

St Michael le Belfrey

Statement of Heritage Significance

October 2022



LDN Architects

Project Directory

Client:

St Michael Le Belfrey
The Parish Centre
11/12 Minster Yard
York
Y01 7HH

Architect & Principal Designer:

LDN Architects
57-59 Bread Street
Edinburgh
EH3 9AH

0131 222 2900

Services Engineer:

Irons Foulner
48 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7HF

0131 220 0144

Quantity Surveyor:

Morham & Brotchie
26 Calton Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8JQ

0131 556 2556

Structural Engineer:

Elliott & Co
9 Forrest Road
Edinburgh
EH1 2QH

0131 220 2486

Revision		
Rev -	18.10.2019	Draft Issue
Rev A	18.10.2019	Final issue
Rev B	03.04.2020	Format change from A3 to A4
Rev C	28.07.2020	Updated following survey work and design changes
Rev D	24.02.2021	Updated following concept design changes
Rev E	01.09.2022	Updated for the submission of the Faculty application
Rev F	11.10.2022	Updated for the submission of the Faculty application

Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Proposals
3.0	The Context of St Michael le Belfrey
4.0	The Significance of the Heritage Assets Affected by the Proposals
5.0	Assessment of the Effects of the Proposals
6.0	Heritage Impact Assessment Table
7.0	Sources

Appendices

Appendix A	Re-ordering Proposals
Appendix B	Staircases Condition & Significance Report by Charles Taylor Woodwork
Appendix C	Report on the Significance of the Stained Glass by Barley Studio
Appendix D	Wall Memorials and Floor Ledgers Condition Survey by Graciela Ainsworth
Appendix E	Email advice on significance of gallery and twin stairs from Hugh Harrison
Appendix F	Report on the Significance of the Stained Glass by Professor Lisa Reilly
Appendix G	Geophysical Survey Report by Magnitude Surveys Ltd
Appendix H	On-Site Archaeology Reports Report 01: Desk Based Assessment, January 2022 Report 02: Report on an Archaeological Investigation During Geotechnical Works, May 2022

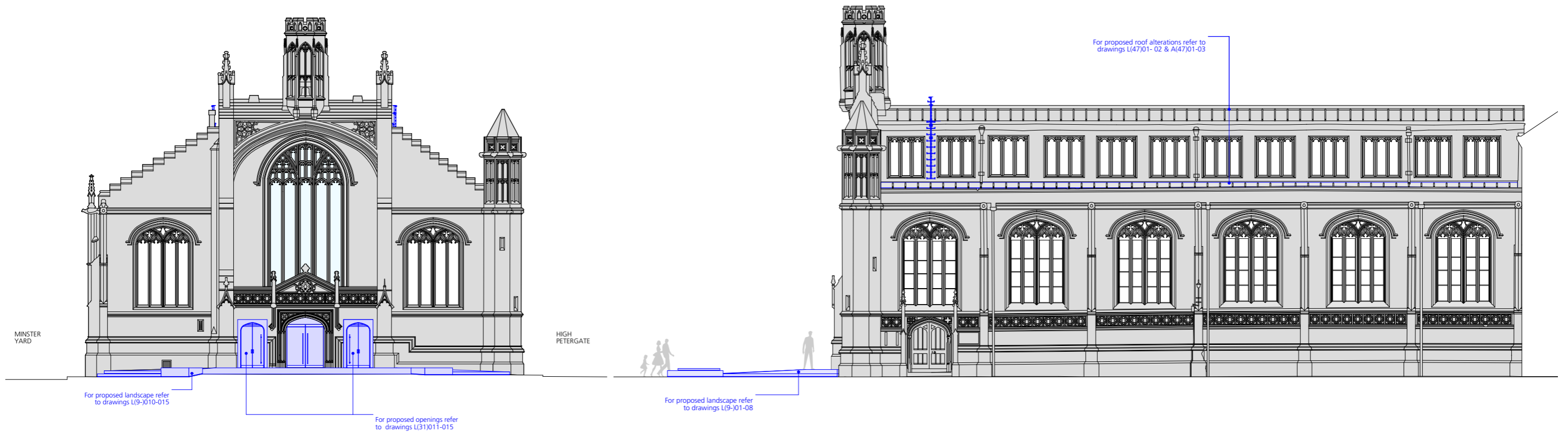


Proposed New Welcome Area/ Narthex

1.0 Introduction

This Statement of Heritage Significance has been prepared by LDN Architects on behalf of St Michael le Belfrey to accompany the Faculty application for the internal elements of the proposed re-ordering of St Michael le Belfrey, a Grade I Listed Church positioned beside York Minster in the city of York. This Statement also accompanies the Statement of Needs, which sets out the justification for the re-ordering of the church.

The Statement of Heritage Significance was first compiled during October 2019, with reference made to the Conservation Management Plan, produced by Purcell Miller Tritton and dated April 2011. It was later revised during July 2020, following further specialist survey work and changes to the re-ordering proposals made as a result of feedback from consultations with various bodies. The document was again updated in February 2021 following a change in approach to the Concept Design, as a result of further feedback from consultations with various Public and Heritage bodies. The final update was made in September 2022 for the submission of the Faculty application.



Proposed West and South elevations

2.0 Proposals

The proposals involve: a) a series of sensitive repair works to the external masonry, the medieval stained-glass windows and the existing roof of the church; b) the addition of new entrances, external lighting, a refuse store and bicycle racks, and a landscaping scheme; and c) a contemporary internal re-ordering of the church.

These aim to improve and upgrade the appearance, use and function of the Grade I Listed Building. They will provide a building fit for today's worship and mission, improve accessibility and functionality of the space and create more flexible spaces, while achieving a seating capacity of approximately 550+. Supporting accommodation is provided within both the existing St Michael le Belfrey church and adjacent No.12 Minster Yard.

A full set of proposed drawings are included under **Appendix A**.

The proposals can be summarised as:

West landscaping and elevation

A new hard landscaped shallow sloping surface approach to the entrance will provide level access to the church.

Two new structural openings with glazed doors will be formed either side of the main existing entrance opening. The existing entrance doors will be retained and held open when the church is in use.

External lighting that concentrates on the main architectural features of the West elevation.

Ground floor

A new larger and more welcoming entrance lobby will be created along with essential supporting accommodation including accessible toilets, storage and a servery. The entrance lobby will be acoustically separated from the nave by fixed and moveable glazed screens. These will provide the ability to enclose part of the entrance lobby and create a flexible meeting space when required.

Within the nave, all of the pews will be removed to allow for flexible seating and worship. A full immersion baptism pool is proposed and demountable flexible staging to be provided.

Gallery

The new gallery will be accessed by two new compliant staircases and a lift. In addition to providing new raked seating, the seating bank will be retractable creating a further flexible space, albeit not acoustically separated from the nave.

No. 11 and No.12 Minster Yard

A new opening will be formed between the church and No.11 with a reconfigured north east entrance to improve accessibility and circulation.

A new vestry and suite of meeting rooms will be formed within the adjacent No. 12 Minster Yard building along with additional supporting accommodation of toilets and storage.

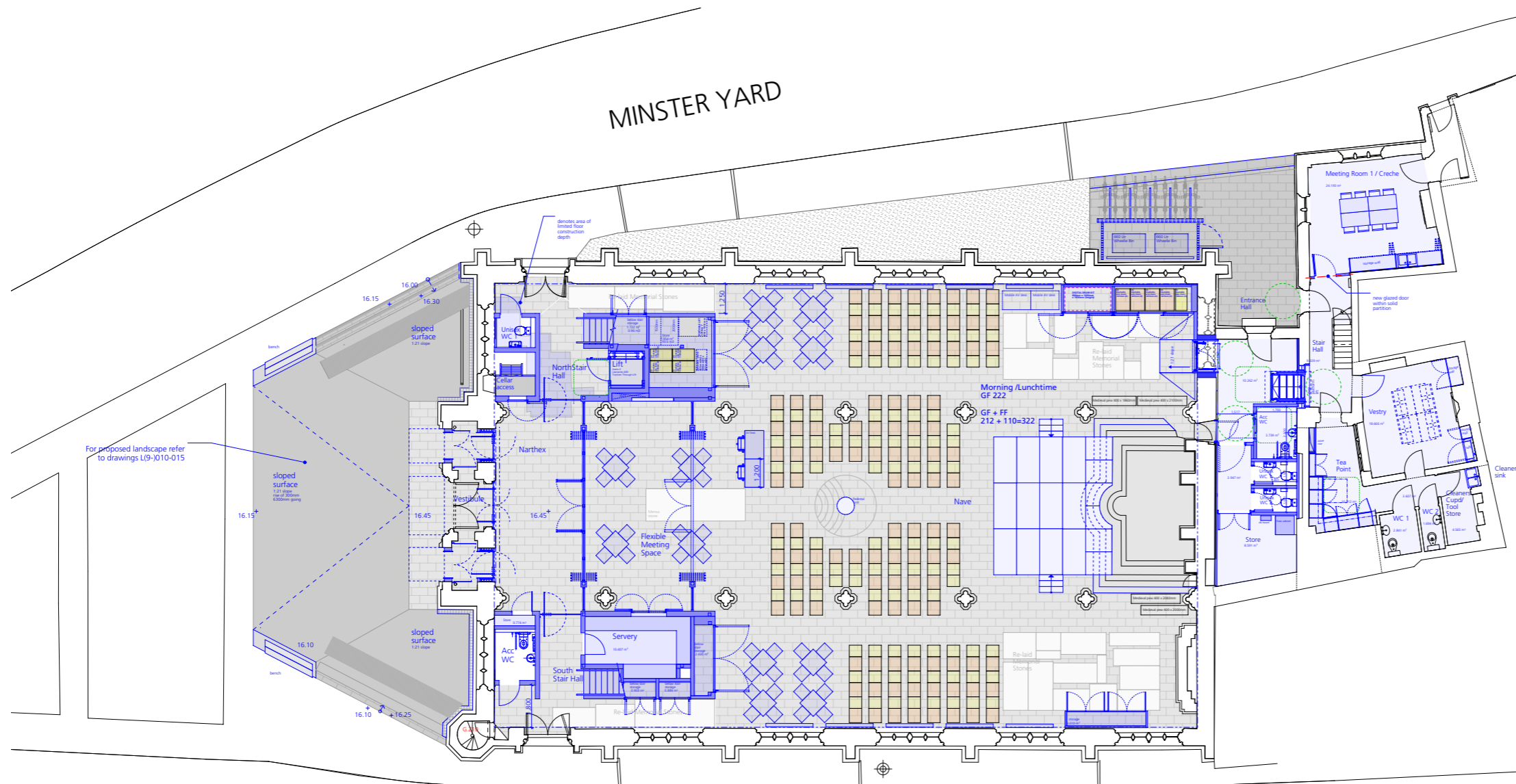
As part of these works a new air source heat pump, serving the church underfloor heating system, will be installed within a metal clad enclosure to the south east corner of No.12 Minster Yard such that it is largely hidden from Minster Yard views. The enclosure will be acoustically insulated and attenuated to achieve required noise reductions set by City of York Council.

North landscaping

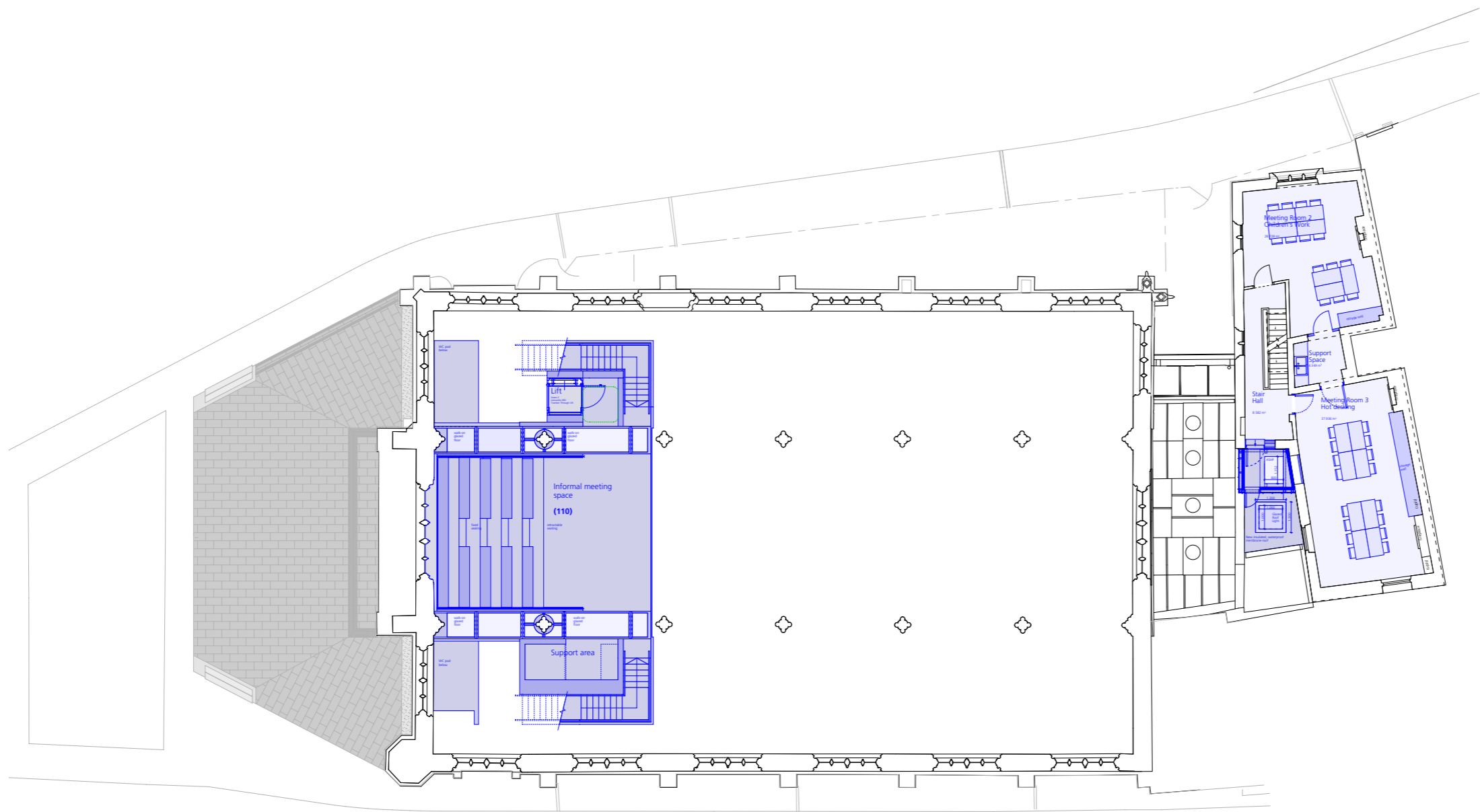
The approach to No.12 is being improved through the creation of a dedicated bins store enclosure and bicycle racks area set on land to the north of the church.

The existing limestone flagged approach to the No.12 entrance will be increased to below these new facilities.

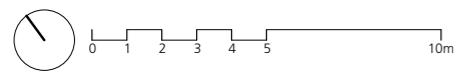
As No. 11 and No.12 Minster Yard are out with the curtilage of the church and do not fall within the jurisdiction of the faculty process, they are referred to only within this document to give the proposals context.



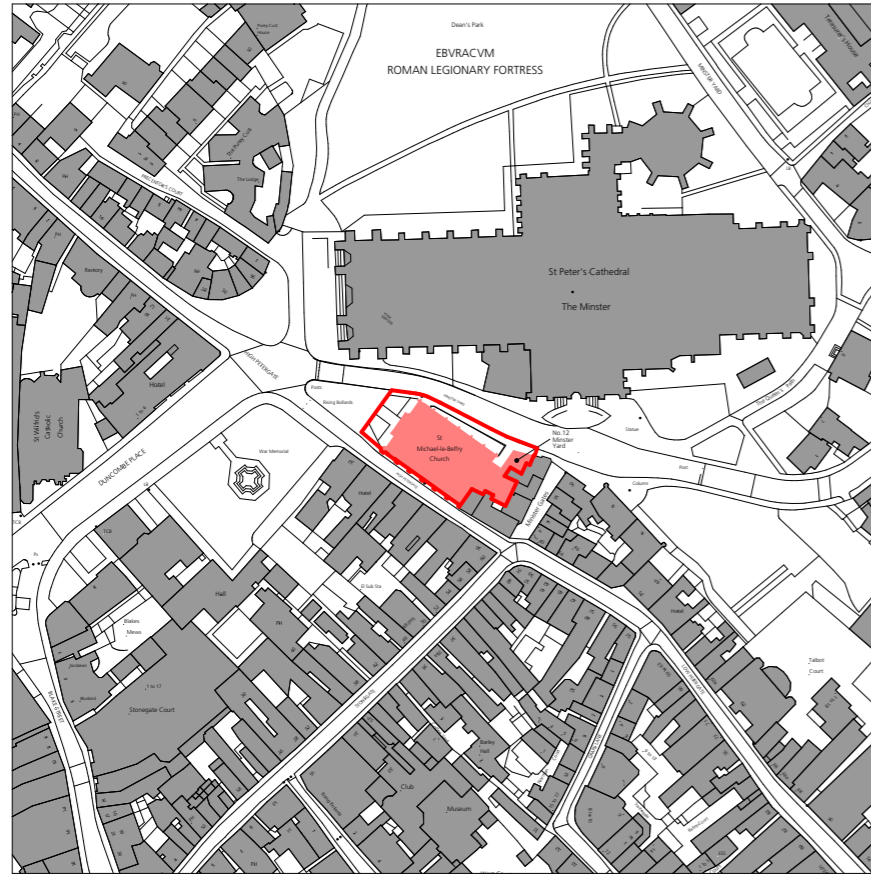
Proposed ground floor plan



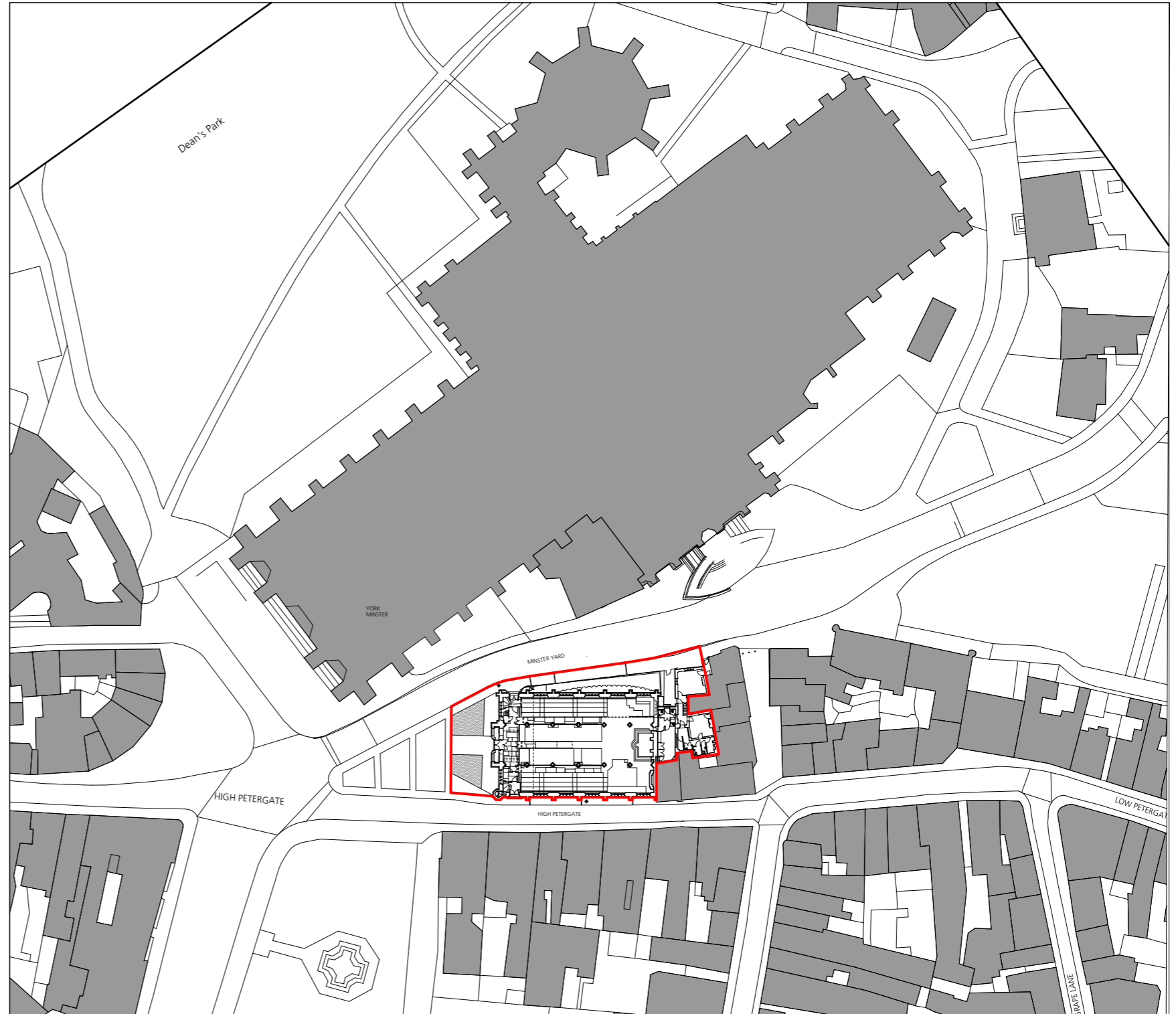
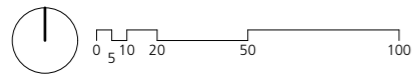
Proposed First Floor Plan | 1:100 @ A1



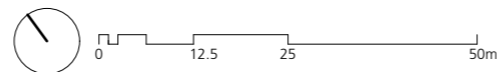
Proposed first floor plan



Location Plan | 1:1250 @ A1



Existing Site Plan | 1:500 @ A1



3.0 The Context of St Michael le Belfrey

Excerpts from the *Conversation Management Plan* prepared in April 2011 have been drawn upon to complete this section. The remainder of this document has been produced by LDN Architects and draws upon a culmination of their work on the project since summer 2019.

