**York Museum Trust**

**Response to Castle Gateway New Public Spaces: Draft Open Brief**

**15th April 2020**

 CASTLE GATEWAY OPEN BRIEF YMT RESPONSE

We are broadly very supportive of the *Draft My Castle Gateway, Castle and Eye of York Open Brief and Design Challenges (21 October 2019)* – it captures the collective ambitions for creating a welcoming, communal, respectful public realm space in this historically significant part of the city. We would wish to add the following points:

1. YMT Heritage: The brief captures the ambition to promote and support people to engage on their own terms with the heritage of the site, which YMT are particularly supportive of. The brief could be interpreted to suggest that removal of the ‘roundabout’ is a desired outcome. It is worth noting that whilst the ‘roundabout’ has changed shape and size, it has remained a consistent feature of the site for at least as long as the existing buildings have been in situ.

The other pieces of heritage that sometimes get overlooked but are critical to understanding the site are the last drop on the north side of the female prison and the Southern Gateway to the Castle.

1. YMT It would be helpful to come to a common agreement about whether the brief defines the area as the Eye of York or Eye of Yorkshire – YMT favour the Eye of Yorkshire which positions this site as significant for Yorkshire more broadly.
2. YMT Movement: YMT would like to see greater emphasis on porosity through and across the site which breaking through the castle wall will be key to facilitating. The demand for porosity through the site has been a consistent theme throughout both My Castle Gateway and YMT’s own consultation and forms a key part of YMT’s own Castle Transformation Project brief. Movement across and through the site needs to be intuitive with minimal intervention. Learning any lessons from other sites around the city might help e.g. Scarborough railway bridge and use of and potential conflict of cyclists and pedestrians.
3. YMT Ecology: YMT would like to see greater emphasis on ambitions around environmental sustainability as an embedded design approach and response to the challenges of the site and commerce opportunities, and a greater emphasis on creating and supporting greater biodiversity across the site.
4. YMT Design Challenges: YMT would like to see greater emphasis on ensuring all design solutions require minimal and cost effective ongoing maintenance. The infrastructure needs (power, water, lighting) for appropriate commerce and events must be designed in rather than disrupt the site later.
5. YMT Design Challenges: Design solutions will need to consider phased delivery of different stages of the Castle Museum transformation project, in particular phased delivery of the proposed Castle Gateway building, removal of the museum concourse building, and breaking through the castle wall and introduction of the castle wall walks, which will impact on circulation routes through the site and additional and alternative views of the site.
6. YMT Greater emphasis on keeping the public realm vehicle free, with the exception of servicing the museum and courts.
7. YMT Refer to the museum new build as ‘Castle Gateway Building’ and the ‘Debtors Prison building and Female Prison building’ collectively as York Castle Museum.