

A. Ashcroft, Esq.  
C/o. Mrs Alison Cooke  
Head of Strategic Planning Policy  
City of York Council, Forward Planning  
West Offices  
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26<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Mr Ashcroft

**Submission Draft York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan**

Thank you for your clarifications note which Alison Cooke has forwarded onto me. On behalf of York Minster Neighbourhood Form, our response is set out below:

Following 4 years of work and over 32 weeks of consultation, the Forum is very grateful for your initial comments and observations.

**Policy A1**

This policy was drafted in response to earlier public comments received through the first pre-submission draft consultation in 2020. We felt it important to offer an overarching policy which set out the purpose of the Plan and how development would be supported. If you feel this would be better split between policies A1 and A2, the Forum have no objection to this.

**Policy A4**

Thank you for your comment on this policy.

Yes, the first two matters in the list of criteria should have bullets to reflect the approach taken to the other criteria of the policy. This is a drafting error.

**Policy C1**

Because of the importance of environmental sustainability to the Forum we felt these paragraphs sit better in the policy itself, not least because of our ambition to address the climate emergency through appropriate adaptation. In the (current) absence on any local or national planning policy/guidance relating to the adaptation of heritage assets, and the balance of harm, we felt these points would hold more weight embedded within the policy, rather than explanatory text.

**Policy C2**

We are happy with your suggestion to move the third paragraph into the supporting text.



## Policy C3

We would be happy if the final two paragraphs moved to supporting text.

## Project Areas

The different approach was intentional and responds to the advice received from both City of York Council and Historic England. Queen Elizabeth Square (Policy PA2) and the redevelopment of the Old Palace (Policy PA3) are strategic projects requiring significant fundraising (circa £20M in total). The Neighbourhood Plan sets the principle of development but the detail must be brought forward in stages. The first, a development brief which will be fully consulted with the local community and statutory bodies. The approved development brief will allow us to start the necessary fundraising with the benefit of a RIBA 2 stage brief giving the Minster the ability to move to RIBA 3 when funding allows.

In terms of the other policy areas we are in a position to move to the planning application stage immediately. These applications are relatively straight forward as they deal with the conversion of existing buildings and in normal circumstances would be dealt with through change of use applications and Listed Building Consents.

## Representations to the Plan

We welcome the revised comments submitted by City of York Council on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October but need further time to review. We would be grateful for an extension to Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November to get these comments to you.

With regard to your specific questions regarding trees; we have always been very clear with the public that the Minster takes the management of its estate very seriously. We regularly have applications for tree works including crown lifting and thinning. Where a tree has come to the end of its life, we replace the tree. We are committed to a net increase of trees within the Precinct but need to balance access and public realm with good tree management. Indeed we have a programme of planting to make sure these new trees become established long before the original needs to be felled.

The London Plane tree at the West Front of York Minster is contentious. Through the extensive consultation, it is clear that half of the city want it to go and half want it to stay. This issue will be debated during the consultations on both the development brief and planning application for Queen Elizabeth Square.

Our overarching arboricultural assessment is the Barnes Associates 2016 report.



We hope these replies are helpful and that our request for a small extension of time is acceptable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. McCallion'.

A McCallion  
Director of Works & Precinct

cc (email only)

Mark Calvert, Chair – York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Forum