3.1 Setting of the church

How does the setting out of the church contribute to its landscape / townscape value and to its significance?

CMP Section 2, Understanding the Place and Community

St Michael le Belfrey (found at NGR SK3997) is situated within the heart of the historic core of York City Centre on High Petergate. It is located within the Roman and Medieval core of York in an urban location with a long and rich history. Immediately south of York Minster, the church lies within the Medieval city walls close to the Rivers Ouse and Foss and is situated on the north side of High Petergate. St Michael le Belfrey is a centrally located parish which attracts a substantial committed congregation in addition to a number of tourists. It benefits from a visible central location as regards drawing in visiting tourists and passers-by but . . . a relatively small residential base within its parish boundaries due to the high occurrence of shops, offices and other businesses within the parish.

(Taken from CMP, 2.1 Location and setting)

CMP Section 3, Assessment of Significance

The church is strategically located adjacent to York Minster, one of the UK's major tourist destinations. It is also adjacent to Petergate, a busy shopping thoroughfare for those visiting, living and working in York. St Michael le Belfrey is therefore a prominent part of the historic environment and urban landscape of York. It was described by Best in 1831 as, *'the largest and most elegant sacred edifice in York, excepting the cathedral'*.

In addition to making a positive contribution to the townscape, St Michael le Belfrey enjoys a considerably important group value with York Minster. Spatially close, it is situated only 17m south of the nave of the Minster and in earlier centuries formed part of the southern wall of the Minster close which once surrounded the liberty of St Peter within the city walls (Drake 1736, 338). Furthermore, largely rebuilt by the Dean and Chapter of the cathedral as a parish church for the area, the church has maintained close links with the Minster . . .

The church also enjoys some group value with the adjacent No. 12 Minster Yard to the

immediate east . . . it now provides offices for St Michael le Belfrey enabling staff to be close to the church. The building is Grade II Listed and incorporates a late 18th century structure behind the three storey limestone ashlar gabled front to Minster Yard.

(Taken from CMP, 3.4.7 Townscape, Setting and Group Value)

St Michael le Belfrey is part of a wider historic environment including ecclesiastical buildings, businesses, residences and parkland. The church is situated in the exceptionally significant historic core of York. York Minster, which dominates the cityscape, is situated to the immediate northeast with a number of historic shops and houses – many of which have been listed to reflect and help conserve their architectural / historic interest in the surroundings. To the west is an area of parkland by Duncombe Place. This contains a Grade II* Listed South African war memorial dated 1905. The church is enhanced by its group value with York Minster and adjacent offices leased from the Dean and Chapter whilst the wider landscape of historic buildings, street layout and parkland forms part of the heart of the city.

The significances described above combine to create a sense of a sacred space with a long and distinguished history. The church, highly visible in the townscape today, has for centuries been at the heart of worship within the parish and a place for the community to meet and interact. The church provides a tranquil space both part of and separate from the busy city centre streets surrounding it. The building provides a quiet space for reflection, prayer or simply admiration of the craftsmanship of generations of local people.

(Taken from CMP, 3.4. 10 Formal and Aesthetic Qualities)

3.2 The living churchyard

What is the significance of the natural heritage of the site?

CMP Section 2, Understanding the Place and the Community

In common with most of the other city churches, the burial ground of St Michael le Belfrey has disappeared; evidence above ground removed and evidence below ground either excavated ad hoc or further obscured beneath almost two centuries of development. Burial in city churchyards was discontinued by an Order of Council in 1854. However, St Michael's churchyard within the Minster precinct was closed and markers removed in 1814 as part of a wider process of improvements to the Minster precinct. The limited space available for the graveyard, which was situated to the west of the church within the precinct, necessitated the opening of a new burial ground in Groves Lane (Murray 1994, 101), together with a small chapel, which was consecrated in August 1800 and closed in 1854.

Consequently, there is no longer a churchyard adjacent to St Michael le Belfrey and as it is not depicted on any of the historic maps, its exact location and extents remain unknown.

(Taken from CMP, 2.5.1 Churchyard)

3.3 Social history

What is the historic and present use of the church and churchyard by the congregation and wider community? How does this contribute to its significance?

CMP Section 3, Assessment of Significance

- **Statutory:** Grade I listed church situated within an area that has been designated a City Centre Area of Archaeological Importance and within the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area.
- **Continuity of worship:** there may have been a church on the site from the late Roman period and there is documentary and archaeological (burial) evidence of an Early Medieval church. The setting is also of significance as an area with a long and influential Christian heritage with connections to Paulinus and St John of Beverley amongst others.
- **Modern worship:** there have been a number of important liturgical developments and subsequent re-orderings within the church which now has an established charismatic Anglican evangelical congregation that has created an ongoing sustainable use for the building over the past 45 years.
- **Scale and artistic embellishment:** largest pre-Reformation parish church in York with some architectural pretension.
- **Exterior Architecture:** visible links to York Minster are expressed in the fabric and design. The building is an exceptional and relatively rare example of a church rebuilt on the eve of the English Reformation and includes glass, stonework, stone carvings and benches from the early 16th century.
- **High quality of fabric and fixtures:** within the church are historic fittings and fixtures the oldest of which are benches dating from the 16th century. Other significant contents include an early 18th century reredos and communion rail, gallery, 19th century ornate organ (removed in August 2019, refurbished and installed in St Lawrence Church, York in 2020) and collegiate pews, monuments from various dates and a probable Medieval altar mensa.
- **Design and craftsmanship - association with significant architects, craftsmen, designers or artists:** represents the achievement of regionally and locally renowned and respected architects, craftsmen and specialists.
- **Links to historic figures:** the most well known historical figure connected with the church is Guy Fawkes. This connection helps to attract a number of national and international tourists.
- **Archaeological:** evidence from early Roman settlement and military operation through to the Medieval church with Medieval and later burials.
- **Townscape:** enjoys a strategic location in the Roman and Medieval heart of York and has townscape significance with respect to views and visibility.
- **Public role:** popularity with tourists, importance to worshippers and within the local community and significant to a number of interest groups. Considerable outreach activities attract new church members and maintain the vibrancy of the church.

- **Group value:** close institutional, historical, architectural and visual links with York Minster complements and enhances the architectural character and visual quality of the church and setting.

(Taken from CMP, 3.3 Key Points of Significance)

3.4 The church building in general

Provide a description of the church.

CMP Section 3, Assessment of Significance

The overall architectural significance of St Michael le Belfrey is considered to be exceptional.

Exterior

The church is of exceptional architectural interest as a building that was completely re-designed in the early 16th century incorporating some earlier fabric into this design. The largest pre-Reformation parish church in York, with the exception of the west front, the exterior has fabric little altered since 1537. It has been commented that *'This church stands among the other churches of York as unrivalled in its perfect adoption of one style of architecture [Perpendicular]'* (Fawcett writing in Monkhouse & Bedford c.1843).

Interior

The church displays a typical late Medieval York plan of rectangular undivided nave and chancel. The interior is of particular interest for the early 16th century stone arcades. It also contains a typical hierarchy of sacred spaces, for example the vestry is less sacred than the chancel and since this often affects the level of investment, craftsmanship, and elaboration, it is partly for this reason that space within the building can vary in terms of significance with the vestry and lobby being of less significance than the chancel, nave and aisles.

(Taken from CMP, 3.4.4 Architectural)

3.5 The church building in detail

Assess the significance of either each historical phase of the building or of each area within it. For example, north aisle, south chancel elevation, Norman tower

CMP Section 3, Assessment of Significance

National, Regional, Local

St Michael le Belfrey has an important local value i.e. to the local community, local interest groups such as York Civic Trust and locally based congregations and the PCC. Furthermore its significance is such that it attracts considerable attention and interest both regionally and nationally, in particular thanks to its connection with Guy Fawkes. Due to the prominent visible location of the building, it also attracts international visitors who are spending time in York.

Religious

Continuity as a Place of Worship

St Michael le Belfrey has been a place of worship for centuries. There may have been a church on the site from the late Roman period and there is documentary and archaeological (burial) evidence of an Early Medieval church. The setting is of exceptional significance as an area with a long and influential Christian heritage with connections to Paulinus and St John of Beverley amongst others. Largely rebuilt 1525-1537, the church retains some in-situ Medieval fabric, particularly at the east end where there is also the earliest surviving stained glass window within the church building.

Overall St Michael le Belfrey has an exceptional historic interest.

The church retains much early 16th century fabric externally but has been considerably altered internally, largely as a consequence of changing liturgy or necessary repair work. Notable changes include the removal of the rood screen, addition of the reredos and communion rails in 1712, addition and extension of the gallery in various phases, addition of the collegiate pews and removal of the box pews in 1853, removal of the choir stalls, and rebuilding of the west front 1867-1868.

The tradition of Christian worship continues into the 21st century. The building is a place of worship by an established charismatic Anglican evangelical congregation that has created a vibrant ongoing sustainable use for the building over the past 45 years. . .

Liturgical Use and Development

Developments in religious thought and practice have been reflected in liturgical arrangements and changes within the church. The relatively open church (i.e. without chantries, side chapels or tower) for corporate worship in the early 16th century presented a very different interior arrangement and atmosphere from the Medieval church as a result of changing modes of worship. The devotionally multi-focal Medieval church with individual spaces with altars and chantries for private individual and family prayers was redesigned for a greater focus on preaching to congregations. This has helped shape the current arrangement with a gallery and generous seating, pulpit, lectern and lack of high altar stone.

Graduated Sacred Spaces/Holy Places

Within St Michael le Belfrey architectural forms and furniture highlight these graded spaces and provide an important symbol and means of understanding the interior. Thus people move from the paved exterior floor and small area of grass around the church into the porch, then the narthex, into the nave and then eastwards to the chancel which is differentiated by the use of tiled paving and is where the pulpit, lectern and sanctuary are situated. Within the chancel the magnificent reredos displaying fine woodwork, painting and gilding, draws the eye to the holiest of spaces and is spatially differentiated within an enclosure formed from the fine early 18th century altar rail.

The elaborate Squires memorial at the east end of the south aisle competes for attention... with the chancel area and is interesting in that it is a domineering secular memorial by a sacred area.

Musical Tradition

Music has long been an important element of worship and there is currently a musicians' stage providing a musical accompaniment to worship. This reflects the importance of various musical instruments used during contemporary services.

Historical Evolution

St Michael le Belfrey has developed over centuries. Changes to meet different styles of worship, changing liturgy, changing fashions of design such as Perpendicular to Neo-Gothic with 20th century alterations, changing sizes and expectations of congregations, changing vicars and personnel with different visions, all contribute to the rich architectural legacy and historic interest of the church. Following the re-designed and substantially rebuilt church in the early 16th century, between 1537 and 1867 the exterior fabric was very little altered. In contrast the interior was subject to a number of phases of alteration and reordering as described in the historical overview and site description in Chapter 2.

Architects, Craftsmen and Others

The church that exists today is the "cumulative" invention of numerous individuals – early 16th century Minster clergy, patrons, and craftsmen and later vicars, architects, craftsmen and worshippers and their collective efforts through donations, bequests, designs and implementation schemes to design a large impressive parish church.

Community Life

St Michael le Belfrey, in common with other parish churches, contributes to our understanding of many aspects of Medieval to modern day religious and urban life. The church has been considered sacred for centuries and has been the setting for the rites of passage from baptism to burial for many generations within the parish. The later Medieval church was situated in one of York's wealthiest parishes with ecclesiastical lawyers, goldsmiths, booksellers and churchmen within the congregation. This is reflected in the architecture as most of the window glass was donated between 1525 and 1540 and shows the donors who were all wealthy laymen or clerics with successful careers and prominent positions. Furthermore, it is intriguing to speculate that whilst St Michael le Belfrey was repaired and largely rebuilt in the early 16th century to improve the condition of the fabric, it was redesigned to meet the changing needs and priorities of its patrons, owners and congregation.

Links to Historic Figures

The most famous connection to a historical figure is provided by the fact that Guy Fawkes was baptised at St Michael le Belfrey on 16 April 1570. His father, Edward Fawkes, was Proctor of the Ecclesiastical Courts and Advocate of the Consistory Court of the Archbishop of York . . . worshipped at the church and was buried in the churchyard on 17 January 1578. . . Other children baptised at the church include the daughter of the Archbishop of York (Jane Young December 23 1565) and the children of Sir Arthur Ingram.

Many individuals of note . . . are buried within the church. These include Thomas Gent, York's sole typographer, also a historian and proprietor of its first newspaper 'The York Mercury' founded in 1719 and acquired by Gent in 1724 (Murray 1994, 102). At the east end of the north aisle is a memorial to William Richardson (1745-1821) who officiated in the church for over 50 years . . . Richardson was also a popular vicar and his powerful preaching increased the size of the congregation.

One of the most influential people connected with the church in recent years was the Reverend David Watson (1933–1984) vicar, charismatic evangelist and author. The congregation grew to several hundred, in only a few years (Manwaring 2002) . . . As his ministry progressed, not only was he promoting new forms of worship, Watson was also involved with missionary enterprises throughout the world and was a high profile advocate of reconciliation and ecumenism in Northern Ireland . . . James Innell Packer (1981, 6), Christian theologian and highly influential evangelical, called him 'one of the best-known clergymen in England'

(Taken from CMP, 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.5)

3.6 Contents of the Church

Provide a description of its contents and their significance. It is reasonable to group these if there is a contemporary scheme which is significant as such, for example one could say a complete scheme of 18th-century furnishings, of high significance.

(Please note that the categories of significance used in the 2011 CMP vary from those referred to in the 'Major Projects' template. In the later sections of this Statement LDN Architects has updated the categories to those in the template.)

CMP Section 3, Assessment of Significance

Fixtures and Fittings

The church retains several fine historic fixtures and fittings.

Of Exceptional Significance are:

Glass: the glass windows include mid 14th century stained glass (the chancel east window) and early 16th century stained glass from the rebuilding (the north and south aisles). . . Medieval stained glass windows are rare in York and the east window with 14th century glass includes a panel depicting the martyrdom of Thomas Becket. . . Medieval glass is found principally in only six churches within central York, one of which is St Michael le Belfrey. The east window is described by RCHM (1981, xlviii) as having one of the finest examples of 14th century glass in the area (the other notable work being at St Denys'). . . It is not however a complete design, but rather a composite of three or more windows presumably from the old church on the site.

Peter Gibson, formerly of Minster Glaziers, states that the *'stained glass of St Michael-le Belfrey is of great importance as it contains one of the largest collections of mid 16th C glass in any parish church in England to escape the Reformation. . .'*

Of Considerable Significance are:

- **Altar:** the large dark marble altar slab in the floor of the nave. If indeed the Medieval mensa of the Minster's high altar reputedly relocated from York Minster in 1617 (Johnston writing in 1669 quoted in RCHM 1981, xliii), it is one of the most significant altar components in York.

- **Benches:** there are seven loose benches in the aisles, four with bench ends carved with poppy heads, including two with ends carved with window tracery, six of which incorporate 16th century carved woodwork. There are two with scrolled ends, also 16th century, and one with turned legs that is 17th century. As suggested by Wilson & Mee (1998, 131) the six oldest benches are likely to be part of the church furnishings of the rebuilt church and date from between the 1530s and 1550s. This would make these benches the oldest known internal woodwork within the building. . .
- **Communion Rail:** by William Etty, 1712. The communion rail is returned to enclose three sides of a rectangle with gates forming a small semicircular projection. It is one of only two early 18th century communion rails to survive in York (one at St Michael, Spurriergate and one at Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, 1715, with a slightly later example at St Martin-cum-Gregory).
- **Gallery:** the architectural significance of the west gallery has been compromised by successive phases of alteration . . . The original gallery has been lost and the rebuild from 1785 has been much altered, albeit with some survivals, for example in some of the benches and side panels and possibly also the stairs which date from between c.1785 and c.1830s. It seems likely that much of the remainder of the current arrangement was formed in 1885-1886 when the organ was removed and narthex screen and gallery front added. Arguably the late 19th century screen has made the gallery more visually intrusive as it cuts across the exceptionally significant 16th century arcades. Despite this negative impact on other significant fabric and the aesthetic qualities of the church, the gallery retains some late 18th century fabric, and is thus amongst the earliest galleries to survive in central York. Indeed only four of the Medieval York churches acquired galleries in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The Royal Arms of Queen Anne on the gallery front carved in 1712 is also a significant feature. Finally, the gallery is important for its plan form and relationship with the other more secular spaces within the church.
- **Memorials:** in general the wall monuments and floor slabs are of local interest, however, some by virtue of their quality, early date and historic interest are of considerable significance. . . In terms of floor slabs, a fragment of white stone with marginal inscription in black letters, dated 8 July 1400 is one of the earliest and may have been relocated from the earlier church on this site.
- **Organ** – this has subsequently been removed from St Michael le Belfrey, restored by Nicholson & Co and reinstalled at St Lawrence Church, York in November 2020.
- **Reredos:** designed by John Etty, his son William completed the reredos in 1712. Composed of raised and fielded panelling the Lord's Prayer (left) and the Apostles' Creed (right) are foundation statements of the Christian faith. In 1924-26 the PCC commissioned a copy of the 17th century artist Zurbaran's Adoration of the Shepherds to replace the Ten Commandments. . .

