in backing stone and clean out.
2) Set SS threaded rod into resin and allow to cure.
3) Load test fixing to design load
4) Fit SS U-bracket (possible upside down to that shown to avoid water catching in this)
5) Offer statue back into niche with tapped threaded rod into statue locked in place with nuts both sides.

Note the rod from the statue and the nuts to be in a metal agreed with AG Studio with neoprene isolation. A check would be needed with Luke Snell RE how much space behind head of the statue etc.

Appendix B:
AG Studios Report on *Materiality*

Materiality: York Minster proposal

Materiality

The proposal is to install a cast iron sculpture in the niche on the West Front of York Minster Cathedral.

Cast iron is proposed as the material for the artwork. Cast iron is an earth material, and one that consorts well with the limestone of the West Front. The iron will derive a natural patina over time; the material will engage with the climate, evolving and developing a rusty, earthy patina which mitigates its industrial production. It is a contemporary material that distinguishes itself from the traditional materials of statutory marble and bronze - and, indeed, from the limestone of the Cathedral fabric among which the sculpture will stand.

The Blockwork language

The *Cast Blockworks* arose from an attempt to consolidate the relationship between mass and space.

These works replace anatomy with architectonic volumes using stacking, cantilever and balance to achieve a stable structure that is still dynamic. Increasingly, the blocks have become more robust, often extending beyond the skin in an attempt to evoke particular feelings and tensions. The challenge is to find a way to employ this architectonic language to provoke empathetic feeling.

All of these pieces attempt to treat the body as a condition: *being*, not *doing*.

Notes on material mitigations:

Protective coating of the artwork: We have used Waxoyl in the past to provide a protective layer over the rusted patina. When applied correctly this can inhibit the rusting process significantly and with a periodic reapplication, as agreed with our partners, can continue to be effective over many years.



Preventative and remedial treatments for potential rust run off: For previous installations of cast iron sculptures in the public realm, we have used various products to remove run off and maintain manageable levels of discolouration. In some installations we have chosen to seal substrates, so they are not so absorbent of iron oxide dissolved in rainwater. Products used for these processes have included:

VINEGAR

FILA MP90 SURFACE PROTECTION SEALANT

PARALOID B-72

LANTANIA GELRUST

ITALEINA 10s

Reference images

A DOOR FOR THE STUART GATES, 2021

Cast iron, A collaboration between Antony Gormley and Simon Armitage

Installation view, Trinity College, University of Oxford, England, 2025

Photography by Theo Christelis, Courtesy of Trinity College, University of Oxford





GROUND, 2025

A collaboration between Antony Gormley and Tadao Ando

Installation view, Museum SAN, Wonju, South Korea, 2025

Photograph by Jaewon Choi, Courtesy of Museum SAN, Wonju





WITNESS VII and WITNESS VIII, 2022

Installation view, Witness VII and Witness VIII, Ecole du Louvre, France

Photograph by Phil Hill, Courtesy of Majid Boustany and Ecole du Louvre





DOUBT, 2021

Installation view, Doubt, Wells Cathedral, England, 2021

Photography by Tom Hull, Courtesy of Wells Cathedral





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