Of Some Significance are:

- **Aisle (Collegiate) Pews (now recognised as moderate to high significance):** the aisle pews are of greater interest than the nave pews because their collegiate arrangement is unusual in a parish church context (most have not survived due to the influence of ecclesiology on church re-orderings). In comparison, the aisle pews display a greater degree of architectural elaboration and carvings, and they retain their doors. The primary significance of the aisle pews is considered to be their collegiate arrangement due to the rarity of this arrangement to survive, especially alongside forward-facing pews.
Of some significance is the date and style of the ends of the collegiate pews with their low doors. Again these are old fashioned and represent a lingering vestige of box pews. The carved poppy heads are also a feature of early Victorian congregational seating schemes rather than later ones (although they remained popular for stalls). The pews display a reasonably good quality of workmanship typical of the 19th century. . .
- The pews in the nave are of little significance. They are, however, of interest for the quality of their craftsmanship and role within the wider scheme. They are also the work of George Fowler Jones, a respected local and regional architect who designed a number of churches and church restorations in the Gothic style. . .
- **Benefactors' Table and Boards:** the benefactor's table and benefaction boards are largely of local historic significance.
- **Communion Table:** an early example dating from the 17th century, significance is compromised by the replacement of the table top during the 20th century.
- **Floor:** the floor treatment is variable with the pew platforms and patchwork repaired chancel tiles having little significance. The flat memorial stones are, however, of local historic interest and make a positive contribution to the character of the building. The floor level is of interest as it has not built up over the years, suggesting archaeological layers are likely to be relatively close to the surface with an absence of deep Victorian deposits – which were presumably removed during various phases of re-levelling.
- **Memorials (including Brasses and Indents, floor slabs and wall memorials):** whilst individually these vary in quality, scale and historic interest, considered as a group they provide local historic and architectural interest. Often by well regarded local / regional craftsmen (including the Fisher family of York) they provide a fascinating glimpse of individuals, family groups and craftsmanship in the past. Sometimes they include additional genealogical or employment details and are part of the local history of the parish.
- **Lord Mayors' Tables:** three Lord Mayors' Tables depict former York Lord Mayor's within the parish.
- **Stairs:** the gallery is approached via two late 18th/early 19th century matching staircases in the narthex.

Of Little Significance are:

- **Bell:** the bell of 1635 attributed to William Oldfield, prolific local bell-maker, was recast in 1883 considerably reducing its significance. Despite the loss of older fabric and historical tonal value, it remains an important symbol of the ancient call to prayer and historic communal secular events and forms part of the ensemble of a parish church.
- **Floor:** the chancel tiles and pew platforms (see above account under 'some significance').
- **Font:** although the font is of considerable religious significance and the church community practise believers' baptism by immersion as well as infant baptism, the architectural/historic significance is low as the original font has not survived and St Michael le Belfrey has a late 20th century portable font.
- **Nave Pews (now recognised to be low to moderate significance):** see above account of aisle pews.
- **Pulpit and Lectern:** the late 20th century pulpit (preaching rostrum) was designed by Ron Sims, church architect, and lectern (reading desk) made by popular Thompson's of Kilburn and installed in 1978.

3.7 Significance for Mission

What are the strengths of the building as it is for worship and mission? What potential for adapted and new uses does the church and its setting already have with little or no change?

Standing in the heart of the historic city of York, the church building of St Michael le Belfrey is the focal gathering place of the people of St Michael le Belfrey – the largest Anglican Christian body in York, and one of the largest Christian communities in the North of England. First and foremost the building is a place of Christian worship and prayer. The Belfrey believes it is already maximising opportunities for existing and new activities which includes Family Days, cafes for special events such as York Marathon and Carol service as well as regular activities from Sunday services and Wednesday lunchtime services to prayer meetings, external concerts and a limited events programme.

One of St Michael le Belfrey's biggest strengths is its location in the city centre and the opportunity to talk to an average of 3k of visitors per month as well as minister to its congregations and church users.

When proposing the Reordering, the Belfrey considered options to the current church building including alternative places to worship outside the city centre. The church family concluded that opportunities to share and demonstrate the Christian faith would be diminished if there was no longer a presence in the centre and felt strongly they needed to remain.

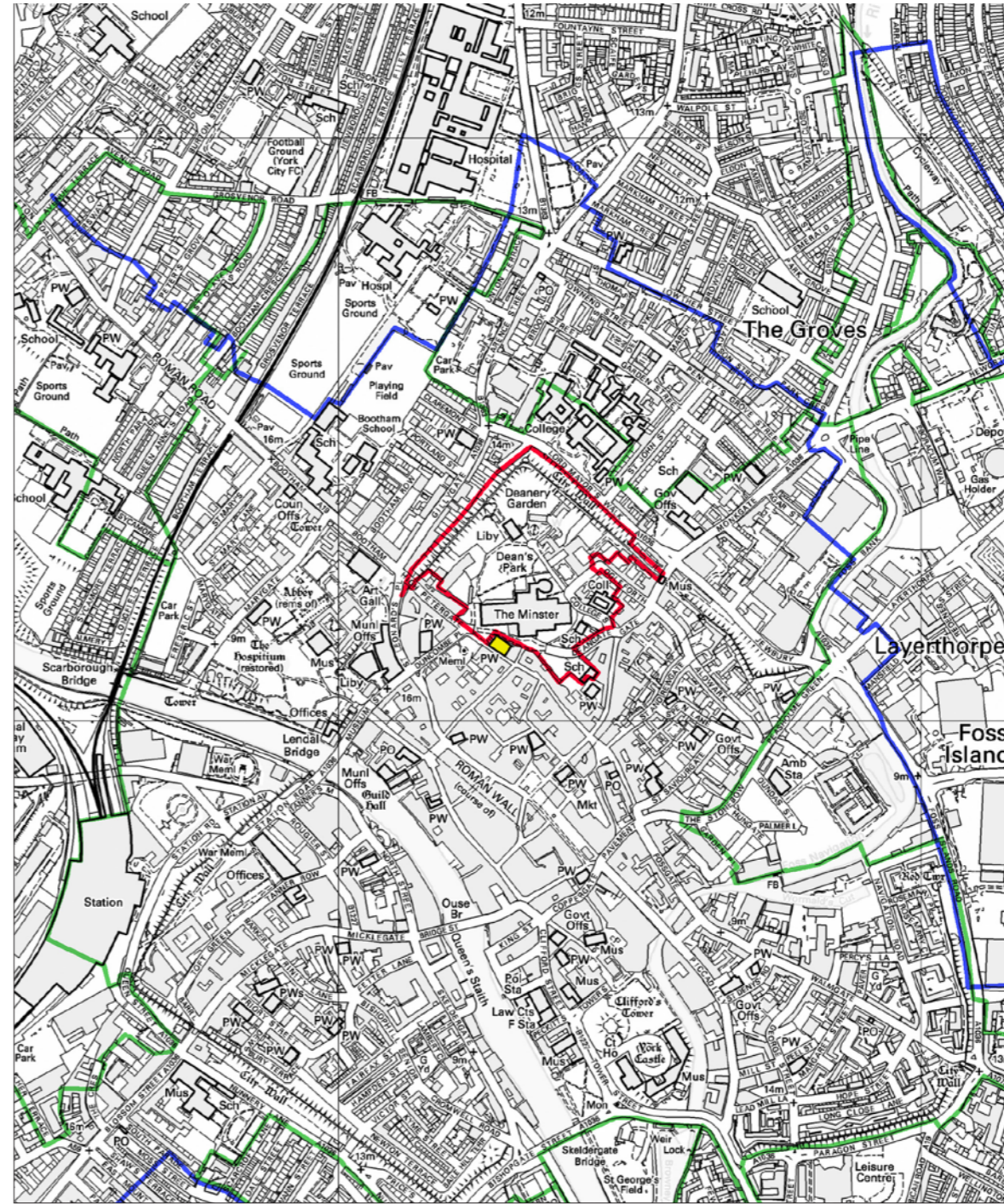
Opportunities for different styles of worship, training and leadership events, safe spaces for children and young people and accessible facilities cannot be developed in the current premises and are laid out in detail in the Statement of Need.

The Belfrey believes its proposition is unique in wanting to preserve a beautiful Grade I listed building of national significance while offering the capability to support a dynamic, thriving Christian city centre church that will help develop leaders and send out teams to revitalise and plant new churches in the north.



Aerial View of St Michael le Belfrey (shaded red)

(Photograph taken from CMP, p.11)



Designation Plan

(Map taken from CMP, p.15)

- St Michael le Belfrey Listed Building
- Conservation Area
- Area of Archaeological Importance
- Scheduled Ancient Monument

4.0 The Significance of the Heritage Assets Affected by the Proposals

4.1 Identify the heritage assets which will be directly or indirectly affected by your proposal

Excerpts from the *York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal* (Character Area Nine: The Minster Precinct and Character Area Ten: The Medieval Streets) and the *York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan: A Sustainable Future 2020-2035* have been drawn to complete this section.

Conservation Area

St Michael le Belfrey Grade I Listed Building sits within a Conservation Area, defined by the old City of Roman, Viking and Medieval York, and for the most part contained inside the city walls. The Conservation Area was designated in 1968 and extended after public consultation in 1975 to include the bars, walls and their approaches and surroundings. The area contains the greatest concentration of listed buildings in the city. The main elements of the character and appearance of the area are:

- 1) The Walls, built in Magnesium Limestone
- 2) The scale and size of the Minster, again built in Magnesium Limestone
- 3) Clifford's Tower and the classical buildings of the Castle Area
- 4) The nucleus of historic civic buildings
- 5) The large scale of the old and new railway station areas
- 6) The St Leonard's Hospital area
- 7) Bootham Hospital
- 8) The city's skylines and vistas
- 9) The complex townscape containing buildings of all ages
- 10) The River Ouse and its tributary The Foss
- 11) The strong landscape associated with York's open spaces
- 12) The residential areas in brick and slate or pantiles
- 13) The commercial and shopping areas
- 14) Other smaller areas which don't fit into the above but have their own character arising from the quality of buildings/spaces

The Core Conservation Area was appraised in 2011 by Alan Baxter & Associates.

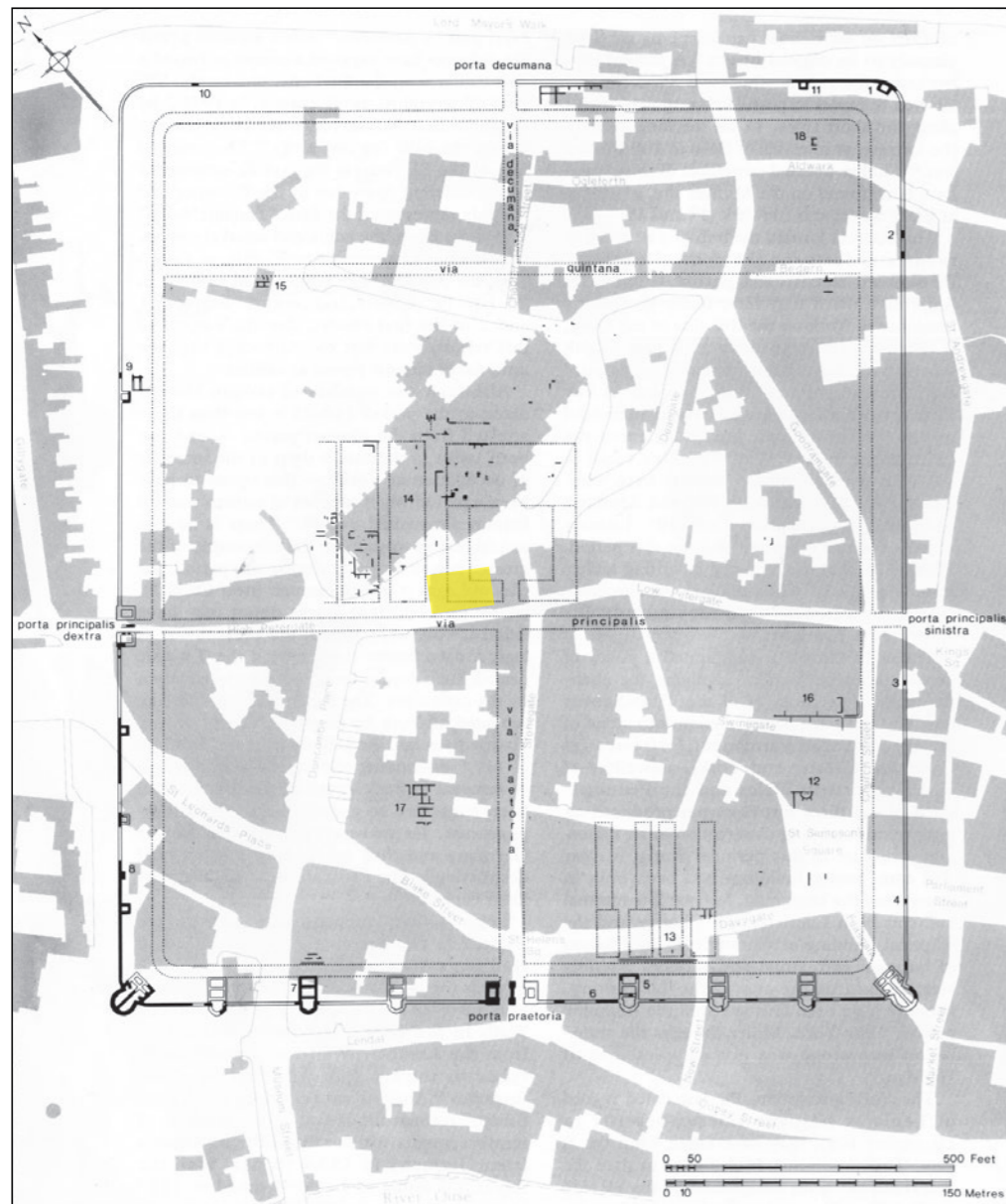
History

The Roman legionary fortress dates from AD71, and was located on the north east bank of the Ouse. Its rectangular structure is still evident in the walls to the north-east and north-west and in the alignment of Stonegate and Petergate. For the relationship of The Roman Fortress to St Michael le Belfrey, refer to the map in next page (p.20).

The area to the south-west of the Ouse was used for the Roman period for housing and commerce. In the seventh century York was an important Royal and ecclesiastical centre, when settlement expanded beyond the walls of the Roman fortress to the south-east and the area around Coppergate came into being. Many of York's familiar "Medieval" streets, winding through and beyond the Roman rectangle, have their origins in the ninth century after many Scandinavians settled in the City. From the tenth century York was a City of overcrowded, narrow streets. This scene was dominated from the late eleventh century by the size and scale of the Minster. The City was a major centre of commerce and trade, with ships coming up the River Ouse from the North Sea. In the sixteenth century York became a seat of government when the former Abbot's house to St Mary's Abbey was adapted and enlarged as the headquarters of the King's Council in the North. Georgian prosperity came to the City in the eighteenth century, transforming the character of much of the centre and approaches, to reflect its importance as a regional centre. Town houses were built inside and outside the Walls. York's population grew in the nineteenth century creating overcrowding within the walled City. The Victorian age also brought the railway, and the industry and commerce associated with it.

Character

From its history, the character of the central historic core emerges. The street pattern reflects the historic development of the City. The rectilinear lines of the Roman camp still define the basic structure – an intersection of major roads enclosed on two sides by defensive walls and with one approach a river crossing but later bent and twisted to accommodate the new urban form imposed upon it by the orientation of the Minster. The boundaries of the properties lining these twisting streets are derived from a system of burgage plots where buildings huddled closely together. The walls surrounded the centre, punctured on the main road approaches by the four Bars (entrance gateways). Much later the City spilled out from these walls with the new Georgian terraces lining the roads outside the Bars, with routes into the City as traditional cobbled approaches; then Regency and Victorian were added to the Georgian houses in terraces; sometimes as roads leading off the main approaches.



The Roman Fortress Showing the Relationship with St Michael le Belfrey (in yellow)

(Map taken from York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal, p.221)

Area of Archaeological Importance and Scheduled Ancient Monument

The central historic core of York sits within an **Area of Archaeological Importance**, and because of the outstanding archaeological importance of the area, most of the ground and the deposits within this area - including the west and north landscaping areas of St Michael le Belfrey - are designated below ground as a **Scheduled Ancient Monument**.

The Minster Precinct (Figure 01)

St Michael le Belfrey also sits within the Minster Precinct of approximately 6 hectares of land, bounded by the historic City Walls to the north and Petergate and the back of Goodramgate to the south.

The Minster Precinct forms a highly sensitive and complicated area of the City of York and is an integral element of the city center. The architecture of this area is dominated by the Minster, one of the greatest Gothic buildings in Europe. The church has exerted a powerful influence over the architectural character of the area and, hence, it is not surprising that Gothic is a common style, both for genuine medieval buildings such as St Michael le Belfrey, but also for other important buildings in the 19th century – such as the Minster School and the New Residence (later part of the Purey-Cust Hospital). These are all of Magnesian limestone: its widespread use is one of the distinctive characteristics of the Precinct.

The Medieval Streets (Figure 02)

The streets around St Michael le Belfrey have a high number of surviving medieval buildings. The principal streets are Stonegate and Low Petergate. These have been the most important since the Roman occupation and their prosperity during the Middle Ages is reflected in their width and building types. No medieval shops survive, although there are a handful of fragments of shop windows. Some shops have models or signs outside to show their trade; for example, an elegant model of Minerva (Roman goddess of poetry and wisdom) with a pile of books at the corner of High Petergate and Minster Gates.

Townscape Views (Figure 03 and Figure 04)

The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies 26 key views which define the character and image of the York Central Historic Core, as well as numerous other views of local significance. The view from the corner of High Petergate (**View 22, Figure 03**) offers an excellent view of the Minster and St Michael le Belfrey, and is the only one that will be affected by the proposal.

- 1 19th century civic improvement and creation of views
- Landmark
- City Wall
- York Minster
- Character Area boundary

Area 9 Location plan

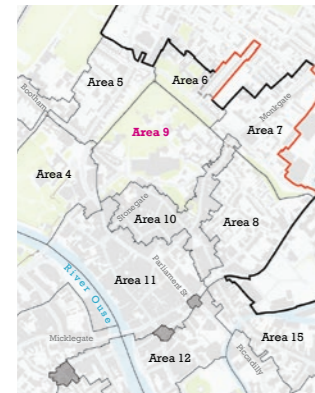


Figure 01



Existing

- City Wall

Opportunities

- Promote appreciation of Dean's Park and its buildings, monuments and history
- Improvements to road and pavement surfaces to make consistent with other Footstreets
- Well maintained gardens

Views

- Strategic fixed with focal point
- Strategic dynamic with focal point
- Strategic dynamic panoramic
- Strategic dynamic panoramic with focal point
- Local fixed with focal point
- Local dynamic
- Local dynamic panoramic
- Key view from outside the character area - refer to section 3.5

Figure 03



- 1 Well preserved medieval streets and buildings
- 2 19th / 20th century redevelopment of backlands for shops and offices
- Alignment of Roman roads
- Landmark
- City Wall
- Line of former Roman fortress wall
- Character Area boundary

Area 10 Location plan

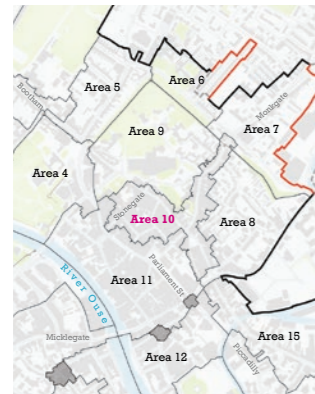


Figure 02



Existing

- Well enclosed medieval street
- Landmark
- City Wall

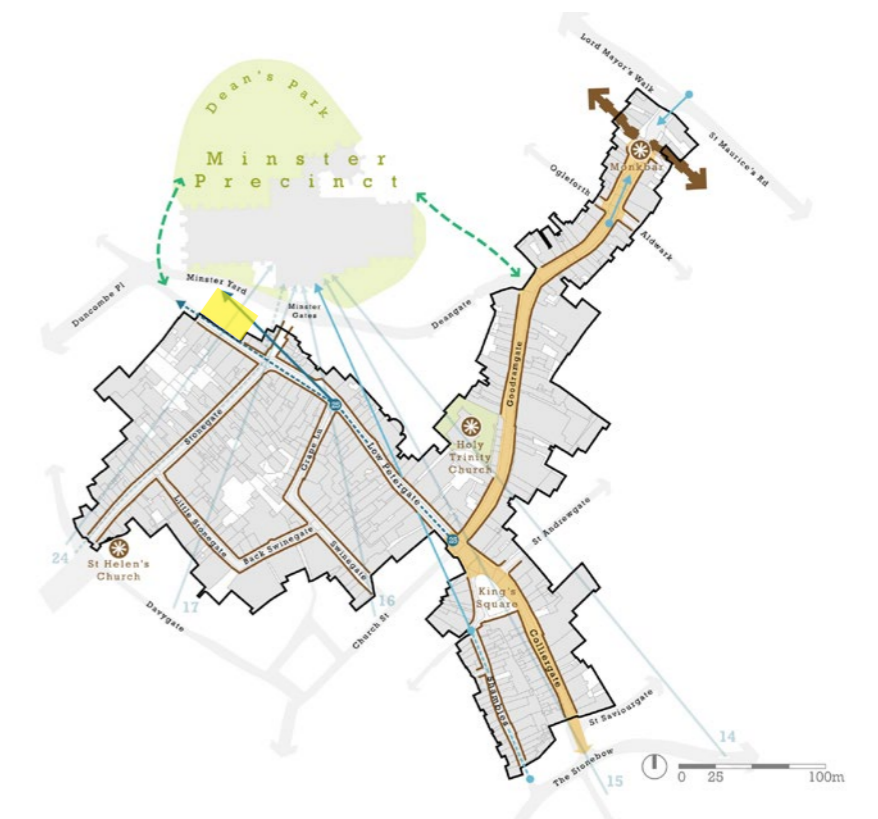
Opportunities

- Promote pedestrian access to Dean's Park
- Improvements to road and pavement surfaces to make consistent with other footstreets

Views

- Strategic dynamic
- Strategic dynamic with focal point
- Local fixed with focal point
- Local dynamic with focal point
- Key view from outside the character area - refer to section 3.5

Figure 04



(Maps taken from York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal, p.225, 231, 235, 247 with St Michael le Belfrey highlighted in yellow)



St Michael le Belfrey - Statement of Heritage Significance

4.2 Identify the parts of the church and/or churchyard which will be directly or indirectly affected by the proposals.

St Michael le Belfrey (Externals)

- 4.2.1 Masonry
- 4.2.2 Medieval stained-glass windows
- 4.2.3 Roof
- 4.2.4 North landscaping
- 4.2.5 West elevation
- 4.2.6 West landscaping

St Michael le Belfrey (Internals)

- 4.2.7 Mensa Stone, Ledgers and Tiles
- 4.2.8 Memorials
- 4.2.9 Northeast Wall
- 4.2.10 Narthex screen
- 4.2.11 Medieval Benches and Pews (Ground Floor)
- 4.2.12 Staircases
- 4.2.13 Gallery and Pews (Gallery)

The following terminology has been used in assessing significance of the heritage assets:

High	Important at national to international levels.
Moderate-High	Important at regional or sometimes higher levels.
Moderate	Usually of local value but of regional significance for group or other value.
Low-Moderate	Of local value.
Low	Adds little or nothing to the value or detracts from it.



North Elevation opposite York Minster



Medieval Stained Glass Window

4.2.1 Masonry

Significance **High**

The church is of exceptional architectural interest as a building that was completely re-designed in the early 16th century incorporating some earlier fabric into this design. The largest pre-Reformation parish church in York, with the exception of the west front, the exterior has fabric little altered since 1537. It has been commented that *"This church stands among the other churches of York as unrivalled in its perfect adoption of one style of architecture [Perpendicular]"* (Fawcett writing in Monkhouse & Bedford c.1843).

St Michael le Belfrey is of considerable interest due to the influence of York Minster which is reflected in the design. Near contemporary visitation reports show the interest and concern in the church by the parishioners but the new church was a corporate clerical effort rather than a collective parochial effort and this is highlighted in the built fabric. For example the crossed keys (symbol of St Peter) and crossed swords (St Paul) seen on the external elevation of the south aisle are dominant symbols at York Minster. Furthermore St Michael's has a clerestory; whilst this follows in the footsteps of late Medieval clerestories in other York churches notably St Martin le Grand, St Martin cum Gregory and All Saints Pavement, clerestories were part of a recent trend to reach York highlighting architectural investment and may also have been part of a greater desire for better lit and more architecturally unified churches. Saunders commented that 'the scale and airy spacious quality of the building must have been a clear indication to the inhabitants of York of Michael-le-Belfrey's status by association' (Saunders, O. (1996). *Minster and Parish: The Sixteenth Century Reconstruction of the Church of St Michael le Belfrey in York*. Unpublished MA thesis (Medieval Studies, University of York), p. 26).

(Taken from CMP, 3.4.4)

4.2.2 Medieval stained-glass windows

Significance **High**

The glass windows include mid 14th century stained glass (the chancel east window) and early 16th century stained glass from the rebuilding (the north and south aisles).

The 16th century windows, as noted by Dr Lisa Reilly within her attached report *"feature a series of standing saints with donor figures, intercessory inscriptions and emblems, heraldic shields and other devices associated with the lay and clerical donors of the windows. In addition to these, a series of sixteenth century panels depicting the Life of St Thomas Becket is also found in the church, with further panels from this series now housed in the neighboring chapter house of York Minster"*. Since Henry VIII's proclamation of 1538 had specifically ordered the destruction of images of St Thomas, this is a rare survival, though even this is mutilated (Knowles 1959).

The seven inscriptions in English which accompany the aisle windows are modern copies of the original 16th century inscriptions and glass which was extensively rearranged and restored under Dean Milner-White in 1961.

Medieval glass is found principally in only six churches within central York, one of which is St Michael le Belfrey. The east window is described by RCHM (1981, xlviii) as having one of the finest examples of 14th century glass in the area (the other notable work being at St Denys'). Knowles has commented (1959, 146), *"The general appearance of the [east] window is very satisfactory. The glass is brilliant and shows very few signs of decay...The painting has been most carefully executed, no pains or expense has been spared, and the work has been loaded with details. It is the most highly-finished example of XIV century work in York."* It is not however a complete design, but rather a composite of three or more windows presumably from the old church on the site.

Peter Gibson, formerly of Minster Glaziers, states that the *"stained glass of St Michael-le Belfrey is of great importance as it contains one of the largest collections of mid 16th C glass in any parish church in England to escape the Reformation. It also escaped the ravages of the Roundheads in the Civil War due to the intervention of the local landowner & parliamentary commander, Lord Fairfax, who protected the Minster and city churches' glass after the siege of York in 1644...The 16th C glass was painted by Flemish craftsmen who also produced the windows of the South Transept of York Minster, including the Rose Window, King's College Chapel Cambridge and Fairford church in Gloucestershire"* (Unpublished notes by Peter Gibson, 2003 revised and expanded by Warwick Burton, 2010).

(Taken from CMP, 3.4.4)



Existing roof of St Michael le Belfrey

4.2.3 Roof

Significance **Moderate-High**

The roof pitches of St Michael le Belfrey date from the rebuilding of the church that took place between 1525 and 1537. These are relatively shallow, and rely on substantial shaped beams rather than trusses for support. The main timbers are in oak, with later timbers to ceiling, purlins and boarding on softwood. The lead on the Nave roof has graffiti dates of 1742 making the lead well over its average lifespan. However, indications of repairs in the roof timbers below suggest the lead has been taken up and re-laid. The North and South Aisle roofs are also in lead but are laid in considerably smaller widths to the sheets, making it likely the roofs to have been re-laid in the 20th century.

4.2.4 North Landscaping

Significance **Moderate-High**

This area, which currently consists of a mixture of a grassed area and modern paving slabs, is designated below ground as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

4.2.5 West elevation

Significance **High**

The west front forms the principal elevation as the main (and only public) entrance is here and the area to the west is open ground providing uninterrupted distance views of this elevation. The centrally placed west door and window are framed beneath a four centred moulded arch with carved spandrels springing from three stage buttress piers with cross gabled and crocketed pinnacles. The west doorway is similar to those in the aisles and has a band of cusped lozenge panels beneath a gabled door head with carved tympanum. Much of this elevation was rebuilt or refaced as part of the works between 1867 and 1868 when the stained glass windows and tracery and the bellcote were replaced and the porch added. It has historical interest as the work of the architect George Fowler Jones who also re-designed the internal layout of the church in 1853 and was responsible for building or substantially altering a number of other churches in the York area in Victorian Gothic style.

(Taken from CMP, 2.5.3)

4.2.6 West landscaping

Significance **Moderate-High**

This area, the current finishes of which are a mixture of modern paving slabs and small grassed areas, is designated below ground as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.



Mensa Stone



Ledgers

4.2.7 Mensa Stone, Ledgers and Tiles

Significance Mensa Stone **Moderate-High**

Ledgers **Low-Moderate**

Tiles **Low**

The floor surfaces would appear to have been regularly re-laid during the life of the building. References in the Churchwarden Accounts include the nave being repaved 1715-1716 and the chancel levelled and repaved 1679 and then raised a step and repaved with encaustic tiles in 1883-1884. It is likely that when the pews were replaced or when repair works were undertaken close to, or involving, the floor then it would have been re-laid, possibly with the removal of burials. Based upon the exposure of the bases of the arcades it would appear that the current floor levels (with the exception of the raised pew platforms), follow that of the rebuilt early 16th century church with successive layers of burials removed during the various phases of re-levelling, re-pewing or re-paving.

The current floor surfaces include flat memorial stones in the narthex (presumably relocated from the nave following the works of 1867-1868), memorial stones in the nave (with any stone surface under the wooden pew platforms removed when they were installed), encaustic tiles in the chancel and stone paving within the sanctuary. The memorial slabs have been relocated on so many occasions, and in-situ burials removed, that any association with relevant burials has almost certainly been lost. The main area of interest as regards the floor surface is the possible mensa from the Minster high altar. The oldest in-situ part of the floor, the GPS survey revealed it may cover a burial vault. If indeed the Medieval mensa of the Minster's high altar reputedly relocated from York Minster in 1617 (Johnston writing in 1669 quoted in RCHM 1981, xliii), it is one of the most significant altar components in York.

The floor treatment is variable with the pew platforms and patchwork repaired chancel tiles having low significance. The flat memorial stones are, however, of local historic interest and make a positive contribution to the character of the building.

The floor level is of interest as it has not built up over the years, suggesting archaeological layers are likely to be relatively close to the surface with an absence of deep Victorian deposits – which were presumably removed during various phases of re-levelling.

The archaeological potential at St Michael le Belfrey is not fully understood and there have been only limited historical archaeological interventions at the site. Investigation of York Archive Gazetteer revealed that an Archaeological Watching Brief in September 1993 observed modern topsoil and backfill to a depth of 0.60m below the ground surface in the contractor's trenches (York Archive Gazetteer, site code: 1993.1019). No records of archaeological interventions were retrieved from the online Archaeology Data Service entries.

An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment was carried out in January 2022 by On-Site Archaeology Ltd. Refer to Appendix H. This highlights that *"In general the proposed re-ordering will entail relatively shallow ground reduction, between 300mm and 500mm. This would impact upon post-medieval, and possibly medieval deposits at the earliest, where these had not*

already been removed by the construction of vaults... The deepest anticipated groundworks would be for the construction of an immersion font, which would be approximately 2.20m deep, and would therefore have the potential to encounter the top of Roman archaeology." (O-SA, Jan 2022).

O-SA also undertook an archaeological investigation during the digging of 2 No trial pits in May 2022 as part of structural investigations. *"The investigation revealed potentially pre-16th century church construction deposits which indicated the possible reuse of foundations and an earthen floor. Deposits related to the 19th century re-ordering of the church were also recorded."* The trial pit located within the north aisle also uncovered frequent disarticulated human bone considered to be a deliberate deposit of human bones approximately 500mm below floor level giving an indication of what may be revealed as part of the wider in-ground works. (O-SA, May 2022).

A Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey, completed 6 September 2010 by Dr Masinton, Archaeology Department, University of York and a Geophysical Survey Report based on a ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey carried out by Magnitude Surveys Ltd in March 2019 has provided useful evidence regarding the location and depth of voids beneath the floor surface. The GPR surveys revealed that the floor has a number of below ground features explained by the long time depth of occupation of the site. St Michael le Belfrey was built in the area above one wing of the Roman Principia. Moreover there is thought to have been a church on the site since at least the 7th century with re-buildings, additions and demolitions likely to have occurred as the church fabric adapted over the centuries.

Four areas of voids within the church were interpreted as probable graves by the Masinton survey. It is likely that there are numerous, mainly post-medieval burials in all of the aisles as it was common practice to be buried within the church and burial fees provided an important source of funding for the church. The most noticeable void (in the area below the mensa) is likely to represent a burial vault and has a depth in the range of 2-3m. The earliest record of the floor being re-laid dates to c.1630 but it is possible that this slab, and any vault beneath, is earlier, with subsequent alterations to the floor not affecting it (Masinton 2006).

The Magnitude survey also identifies the presence of voids below the ledger stones within the aisles of the nave and narthex at depths of approximately 0.15m to 0.6m. However the survey does not appear to give support to Masinton with regard to the deep burial vault beneath the mensa stone. Instead from their Radargram 2482, Magnitude show a shallow vault with a possible back filled void beneath which they have interpreted as *'likely disturbed ground used to fill in the void beneath the slabs with rubble material'* (Magnitude, 7.3.2.2)

In contrast to the nave, Masinton (2010, 3) described the chancel as 'relatively quiet' with much fewer below ground archaeological deposits. The survey revealed the possibility of buried wall foundations from earlier building phases. Masinton concluded 'the site has complex below-ground deposits which must be treated in a sensitive manner if any work were to go forward which might disturb it [sic]' (2010, 3).



Wall memorials including The Royal Arms of Queen Anne



Wall memorials including Squire Memorial

Interestingly the Magnitude survey notes the presence of a *'hyperboilc reflection'* in the centre of the chancel at a depth of approximately 0.4 m and 0.5m below the surface, suggesting a casket with void space may be present. However they do qualify this, noting that *'another origin cannot be ruled out as the same response could also be caused by another buried object.'* (Magnitude, 7.2.3). It would not therefore be unreasonable to conclude that the other object could be buried wall foundations as noted above by Masinton.

4.2.8 Memorials

Significance Wall memorials **Moderate**

Squire Memorial **Moderate-High**

The Royal Arms of Queen Anne **Moderate-High**

Lord Mayoral Boards **Low-Moderate**

In general the wall monuments and benefactor's boards are of local interest, however, some by virtue of their quality, early date and historic interest are of considerable significance. These include one of the earliest known cartouches in central York to Anne Walker (1687) which has scrolls mixed with foliage.

Due to its size, elaboration, quality of craftsmanship and detailed genealogical information, the monumental effigy to Sir Robert Squire, 1707, and Priscilla his wife, 1711, with nearly life-size figures of Sir Robert and his wife standing in a niche with Corinthian pilasters and open pediment, is of considerable interest.

4.2.9 Northeast Wall

Significance **Moderate-High**

The east elevation of the church is made up of 14th century fabric extending from the south aisle behind the altar to the south edge of the north aisle. The Conservation Management Plan (p.44) notes that "Minster craftsmen tended to be redeployed to work in Dean and Chapter parish churches such as St Michael le Belfrey and it seems likely that the east window and stonework beneath was the work of Minster craftsman and belongs to the pre-1525 church." 16th century fabric occupies the remainder of the north aisle.

The 1852 Ordnance Survey map shows the outline of a former building to the east of the church aligned with the north aisle. The current curtained partition and oak posts enclosing the east wall within the north aisle was installed in 1977 replacing a previous screen between the organ and vestry.

Throughout the history of the building new openings have been made and those no longer required built up and incorporated into future changes. Notable examples of this are the blocked window to the east wall of the south aisle, which may be part of the earlier church on the site, and the blocked door opening in the north wall, third bay from the east, which it is thought was infilled when the current window above was installed.

A previous Listed Building Consent reference 03/00168/LBC dated 28 February 2003 was granted for the forming of an opening within the east wall of the north aisle, although these works were not undertaken. The opening was aligned to the right of the existing east end aisle window when viewed from inside the church to improve the connection into the vestry.

4.2.10 Narthex Screen

Significance **Low**

The narthex is separated from the body of the church by a partially glazed oak screen constructed in 1886 with three double door openings providing access to the nave and side aisles. As noted within the Conservation Management Plan, *It was described by Hargrove (1907, 04) as a 'graceful oak and glass screen...to prevent the draught, which had been seriously felt by the congregation'.*



Medieval Benches



Pews (Ground Floor)

4.2.11 Medieval Benches and Pews (Ground Floor)

Significance Benches **High**

Aisle (Collegiate) Pews **Moderate-High**

Nave Pews: **Low-Moderate**

There are seven loose **benches** in the aisles, four with bench ends carved with poppy heads, including two with ends carved with window tracery, six of which incorporate 16th century carved woodwork. There are two with scrolled ends, also 16th century, and one with turned legs that is 17th century. As suggested by Wilson & Mee (1998, 131) the six oldest benches are likely to be part of the church furnishings of the rebuilt church and date from between the 1530s and 1550s. This would make these benches the oldest known internal woodwork within the building. Following an examination by T. L. Phelps (Fine Furniture Restoration, letter to Peter Gibson, Church Warden, St Michael le Belfrey 23 April 2004), most of the benches have been reduced in height and length and adapted many years ago. They were most likely part of choir stalls or tall pews with book rest shelves.

The **pews in the nave** are of little significance. They are, however, of interest for the quality of their craftsmanship and role within the wider scheme. They are also the work of George Fowler Jones, a respected local and regional architect who designed a number of churches and church restorations in the Gothic style. A minor curiosity is the way the nave pews are boarded across the piers so that the congregation cannot enter from the aisles. This is inconvenient and a surprising design detail. Overall, the pews have an imposing character on the quality of the internal space due to their extent and the use of dark oak.

The **aisle pews** are of greater interest than the nave pews because their collegiate arrangement is unusual in a parish church context, especially alongside forward-facing pews (most have not survived due to the influence of ecclesiology on church re-orderings). In comparison, the aisle pews display a greater degree of architectural elaboration and carvings and they retain their doors. The primary significance of the aisle pews is considered to be their collegiate arrangement due to the rarity of this arrangement to survive. It was not unusual for a few seats to be orientated east / west at the east end of aisles in that they faced the pulpit area (such an arrangement can be seen at St Michael le Belfrey on the 1852 OS map prior to the 1853 re-ordering).

However, to have a near complete scheme, all the way along, is much rarer. The scheme has not completely survived in its full form as originally it extended as far as the second bay from the east end with the final eastern bays in the aisles reserved for children's stalls forming part of this scheme of 1853. The design of such pews in the 1850s, when ecclesiology was a major force in church schemes, is remarkable and of historic interest. Yet, this is not an innovative arrangement, indeed it would have been regarded as "old fashioned" in the mid-19th century.

Such pews are also typical of 19th century college chapels thus there are a large number of examples in this context.

Of some significance is the date and style of the ends of the collegiate pews with their low doors. Again these are old fashioned and represent a lingering vestige of box pews. The carved poppy heads are also a feature of early Victorian congregational seating schemes rather than later ones (although they remained popular for stalls). The pews display a reasonably good quality of workmanship typical of the 19th century. However in terms of artistic or architectural quality they are not innovative, nor are they of exceptional quality, but repeat commonly used details during the early 19th century.

It is of interest that this scheme has not embraced the full tenets of ecclesiology. Perhaps the decision to re-order the church seating arrangements in this way respected the wishes of the congregation for a low church. The capacity for the aisle pews to seat larger numbers of people may account for the decision to orientate them east / west, although once their greater width and length, (in comparison to the forward facing nave pews), has been accounted for the differences in seating numbers is unlikely to have been sufficient to explain this arrangement. It is interesting to speculate that this hints at a greater diversity of mid-late 19th century church seating arrangements than commonly appreciated.

The significance of the aisle pews has been upgraded from that given in the Conservation Management Plan of Some to Moderate-High as since its writing in 2011, collegiate pews have been removed from other buildings including Hull Minster, where some have been retained and Bath Abbey, where they have been removed entirely.

Job Title:
ST MICHAEL LE BELFREY
CONTEMPORARY REORDERING

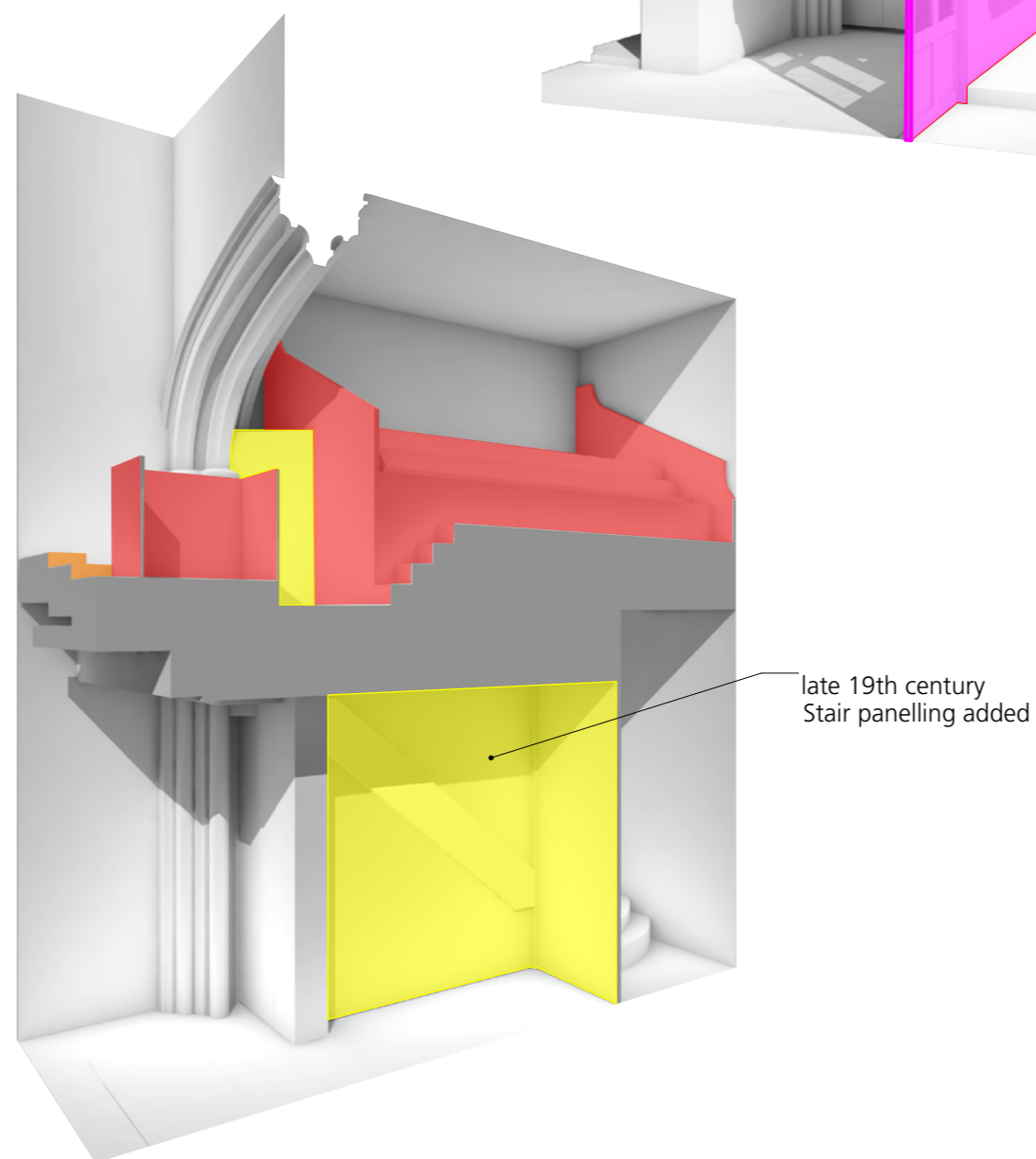
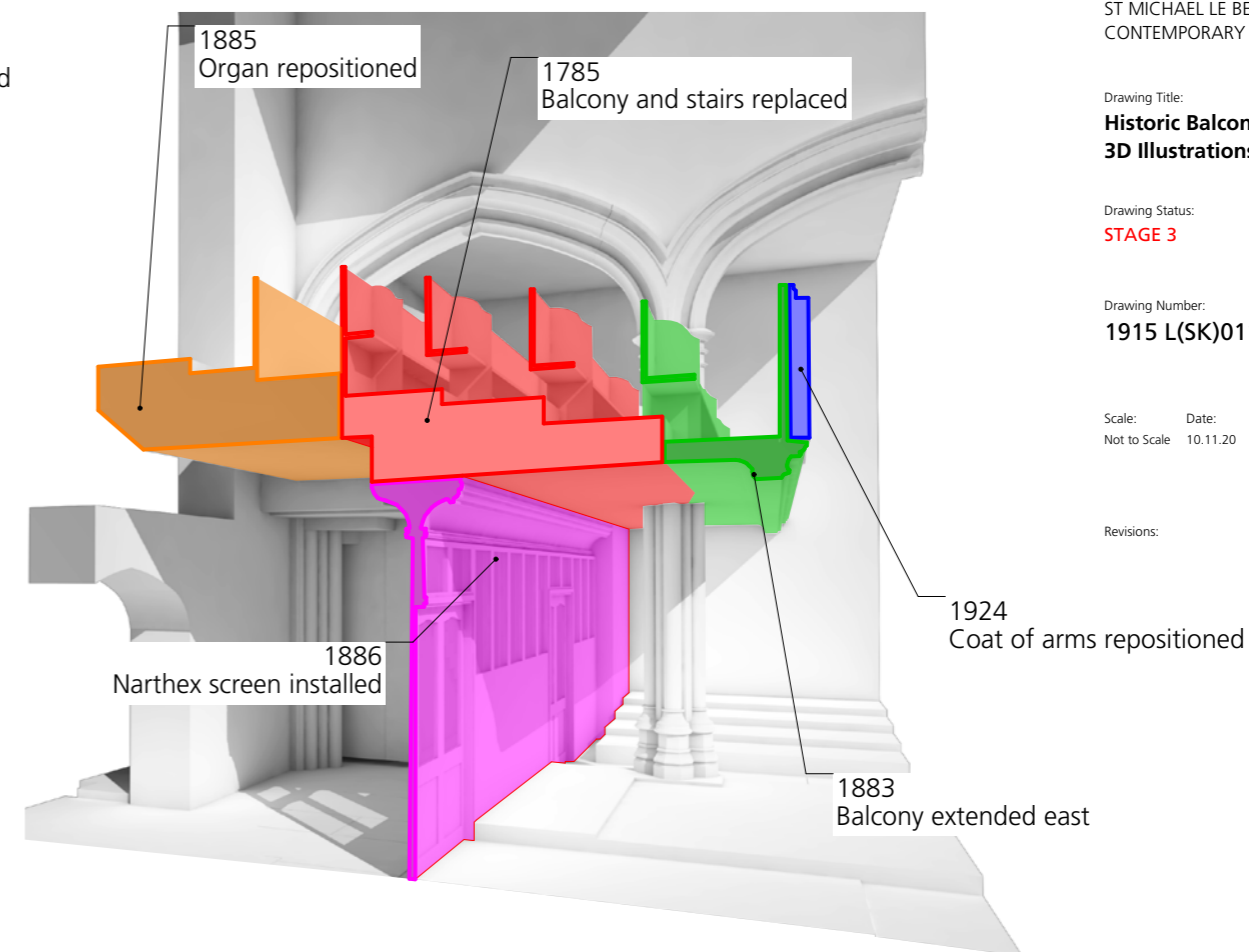
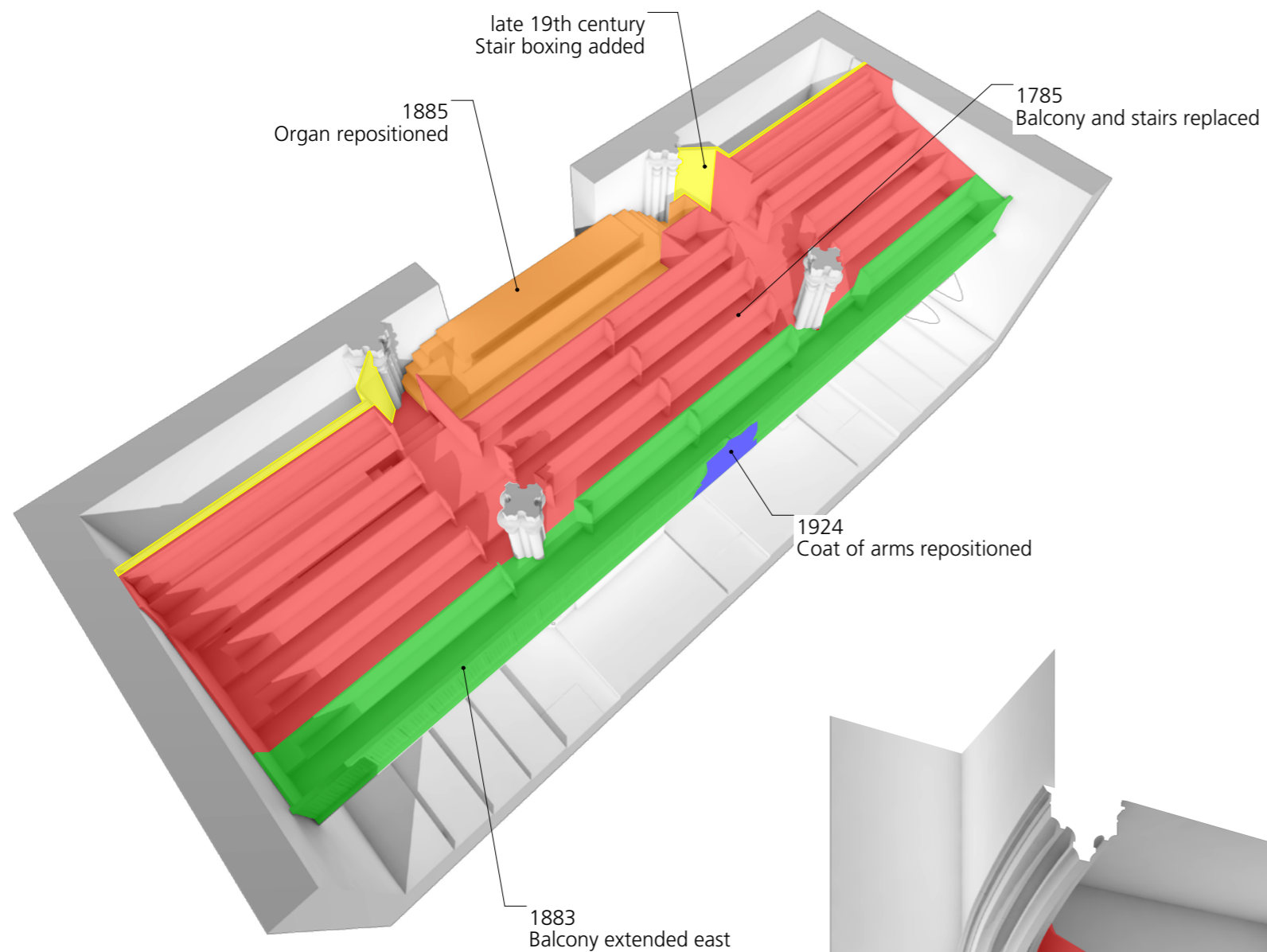
Drawing Title:
Historic Balcony Development
3D Illustrations

Drawing Status:
STAGE 3

Drawing Number:
1915 L(SK)011

Scale: Date: Drawn: Reviewed:
Not to Scale 10.11.20 IT/External EB

Revisions:



4.2.12 Staircases

Significance Staircases **High**

Boxing in of staircases **Low**

The two staircases leading to the existing gallery are accepted as being of high significance, because, as Gothic balustraded staircases dating from the installation of the gallery in 1785, there are no other known examples of this style and period in English churches. Like the gallery, they were designed by William Belwood and are identical. They were built to be open to view but were boarded from viewing from the ground floor when the narthex was completed in the late nineteenth century.

A condition and significance study was undertaken in 2019 by Charles Taylor Woodwork, and an independent gallery expert, Hugh Harrison, was consulted in 2020. Mr Taylor considered that the significance of the staircases was undermined by the later boarding which obscured them from view and by the lack of a paint or polished finish when built. More importantly he concluded that retention and heavy use of the staircases as part of the reordering scheme would pose expensive and possibly unresolvable challenges, particularly because of key areas of non-compliance with modern safety standards. Mr Harrison upheld the view of the Georgian Group that the staircases are of high significance.

4.2.13 Gallery and Pews (Gallery)

Significance Gallery **High**

Children's Pews **High**

Remaining Pews **Low-Moderate**

The gallery was designed by William Belwood, a distinguished architect who worked at national as well as local level, to replace an existing gallery and specifically to house a new organ and to expand seating capacity at a time when the preaching of the Rev William Richardson was more than filling the church. However, the gallery did not appeal to nineteenth-century congregations, and faculties were obtained to take it down in both 1853 and 1883, but not implemented. The 1853 faculty stated:- "to take down and remove any part or portion of the present galley at the west end...and to make alterations therein for the purpose of improving the appearance of the said gallery and of causing the same to disfigure the church in a smaller degree than at present". There is no record of the exact alterations made to the gallery in 1853 at the same time as the present ground-floor pews were installed.

The main purpose of the 1883 faculty was to remove the organ, but, instead of demolishing the gallery, bench seating was installed in place of the organ in the central section, and a fascia added. The rare children's pews, believed to date from 1785, survive to the NW and SW corners of the gallery. The coat of arms of Queen Anne was moved from the reredos and attached to the fascia of the gallery in 1926. Twentieth-century commentators on the building, such as Pevsner, have not mentioned the gallery as a significant architectural feature. The following text is extracted from the 2011 Conservation Management Plan:

The architectural significance of the west gallery has been compromised by successive phases of alteration and thus is considered to be of considerable rather than expectational significance. The original gallery has been lost and the rebuild from 1785 has been much altered, albeit with some survivals, for example in some of the benches and side panels and possibly also the identical stairs which date from between c.1785 and c.1830s.

It seems likely that much of the remainder of the current gallery arrangement was formed in 1885-1886 when the organ was removed and narthex screen and gallery front added. Arguably the late 19th century screen has made the gallery more visually intrusive as it cuts across the exceptionally significant 16th century arcades.

Despite this negative impact on other significant fabric and the aesthetic qualities of the church, the gallery retains some late 18th century fabric, and is thus amongst the earliest galleries to survive in central York. Indeed only four of the Medieval York churches acquired galleries in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The Royal Arms of Queen Anne on the gallery front carved in 1712 is also a significant feature. Finally, the gallery is important for its plan form and relationship with the other more secular spaces within the church.

However, since its writing, The Georgian Group and the Church Buildings Council have argued for High significance and an independent gallery expert commissioned by the church, Mr Hugh Harrison, has supported this view, subject to a clearer understanding of the scale of modification to the gallery since it was built in 1785.



Proposed West Elevation with New Openings

5.0 Assessment of the Effects of the Proposals

5.1 Identify the impact of the proposal on the parts, the building and on the surrounding heritage assets.

This section describes and assesses the impact of the proposal on the parts and on the whole, as well as with regards to surrounding heritage assets, including the conservation area itself.

It discusses:

- *whether the Proposed Development preserves the significance of the listed buildings within the Site;*
- *whether the Proposed Development preserves the character and appearance of this part of the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area; and*
- *whether the Proposed Development preserves the setting of nearby designated heritage assets within the environs of the Site, including listed buildings and scheduled monuments.*

The section also explains how we intend, where possible, to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the parts affected and the whole, and of the broader context.

St Michael le Belfrey (Externals)

- 5.1.1 Masonry repairs
- 5.1.2 Environmental protective glazing
- 5.1.3 Roof repairs
- 5.1.4 Refuse Store and Bicycle Racks
- 5.1.5 New entrances
- 5.1.6 Lighting
- 5.1.7 New sloping surface and drainage

St Michael le Belfrey (Internals)

- 5.1.8 New Floor, Mensa Stone, Ledgers and Tiles
- 5.1.9 Memorials
- 5.1.10 Northeast Wall
- 5.1.11 Medieval Benches and Pews (Ground Floor)
- 5.1.12 Narthex Screen, Staircases, Gallery and Pews (Gallery)



Fabric Repairs Key

- Descalce masonry
- Re-point masonry with lime mortar
- Descalce and re-point masonry
- Light brush to remove algae
- Remove algae and re-point masonry
- Replace masonry - re-bedding and re-painting
- Dawkings specific to the fabric repair package
- Areas of insufficient detail to document at time of survey

Cross refer to Structural Engineer's repair drawings and specifications throughout.

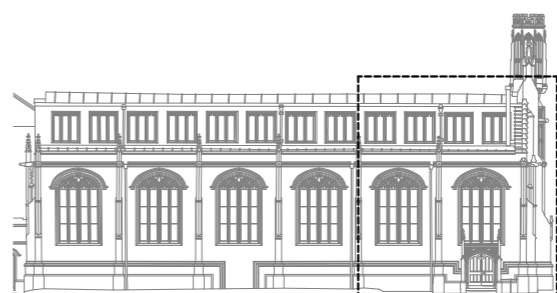
Areas highlighted in pink are intended to identify key elements from the structural repair drawings. For the full extent and scope of structural repair refer to the structural drawings.

Common Notes:

Cross refer to LDN Fabric repair schedule External Stonework Specification & Allowances S(21)001 throughout.

Window references indicated in roman script e.g. nIX refer to (31) drawing series for details of refurbishment package

- Refer to separate drawing package for roof refurbishment works.
- Stepped gable detailed on West and East Elevation drawings
- For details of rainwater goods (clerestory + main facades), refer to separate drawing package.
- Thick blue line to Nave clerestory indicates approx. level of proposed new chase in stonework to accept a new lead upstand flashed / terminated in the junction. Refer to roof package for details.
- Reverse (unseen) elevation of the parapet not surveyed at present.
- Level of existing lead flashing top course level beyond.
- Thick blue line to South, North and East Aisle parapet walls represents the proposed line of a full new lead course. Refer to roof package for details.
- West tower detailed on separate drawings
- New replacement finial where existing is missing
- Buttress 7 repair detailed on North Elevation drawings
- Buttress ES (A) detailed on separate drawings
- Note: Refer to separate drawing package for window repairs and reference to specialist report.
- Side (unseen) elevations of the buttresses looking North and South not surveyed at present.
- Grey hatched areas not surveyed at present.



NOTES:
DRAWINGS ASSEMBLED FROM MEASURED SURVEY BY CT SURVEYS

SCALE:
METRIC - ALL DIMENSIONS GIVEN IN THESE DRAWINGS ARE METRIC
0 500 1000 2000mm
2m
IMPERIAL - INTENDED AS AN INDICATIVE GUIDE ONLY
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 feet

5.1.1 Masonry Repairs

Need

- The most important issue regarding the current condition of the Grade I Listed Building is the need for a significant and sensitive stonework conservation to remove any risks of further damages to its masonry.

Proposal

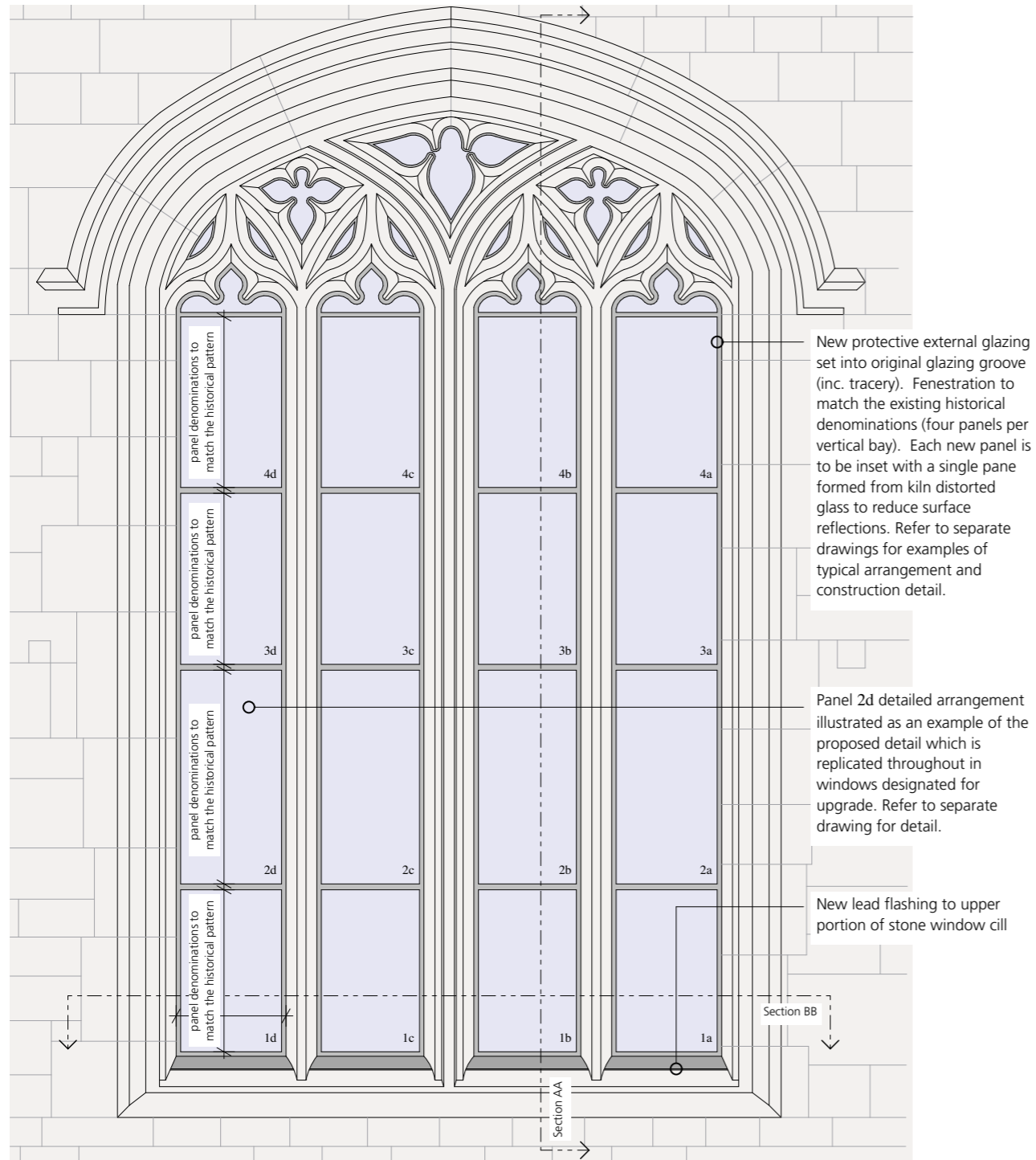
- Replacement of all the necessary decayed structural elements of the building.
- For the replacement of the decayed stones, the most appropriate stone will be chosen, both aesthetically and petrographically.
- De-scaling and re-pointing masonry with lime mortar and removing algae.
- External limestone walling and bell tower repaired using limestone.

Impact

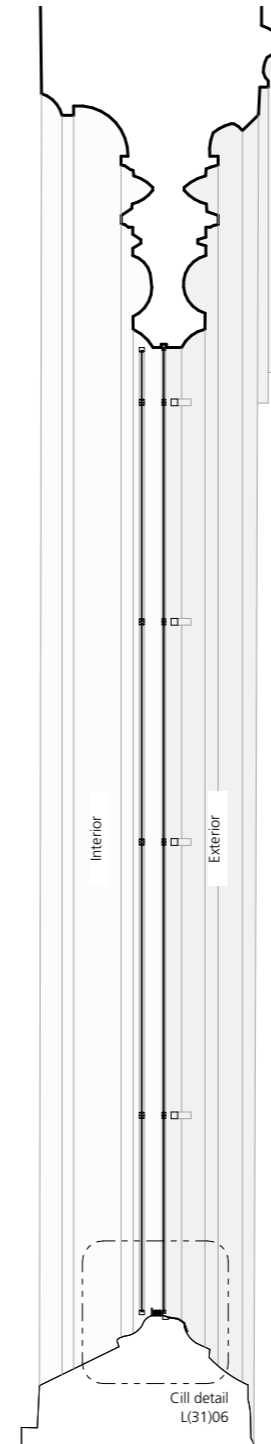
- The proposed repair will better reveal the significance of the historic masonry of the church and hence extend the life of the Listed Building by safeguarding its future.
- The proposal is highly beneficial to the preservation of the character and appearance of the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area, and the setting of York Minster.

Mitigation

- The proposal will secure the optimum viable use of the masonry of the Listed Building in support of its long-term conservation.
- The proposal will complement the unique historical character of the site and incredibly rich and complex built heritage of York.
- The proposal for the repair of the external masonry of St Michael le Belfrey will have benefits linked to social values, and the economic growth of locally-based businesses, ensuring a focus on sustainable development.



External elevation of window nVI on the North facade
Window with proposed upgrade



Section AA
Window with proposed upgrade

5.1.2 Environmental Protective Glazing

Need

- Following a recent condition survey by stained glass specialists Barley Studio (see **Appendix C**), the stained glass was found to be structurally sound and generally in good order. However, considering the significance of the windows, the noted ongoing corrosion of the medieval glass of the east window and the beginnings of paint loss to the aisle windows, the provision of internally ventilated environmental glazing has been recommended. The windows are thought to be one of the largest collections of mid-16th C glass in any parish church in England so their protection is imperative.

Proposal

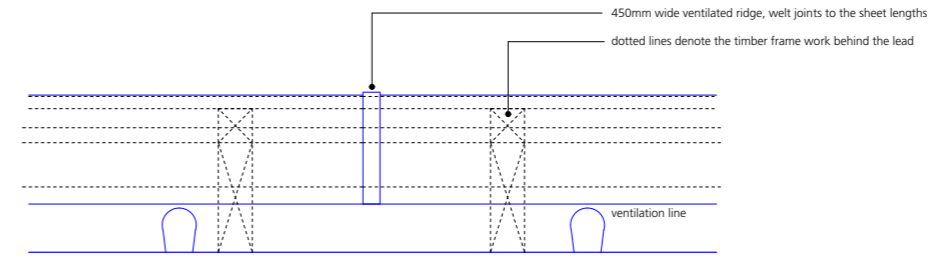
- Medieval stained glass windows carefully removed and repaired offsite by specialist glazier.
- Stonework at window openings carefully repaired by specialist stonemason.
- Medieval stained glass windows re-fitted along with internally ventilated environmental glazing.
- Consideration being given to commissioning new 21st Century stained glass to one of the north aisle window, replacing existing 20th century glazing panels.

Impact

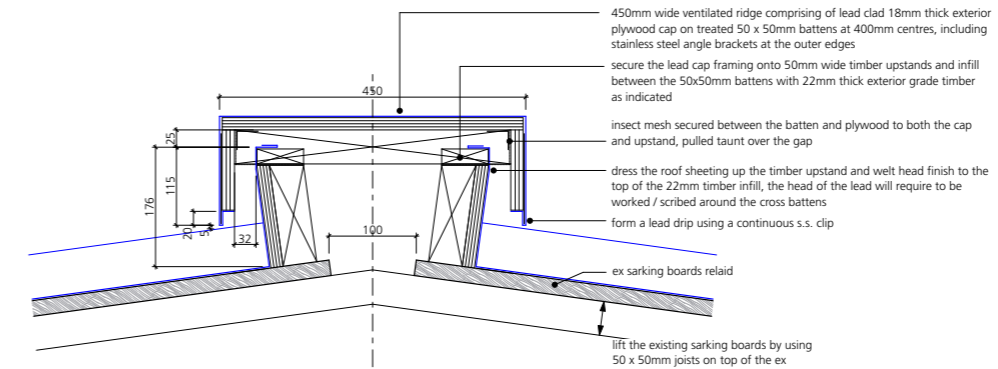
- Due to the age of the stained glass (14th and 16th century), the delicate colour pigments used require that the environmental protective glazing (EPG) is of large format panels to promote light transmittance and prevent shadowing on the stained glass from the EPG.
- The existing stained glass panels requiring safeguarding will be brought inwards and protected by the internally ventilated environmental glazing, while aesthetic improvements will be made to the windows, such as reducing the visual impact of heavy mending leads and stabilising previous repairs (such as failed edge bonds and backplates).
- Although the addition of internally ventilated environmental glazing will alter the appearance of the existing stained-glass windows, we note that a similar EPG installation has been successfully carried out at the adjacent York Minster. Our proposal at St Michael le Belfrey draws on York Minster's technique as precedent in order to protect the significant stained glass collection of the Grade I Listed Building.

Mitigation

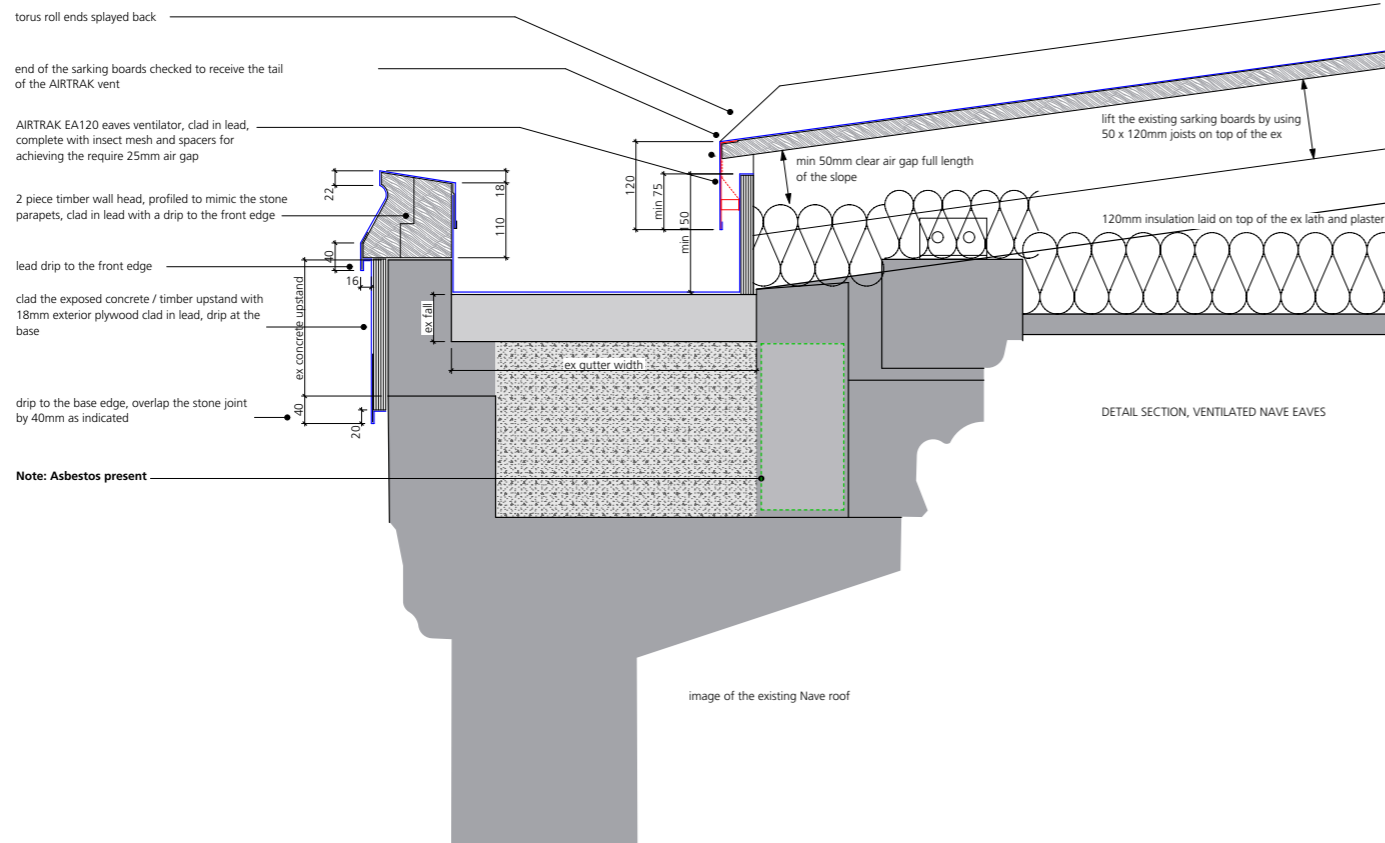
- Internally ventilated environmental glazing will reduce the risk of further damaging of this heritage asset of the Listed Building and aid in its future safeguarding.
- The proposed new gallery and staircase insertions within the Listed Building, which are part of the contemporary re-ordering of the church, are arranged in such manner to reveal larger parts of the stained glass collection that are currently not appreciated to the same extent. The insertions also provide opportunities for viewing the adjacent medieval windows from new elevated vantage points.



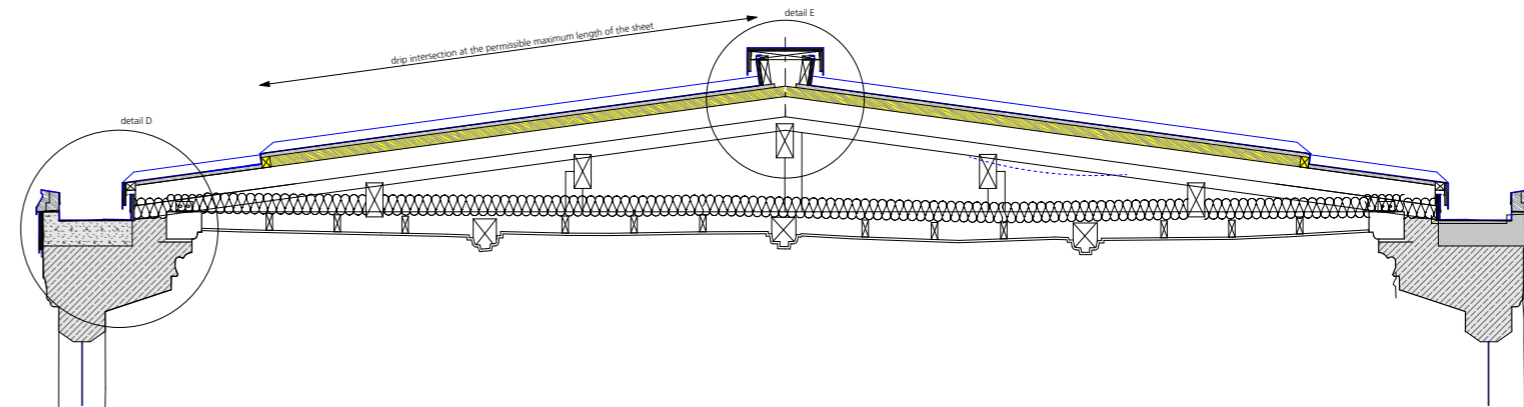
PART ELEVATION NAVÉ VENTILATED RIDGE



DETAIL SECTION NAVÉ VENTILATED RIDGE



DETAIL SECTION, VENTILATED NAVÉ EAVES



5.1.3 Roof Repairs

Need

- The lead roofs are generally functioning but are very aged with short laps, pulled flashings and other weak details in the leadwork which have been and could still be prone to water ingress. More specifically, the Nave roof covering requires serious attention.
- Some of the lead rolls are cracking and should be addressed as well as potentially ventilating beneath the leadwork and insulating the roof are now recommended.
- Many of the roof parapets, finials and pinnacles have been removed or lost over time.
- Access for maintenance should be improved by providing safe access into the roof void, where possible, and to each roof slope without the need to use the existing unsafe west parapet stairs.

Proposal

- Existing lead roof finishes replaced with code 8 lead sheeting on new ventilated and insulated build-up.
- At the east end of the nave roof, it is proposed to extend the roof slope eastwards to remove the existing verge gutter and improve the detailing to this area.
- Providing roof access system.
- Repair, where possible, and replacement of existing rainwater hoppers and downpipes.

Impact

- The proposed improvement works of the existing roof of the church will sustain and enhance the significance of this heritage asset and thus extend the life of the Grade I Listed Building.
- The proposal is highly beneficial to the preservation of the character and appearance of the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area, and the setting of York Minster.

Mitigation

- The replacement of the church roof covering is considered to be highly beneficial as the proposal will secure the optimum viable use of this heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation.
- The sections of the existing lead dating from the 1700's and identified with handprints and signatures will be carefully uplifted from the roof and set aside for exhibiting to the public.
- Archaeological watching brief will be in place when the roof is being replaced and will record findings as required by the Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation.



Proposed Refuse Store and Bicycle Racks

5.1.4 Refuse Store and Bicycle Racks

Need

- The bins provision and bicycles accommodation at St Michael le Belfrey is now ad hoc, where refuse bins are exposed along the side of No.12 Minster Yard and bicycles are locked to the existing railings surrounding the grassed area to the north.

Proposal

- The combined bin store and bicycle parking area is conceived as a finned screen set parallel to and the length of a structural bay of the church.
- The bin enclosure is provided with lockable gate access to the east side nearest the access doors to both the church rear and No.12 Minster Yard.
- The bike parking area is provided by a series of evenly spaced curving fins projecting out from the finned screen where, a maximum of 10 bicycles, can be supported on and locked against.

Impact

- To minimise the impact on the appearance of the Listed Building, the bin enclosure is kept open and without a lid - the top edge of the enclosure screen aligned with bottom edge of the stone base course of the church.
- It is also proposed that the screen will be coloured in a bronze tone to match other new elements proposed (such as the air source heat pump enclosure).
- The proposal will be visible from the adjacent York Minster, however, the high quality design and materiality of the proposed development remains sensitive to the historic character of the Minster neighbourhood area.

Mitigation

- The proposal seeks to deliver an improved usability of the currently unorganised bin store and bike area and by extension enhance the significance of the North landscaping of the Listed Building.



Proposed West Elevation in its Context

5.1.5 New entrances

Need

- A larger public entrance and exit to cope with the numbers using the church for its main services, concerts, cafes and other events is currently needed, as there is often overcrowding near the exit to the church after such important events.
- Easier entry and exit for those with mobility problems, without blocking the entry for others.
- Keeping the present wooden doors fully open is problematic on many days of the year because the wind tunnel effect around York Minster sends a blast of air straight into the church.
- It has been argued that the existing north and south doors at the west end of the aisles could provide alternatives to the proposed wider main entrance. Although these doors can be helpful in emergencies, neither of them has sufficient internal space around it (in either the existing or the proposed new layout of the church) to function as an entrance or exit for significant numbers of people. Moreover, the exit from the south door is almost straight on to a street with a danger from passing traffic and high visitor footfall. Even if these problems could be overcome, the side entrances would not provide the welcoming appearance which is a key element in the overall objectives of the project.

Proposal

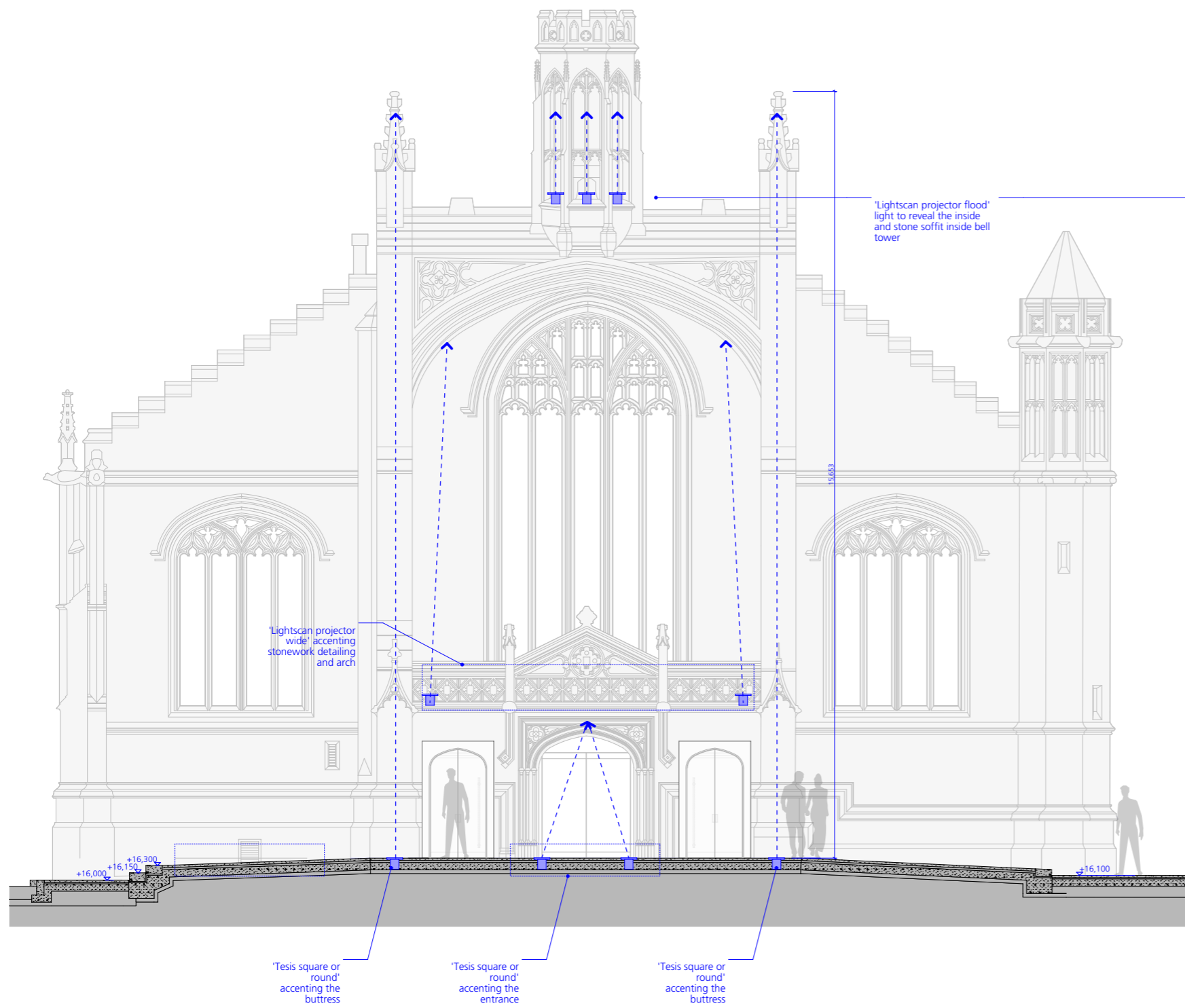
- Two new structural openings fitted with glazed doors formed to either side of the existing entrance are proposed for the West elevation of the Listed Building.
- The existing internal lobby doors will be replaced with glazed doors.

Impact

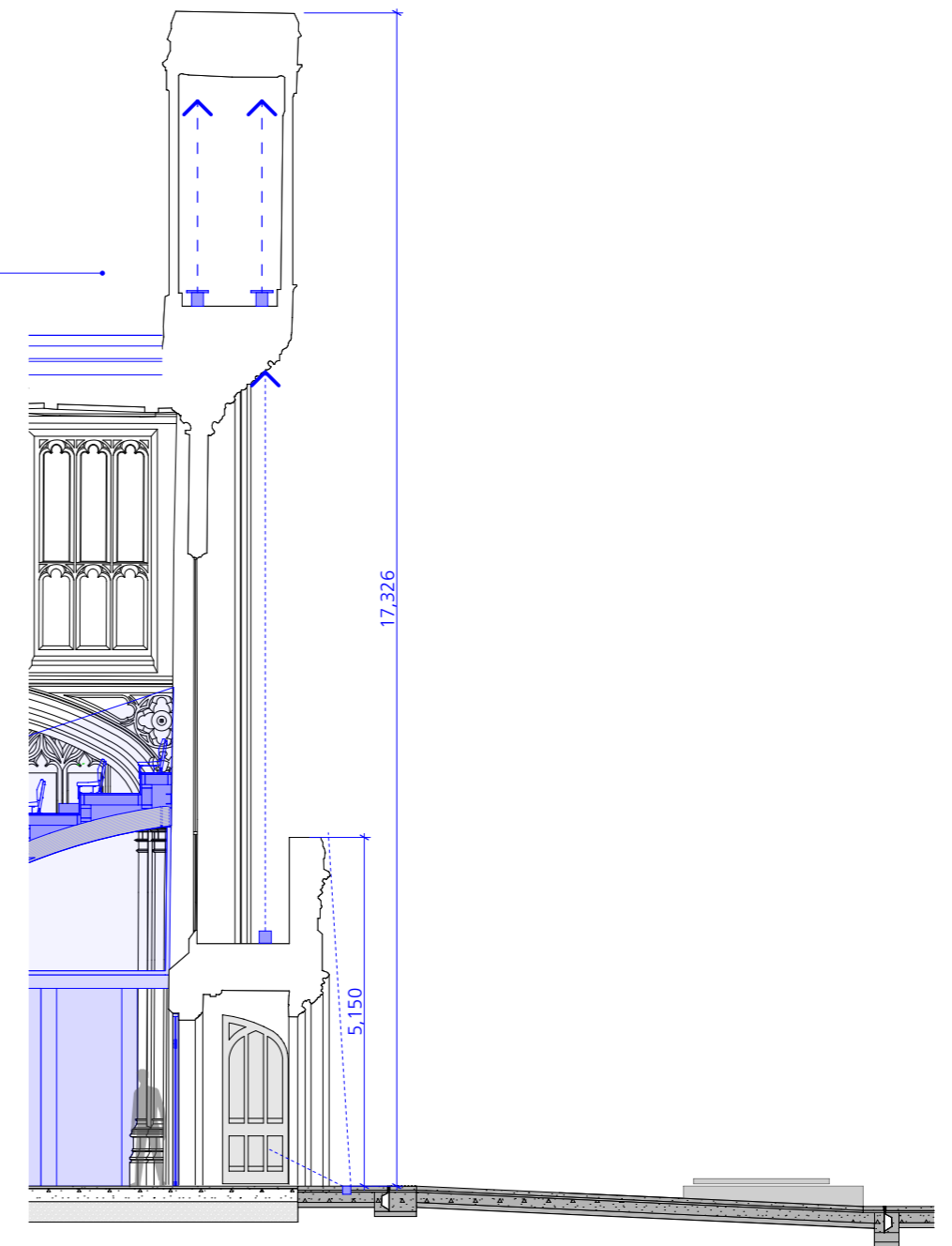
- Although there will be a loss of historic masonry, the stone of this elevation - which was refaced as part of later works, between 1867 and 1868 - will be carefully removed, recorded, and set aside for use in the masonry repairs of the Listed Building.
- The design team has carefully considered ways to respect and preserve the character and appearance of this part of the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area. For the design of the two openings the particular sensitivities that relate to townscape views have been also carefully considered. The proposal for two openings not only acknowledge and reflect on the symmetry of the Listed Building but also respond to the architectural style and composition of the front elevation of York Minster Cathedral.

Mitigation

- The new entrance will aid in securing the optimum viable use of the Listed Building as the building will continue to act as an active church, and hence allowing for the significance of this heritage asset to be further appreciated.
- An inviting entrance that improves accessibility, and helps alleviating perceived bottlenecks around the entrance and exit area.
- The proposal focuses on presenting a more open and welcoming presence of the use of the Listed Building to all with the opportunity of people outside the church to see into the daily life within the church, as well as being able to appear more transparent and open when viewed at night time.
- The proposal will assist with the mission of the church.



Proposed West Elevation | 1:50 @ A1



Section A-A Extract | 1:50 @ A1

Proposed External Lighting Scheme

5.1.6 Lighting

Need

- Promote the observation and experience of the Listed Building.
- Offer a more inclusive and safe night-time local economy with more people enjoying a vibrant cultural life.

Proposal

- 'Lightscan projector flood' lights within the base of the bell tower to illuminate the internal surfaces of the bell tower.
- 'Tesis square or round' lights accenting the two buttresses and the main entrance.
- 'Lightscan projector wide' accenting decorative stonework detailing and the main stone arch above the west window.

Impact

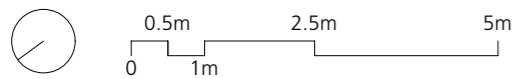
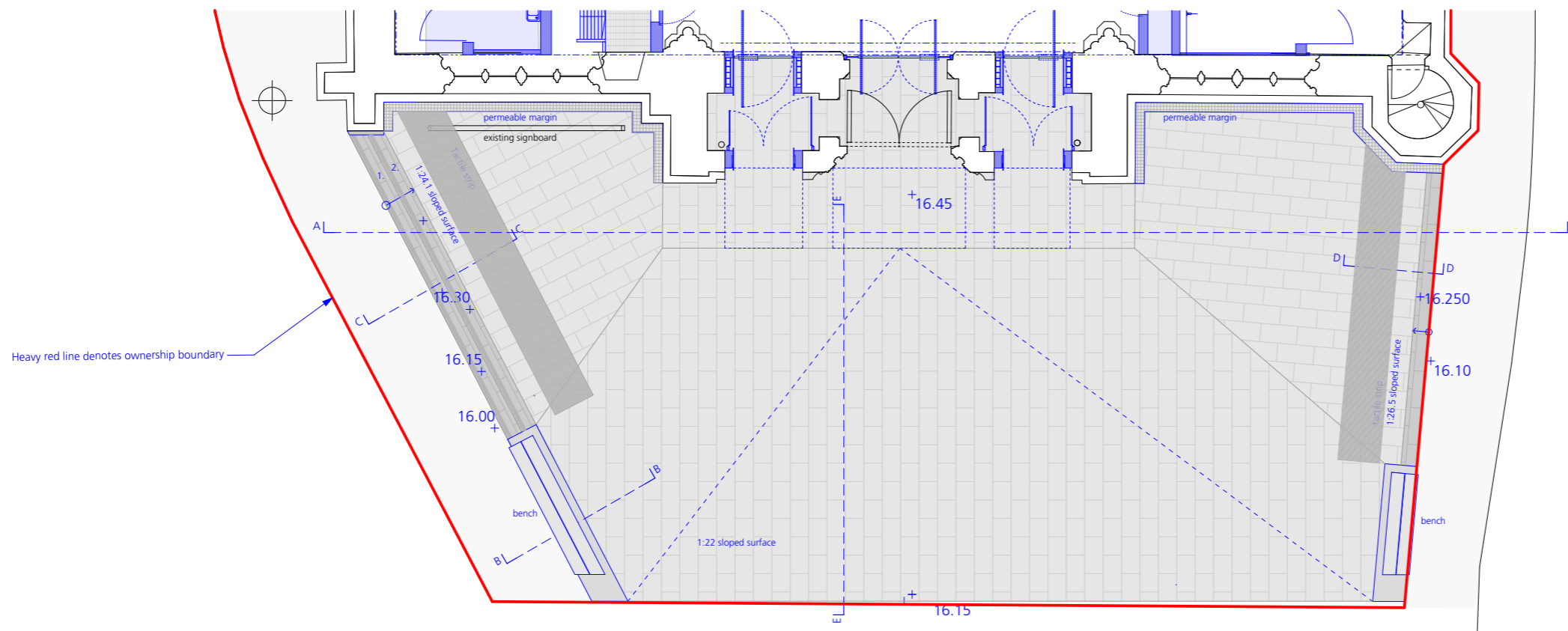
- The luminaire fixing locations will be respectful of the historic fabric of the Listed Building and will leave no permanent scarring.
- Steps were taken to minimise the level of luminance emitted from the proposed development. A reduced and sensitive approach to the historic context lighting scheme has been considered, so the proposal for the West elevation of the Listed Building will not distract from the significance of York Minster.

Mitigation

- By focusing only on highlighting the main architectural feature of this heritage asset, the proposal will visually contribute to the desired aesthetic presentation of both the Listed Building and its surroundings.
- The lighting proposal will improve the security to this part of the York Central Core Conservation Area.
- Different colours of light will be used to support various cultural and social causes.
- The proposal will elevate the presence of the Listed Building, helping the visibility and sustainability of the church in the community.



Landscape | Section A-A



5.1.7 New sloping surface and drainage

Need

- The entrance to the church is currently stepped and therefore not accessible by all users.

Proposal

- A new stone finished sloping surface access to front entrance is proposed.
- The stone margin at the junction between sloping surface and west wall will promote drainage.

Impact

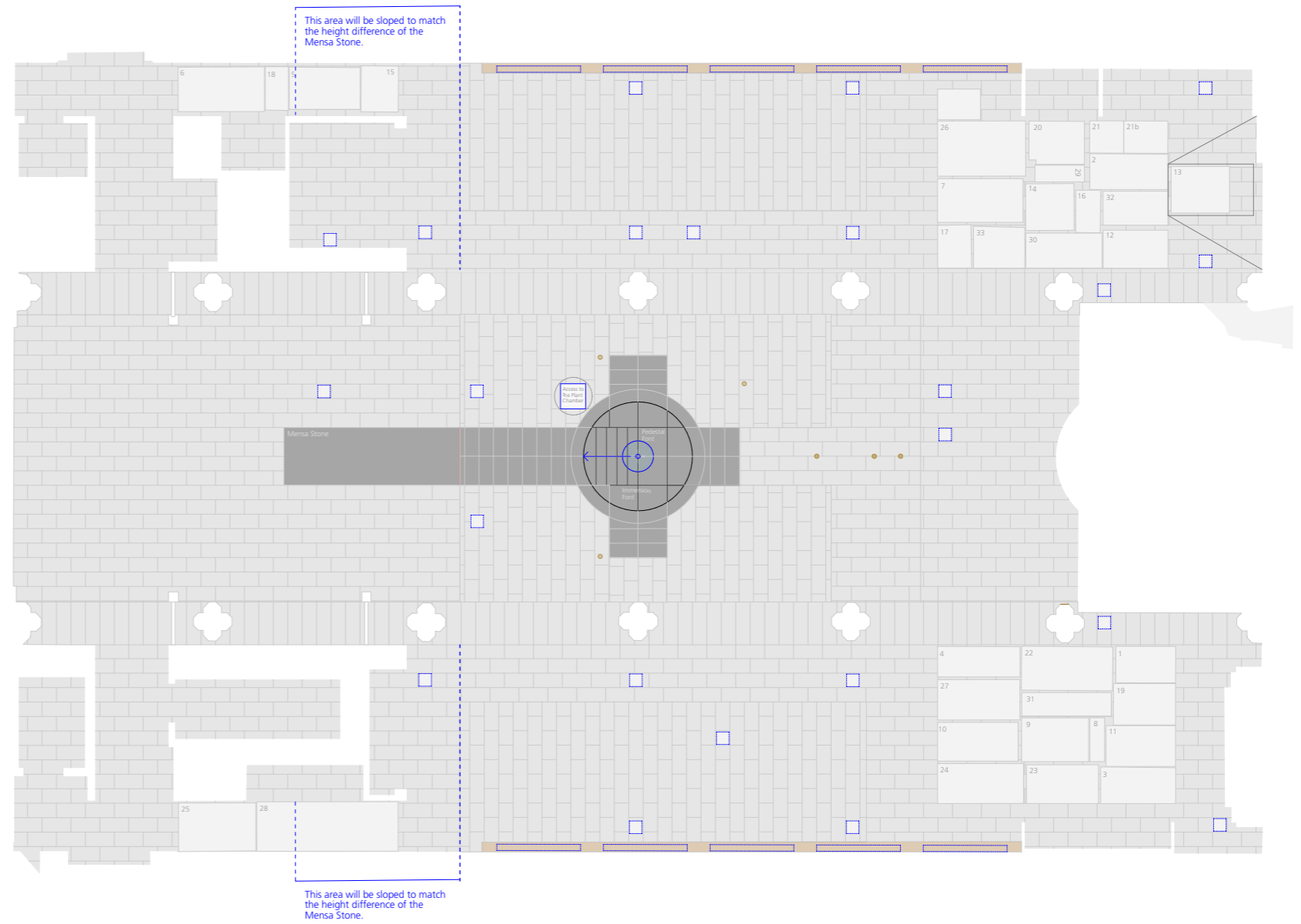
- The new stone finished sloping surface will abut the existing west elevation.
- The contextual design of the proposal that blends with the broader materiality of the existing environment aims to preserve the appearance of this part of the York Central Core Conservation Area, and hence positively affect the view from the corner of High Petergate and those heritage assets that share a visual connection with the west landscaping of St Michael le Belfrey.

Mitigation

- The new sloping surface will benefit the historic aspects of the wider Minster neighbourhood area by complementing York's rich built heritage.
- The new sloping surface provides full accessibility.



Interior of church looking east, c.1810'



Proposed floor and relocation of Ledgers

5.1.8 New Floor, Mensa Stone, Ledgers and Tiles

Need

- The ground floor level is not fully accessible which restricts some children and adults from visiting and worshipping.
- The existing floor finishes are uneven and present trip hazards.
- The existing floor construction is un-insulated.
- A robust floor finish is required as the seating arrangements will be changed regularly.
- Full immersion baptism is an important part of the Belfrey's ministry and there is a desire to highlight the baptism pool so that visitors can understand its significance.

Proposal

- Existing floor, including tiled finish, removed entirely.
- New level access limestone floor finish elsewhere.
- New limecrete floor slab incorporating underfloor heating.
- Mensa Stone retained, protected and conserved insitu.
- Ledger stones carefully removed, conserved and relocated on the northeast side of the church.
- Pit formed for new baptism pool and trenches for new services.

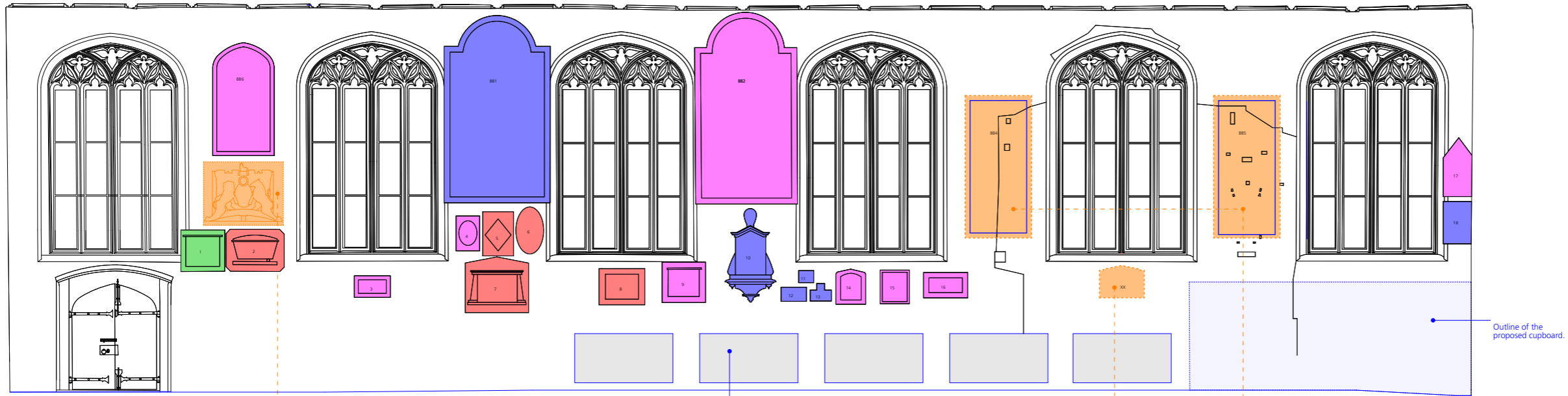
The Church Buildings Council and others have requested that the Belfrey considers locating the baptism pool nearer to the west end of the church in line with normal Anglican guidance and practice, as baptism is regarded as the entry point into the Christian faith and family. This guidance has been reviewed and the proposed location is in the nave reflecting the fact that several candidates are involved on each occasion as part of what is often a larger than usual service, and require considerable space for the supporters of the candidates to assemble around the pool. It would not therefore be appropriate to locate the pool in the enlarged welcome area, which will be connected with the rest of the church only through glass doors.

Impact

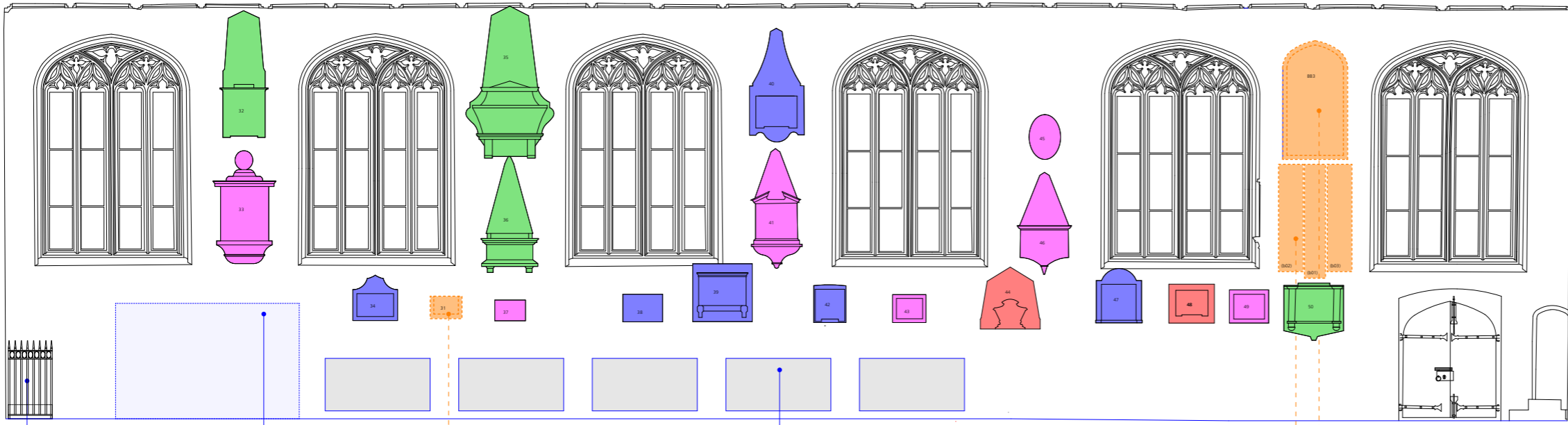
- Unknown archaeology may be uncovered during the removal of the floor and construction of the pit and services trenches. The Scheme of Investigation will confirm the requirements of the Archaeological Watching Brief which will monitor in-ground works and extract and/or record archaeological findings.
- The ledger stones will be re-laid in new positions, though they have most certainly been moved in the past.
- The church will have a new floor finish.

Mitigation

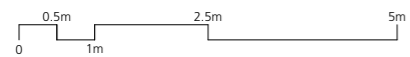
- The new floor finish will complement the existing historic fabric while providing a robust surface for a variety of uses.
- The new floor construction will be insulating and breathable.
- Underfloor heating will minimise the requirements of radiators or trench heating elsewhere.
- The mensa stone will be retained and protected insitu to avoid any potential disruption to archaeology.
- The ledger stones which are not currently in their original positions will be conserved before being relaid in new positions.
- An archaeological watching brief will be employed during the removal of the floor and construction of the pits.
- A platform lift is proposed to avoid the need for a pit and disturbing of possible archaeology.



NORTH AISLE ELEVATION | 1:50 @ A1



SOUTH AISLE ELEVATION | 1:50 @ A1



5.1.9 Memorials

Need

- The relocation of some of the wall memorials is necessary to facilitate the construction of new storage units.
- The proposed blinds to the West window of the gallery will interfere with the the position of the two Memorial Boards and hence their relocation is proposed.
- The relocation of the Royal Arms of Queen Anne is necessary due to the removal of the existing gallery.
- The three Lord Mayoral Boards are currently not properly seen and appreciated in their existing position.

Proposal

- Wall memorials in very poor and poor conditions will be carefully conserved.
- The two Memorial Boards from the Nave West Elevation will be relocated to the North Aisle Elevation, where the organ was previously located.
- Four wall memorials, of which three are currently hidden behind the existing kitchen cupboards and one that will become hidden by a proposed cupboard, will be relocated to the North and South Aisle Elevations and Nave East Elevation.
- The Squire memorial will remain in its current location, but it is proposed that the railing around the memorial will be lowered and fixed to the new floor.
- The Royal Arms of Queen Anne from will be relocated to the North Aisle Elevation.
- Relocating the three Lord Mayoral Boards to the South Aisle Elevation.

Impact

- 4no memorials, 2no Memorial Boards, The Royal Arms of Queen Anne and 3no Lord Mayors Boards will be in new positions within the church.
- Those wall memorials considered in very poor and poor conditions will be conserved.

Mitigation

- The condition of the memorials will be assessed prior to relocation.
- There is evidence that the wall memorials have been relocated throughout the church in the past.
- The relocations of the proposed memorials aim at enhancing their visibility and significance within the church.

5.1.10 Northeast Wall

Need

- Full accessibility between the church and No.12 Minster Yard, with easy access to adjacent meetings rooms required for children and young people's work on Sundays, as well as mid week programmes across a range of activities.
- Improvements in safety and safeguarding for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Relocation of Vestry into ground floor of No.12 Minster Yard.
- Access to toilet facilities.

Proposal

- New structural opening fitted with solid timber doors formed centrally below existing north east aisle window to provide improved direct access to adjacent No.12 Minster Yard building.

Impact

- There will be a loss of historic masonry, albeit plain ashlar.

Mitigation

- The masonry will be recorded and carefully set aside for use in the repairs.
- A new direct connection to No.12 Minster Yard will provide the opportunity for housing support facilities in adjoining accommodation rather than within the church.
- A new direct connection to No.12 Minster Yard will improve circulation and accessibility to facilities supporting the operation of the church.
- A Listed Building Consent was previously granted for an opening within this wall.
- Throughout the buildings history, there have new been openings made and others blocked up within the external fabric as the needs of the building have changed over time.



View of the Proposed Interior of the Church from the East

5.1.11 Medieval Benches and Pews (Ground Floor)

Need

- The existing fixed pews limit the use of the nave and many have poor sightlines.
- There is a requirement for different types of service and other events: for example, smaller mid-week services; prayer meetings with break-out groups; church-in-the-round; cafe-based services and events; children and youth activities such as messy church; more freedom to locate communion and prayer ministry stations for big seasonal services.
- There is a requirement to clear the nave for particular events - for instance, when tables as well as chairs are required - and to appreciate the aesthetic benefit of seeing the ground floor as it would have originally appeared.
- There is a desire to provide space for buggy parking, which currently obstructs the entrance area during family services.

Proposal

- Aisle (collegiate) pews removed entirely and salvaged if possible.
- Medieval benches retained and exhibited throughout church.
- Nave pews removed entirely and salvaged if possible.
- New loose, stackable tables and chairs to provide flexible use of the nave provided and contained within new storage units.

It has been suggested that the nave pews could be removed but the collegiate aisle pews retained as the initial phase of the reordering, with the possibility of removing the collegiate pews later in the light of experience of using the church after the initial phase. However, this approach would undermine the viability of the project in a number of ways

- It would substantially reduce the amount of flexible space, as the collegiate pews account for around 45% of the floor area currently occupied by pews.
- It would disrupt plans for relaying the floor and improving the heating system.
- It would prejudice the objective of achieving level access on the ground floor.
- Access to storage space for chairs and tables would be compromised.
- The congregation would not tolerate a second period of moving out of the church, and therefore the possibility of a second phase of reordering is unrealistic.
- Costs would be substantially increased.

Impact

- The church will have a small number of historic pews which can be used but are primarily for exhibition.
- The removal of the dark wood pews and replacement with flexible lighter coloured seating, would contribute to a brighter and more welcoming interior space of the church.

Mitigation

- The arrangements of the pews have changed over time and loose flexible seating reflects the changes in worship today.
- The future use of the building will be safeguarded by providing a flexible nave.
- The pews which are being removed will be recorded.
- Efforts will be made to salvage the existing pews which are being removed where possible.
- The flexibility brought through the use of chairs will enable the new interior to be arranged in many different layouts. In doing so this will allow the special quality of the buildings interior, including details such as column bases, to be fully appreciated from different vantage points.
- Additional storage will be created.



View of the New Staircase and Lift to the Proposed Gallery

5.1.12 Narthex Screen, Staircases, Galler and Pews

Need

- The existing gallery is not accessible.
- The existing stairs and balustrades are non-compliant and create a safety hazard.
- Following a recent condition survey by woodwork expert Charles Taylor (see **Appendix B**), it was advised that if the staircases and balustrades are to be retained in place they present a great deal of potentially expensive, unresolvable, structural and compliancy challenges, which if fully addressed would degrade the quality of the stair scheme and negate the benefit of retention however ingeniously handled.
- The existing gallery provides limited seating and no flexibility.
- In order to create a more welcoming, light and enlarged entrance and much needed supporting accommodation on the ground floor including accessible toilets, storage and a servery, a new gallery is required.
- The new gallery is essential to the entire reordering project, principally because it combined with the ground floor, provides seating capacity of approximately 550+ which would otherwise be reduced to around 460 by the enlarged welcome area and the replacement of pews with chairs. In addition, the gallery will provide break-out space for use in services, conferences, and other events, as well as space for quiet reflection and prayer for visitors during the week.
- The new gallery will be contemporary in style and will clearly read as a new 21st Century layer.
- The new gallery will be as independent a structure as possible, with minimal ties to the existing fabric.
- The new gallery's design minimises the extent of the seating area to within the nave to maintain the legibility of the existing stone arcades.
- The lift and store elements are reduced in height as much as possible to allow the existing stained glass windows to the north west and south west corners to be unobstructed and allow them to be read as part of the church's stained glass windows collection.
- The removal of the dark wood gallery and pews and replacement with a new gallery insertion, constructed of lighter materials, would contribute to providing a lighter and more welcoming environment within the church interior.
- Archaeological watching brief as the current gallery is dismantled.
- The change of the foundations design from piles to ground beams to minimise impact on below ground archaeology, following advice from the archaeological consultant OS-A.

Proposal

- Narthex screen carefully removed entirely.
- Twin stairs carefully removed entirely
- Gallery carefully removed entirely.
- Childrens' pews and remaining pews in the gallery will be carefully removed.
- New contemporary gallery installed with staircases and lift access.
- The underside of the gallery forms the ceiling of a new reconfigured and acoustically separated narthex and flexible meeting space.

Impact

- The church will no longer have a historic gallery and associated staircases.
- The new raked gallery partially obscures central west window when viewed from the chancel and nave.

Mitigation

- The gallery has changed over time and its replacement reflects the changing needs of the mission of the church.
- The future use of the building will be safeguarded by providing flexible and accessible accommodation.

Magnitude of Impact	Definition
High Beneficial	The alterations considerably enhance the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Medium Beneficial	The alterations enhance to a clearly discernible extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Low Beneficial	The alterations enhance to a minor extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Neutral	The alterations do not affect the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Low Adverse	The alterations harm to a minor extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
Medium Adverse	The alterations harm to a moderate extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.
High Adverse	The alterations harm to a clearly discernible extent the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate its significance values.

Issue

*	25 August 2022	Client issue
A	26 August 2022	DAC Sub-Committee issue
B	30 August 2022	Faculty Application issue
C	11 October 2022	Faculty Application re-issue

6.0 Heritage Impact Assessment Table

Feature	Contribution to the significance of the heritage asset	Proposal affecting that aspect of significance	Impact on the contribution the feature makes to the significance of the heritage asset	Justification, including measures taken to either: 1. Reduce harm to the significance of the heritage assets (if harmful impact identified) 2. Maximise the enhancement of the significance of the heritage assets (if enhancement has been identified)	Residual impact on the significance of the heritage asset
St Michael Le Belfrey (Externals)					
Masonry	High	Masonry repairs	High Beneficial	The repairs of the masonry will better reveal the significance of the historic masonry of the Listed Building, extend the life of the church and safeguard its future. The proposal will also complement the unique historical character of the Minster neighbourhood area.	High Beneficial
Medieval stained-glass windows	High	Environmental protective glazing	Medium Beneficial	Although the addition of internally ventilated environmental glazing will alter the appearance of the existing stained-glass windows, the environmental protective glazing is strongly recommended to reduce the risk of further damaging of this heritage asset due to environmental factors. Aesthetic improvements will be also made to the windows, such as reducing the visual impact of heavy mending leads and stabilising previous repairs, to enhance the significance of this heritage asset.	High Beneficial
Roof	Moderate-High	Roof repairs	Medium Beneficial	The repairs to the existing roof of the Listed Building will secure the optimum viable use of this heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation.	High Beneficial
North landscaping	Moderate-High	Refuse store and bicycle racks	Low Beneficial	The proposed arrangement of the refuse store and the bicycle racks replaces the currently ad hoc bins provision and bicycles accommodation through a contemporary design that remains sensitive to the historic character and appearance of the Minster neighbourhood area.	Low Beneficial
West elevation	High	New entrances	Medium Adverse	The addition of the two entrances will provide a more accessible area, allowing for the significance of this heritage asset to be better appreciated. Although there will be a loss of historic masonry, the stone of this elevation – which was refaced as part of later works, between 1867 and 1868 – will be carefully removed, recorded, and set aside for use in the masonry repairs of the Listed Building.	Neutral
West elevation	High	Lighting	Low Beneficial	A reduced and sensitive to the area lighting scheme has been considered for the West elevation, so the luminance emitted from the proposal will not distract from the significance of York Minster. By focusing only on highlighting the main architectural feature of this heritage asset, the proposal will visually contribute to the enhancement of both the Listed Building and the Minster neighbourhood area.	Medium Beneficial
West landscaping	Moderate-High	New sloping surface and drainage	Medium Beneficial	The high quality and contextual design of the new sloping surface will provide an integrated public realm with the recently completed Minster Precinct improvement works. A coherent and integrated approach is a key aspiration of the Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan – as identified in the Conservation Management Plan (2011) – and will enhance the group value with the Minster neighbourhood area.	Medium Beneficial

St Michael Le Belfrey (Internals)					
Spatial Qualities of 16 th Century Interior	High	Removal of existing gallery and stairs, pews and narthex screen.	Medium Beneficial	The removal of the existing and position of the new gallery, levelling and consistent new stone finish to the floor and removal of the pews allows original fabric including stained glass windows within the aisles to be revealed giving a greater sense of the spatial qualities of the original 16 th century interior space.	Medium Beneficial
Mensa Stone	Moderate-High	Conserved	High Beneficial	Retaining the Mensa stone in its current location, while carefully repairing it in situ, will better reveal the significance of this heritage asset.	High Beneficial
Ledgers	Low-Moderate	Repaired and re-laid	Medium Beneficial	The ledger stones will be lifted, repaired, and then re-laid on the northeast side of the church – the ledgers will be embedded in a new limecrete floor system. The relocation of the ledgers on the northeast side of the church will better reveal the significance of this heritage asset, as the ledgers will be neatly arranged.	Medium Beneficial
Tiles	Low	Removed	Low Beneficial	The tiles are cracked and uneven, causing several trip hazards. The removal of the tiles will create a more accessible area securing the optimum viable use of the Listed Building.	Low Beneficial
Wall memorials	Moderate	Repair of all the wall memorials in poor condition, and relocation of two Memorial Boards and four wall memorials.	Low Beneficial	All the wall memorials that are in poor condition will be carefully repaired. The two Memorial Boards from the Nave West Elevation will be relocated to the North Aisle Elevation – where the organ was previously located – allowing for the significance of this heritage asset to be better appreciated. Four wall memorials, of which three are currently hidden behind the existing kitchen cupboards and one that will become hidden by a proposed cupboard, will become visible and better appreciated by relocating them to the North and South Aisle Elevations and Nave East Elevation.	Medium Beneficial
Squire Memorial	Moderate-High	Conserved	High Beneficial	The Squire memorial will remain in its current location. It is assumed that this is supported by the original floor and the current flooring has been built up around the associated plinth. It is thus proposed that the railing around the memorial will be lowered and fixed to the new floor to aid enhancing the visibility and significance of this heritage asset.	High Beneficial
The Royal Arms of Queen Anne	Moderate-High	Relocated	Medium Beneficial	The suggested relocation of The Royal Arms of Queen Anne from its original location on the existing gallery to the North Aisle Elevation will secure the visibility of this heritage asset from the new proposed gallery.	Medium Beneficial
Lord Mayoral Boards	Low-Moderate	Relocated	Low Beneficial	The relocation of the three Lord Mayoral Boards to the South Aisle Elevation will enhance the significance of this heritage asset as these are not properly seen and appreciated in their current position.	Medium Beneficial
Northeast Wall	Moderate-High	New structural opening	Medium Adverse	Although there will be a loss of fabric with the proposed opening below the north aisle's east window, the new entrance will provide an internal link to access a series of meeting rooms, conference facilities, the proposed Vestry space, toilets and storage space within the adjoining No.12 Minster Yard and facilitate the future sustainability and use of the building. The stone removed will be recorded and set aside for use in the masonry repairs of the Listed Building.	Neutral
Narthex screen	Low	Removed	Low Beneficial	By removing the narthex screen, the overall access to the church is improved, allowing for the provision of a servery and accessible toilets.	Medium Beneficial
Medieval Benches	High	Retained	High Beneficial	The medieval benches will be retained and exhibited throughout the church, and hence their significance will be enhanced within the church.	High Beneficial

Aisle (Collegiate) pews	Moderate-High	Removed	Medium Adverse	Although these will be removed, it is proposed that they are salvaged or repurposed, if possible. The removal of the aisle pews will allow for maximum flexibility of worship and prayer, including services in the round, training, and development events as part of Resource Church Status and Belfrey networks. Flexible staging for worship, concerts, theatre, and conferences will also become possible.	Low Adverse
Nave pews	Low-Moderate	Removed	Low Adverse	Although these will be removed, it is proposed to be salvaged or repurposed, if possible. The removal of the nave pews will allow for the maximum flexibility of worship and prayer, including services in the round, training, and development events as part of Resource Church Status and Belfrey networks. Flexible staging for worship, concerts, theatre, and conferences will also become possible. By removing the nave pews, a full immersion baptismal font for the Belfrey, York Deanery and Christians in the area will be able to be accommodated.	Low Beneficial
Staircases	High	Removed	High Adverse	The creation of new staircases will improve accessibility, general movement of people and safety in the event of a fire, securing the optimum viable use of the Listed Building.	Low Adverse
Boxing in of staircases	Low	Removed	Low Adverse	The removal of this heritage asset will aid in creating a lighter, larger, and more welcoming entrance area, securing the optimum viable use of the Listed Building.	Low Beneficial
Gallery	High	Removed	High Adverse	Although the removal of the gallery is proposed, the aim of the design of the new proposed gallery is to enhance and reveal more of the spatial qualities of the original interior of the church.	Low Adverse
Children's pews (Gallery)	High	Removed	Low Adverse	Although the children's pews will be removed, these will be set aside for potential re-use – the children's pews could possibly be exhibited/reused intact in another location.	Neutral
Remaining Pews (Gallery)	Low-Moderate	Removed	Low Adverse	It is proposed to remove the remaining pews of the gallery, to create a new comfortable seating area and a more flexible space with additional storage.	Low Beneficial



Proposed Internal Re-ordering of St Michael le Belfrey

7.0 Sources

St Michael le Belfrey Statement of Need 2021, revised in February 2021

Conservation Management Plan produced by Purcell Miller Tritton, completed in April 2011

York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal by Alan Baxter Assoc. and Historic England © City of York Council, 2011

York Minster Precinct Neighbourhood Plan: A Sustainable Future 2020-2035, completed in April 2021

Condition & Significance Report on Staircases by Charles Taylor Woodwork dated September 2019.

Glazing Condition Survey by Barley Studio dated September 2019

Wall Memorials and Floor Ledgers Condition Survey by Graciela Ainsworth dated 12 February 2019.

Email advice on significance of gallery and twin stairs from Hugh Harrison dated 19 March 2020.

Geophysical Survey Report by Magnitude Surveys dated March 2019

Report on the Significance of the Stained Glass of The Church of St Michael le Belfrey by Professor Lisa Reilly dated 11 January 2021

Medieval Church Architecture by Jon Cannon. Published by Shire Publications, June 2014