



# Rialto House, Fishergate, York

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## Heritage Statement

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**OLYMPIAN**

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*The Proposed Development Site as seen from Fishergate to the north east*

## 1.0 Introduction and Objectives of Report

### 1.1 Introduction and Purpose

This Heritage Statement is written by Ashley Davies, of GWP Architecture, on behalf of Olympian to inform, and subsequently seek to justify, proposals for a Planning Consent application being submitted by GWP Architecture.

The Statement seeks to establish the historic development of the site and its setting, and provide an evaluation of the significance of the site and the buildings on the site, to inform the development of an appropriate heritage-led scheme for the site. It considers the proposals and evaluates the heritage impact that the proposals would have and, where appropriate, identifies potential mitigation.

### 1.2 Authorship

This document has been produced, in June 2021, by Ashley Davies, an RIBA-accredited Specialist Conservation Architect, an Affiliate Member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation, a member of the RIBA Conservation Register Steering Group and a Visiting Lecturer in Conservation Principles.

Ashley is also a Chartered Architect and has undertaken many Building Conservation courses. He has delivered many heritage-led projects over his career involving the repair, restoration and adaptation of many grade I, II\* and II listed buildings.

In the last ten years, Ashley has researched, appraised and written over 100no. Historic Building Reports for over 65no. grade I, II\* and II listed buildings and heritage sites, which has included over 40no. Heritage Impact Statements.

### 1.3 Legislative and Planning Policy Context

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared following the guidance within Historic England's publication 'Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment', dated April 2008, and in the context of National Planning Legislation and Local Planning Policy and Guidance.

#### 1.3.1 National Planning Legislation and Guidance

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in the context of National Planning Legislation.

The proposed development site is not within a Conservation Area, however, it is in proximity to three Conservation Areas.

The current legislation in England and Wales, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Section 69 and 70), defines the quality of a conservation area as being: "the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

The legal definition of a Conservation Area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as being: "An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

Conservation area consent was abolished by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 and replaced with a requirement for planning permission for demolition of a building in a conservation area. The circumstances in which such planning permission is required are the same as previously applied under conservation area consent.

Removal of architectural details, making holes in walls to create new windows, or demolishing one wall to allow an extension would not amount to demolition and so would not require permission for demolition, however, these works may still require Planning Permission.

#### *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. When determining Planning Applications the NPPF directs LPAs to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development; the 'golden thread' which is expected to run through the plan-making and decision-taking activities. This encourages LPAs to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

Where a development plan is absent, silent or out-of-date, permission should be granted except where adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh those benefits, when assessed against NPPF policies as a whole; or where specific policies contained within the NPPF (including those with regard to designated heritage assets) indicate that development should be restricted to some degree.

Section 12 - 'Achieving well-design places' - Paragraphs 124 to 132 - talk about "the creation of high quality buildings and places (being) fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."

Paragraph 127 states that developments should be:

(c) "sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)"

Section 16 - 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' - Paragraphs 184 to 202 - talks about Heritage Assets being "irreplaceable resources, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations".

Paragraph 185 states that "Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- (b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- (d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

#### *Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (March 2014)*

National planning guidance has subsequently been adopted in order to guide the application of the NPPF. It reiterates that conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle.

Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. It states that substantial harm is a high bar that may not arise in many cases and that while the level of harm will be at the discretion of the decision maker, generally the degree of substantial harm will only be at a level where a development seriously affects a key element of an asset's special interest. It is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed.

#### *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, 2008)*

Conservation Principles outlines Historic England's approach to the sustainable management of the historic environment. While primarily intended to ensure consistency in Historic England's own advice and guidance, the document is recommended to LPAs to ensure that all decisions about change affecting the historic environment are informed and sustainable.

The guidance describes a range of heritage values which enables the significance of assets to be established systematically, with the four main 'heritage values' being:

- Evidential value: which derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historical value: which derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- Aesthetic value: which derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Communal value: which derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

**Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning**

The PPS5 Practice Guide was withdrawn in March 2015 and replaced with three Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPAs) published by English Heritage (now Historic England). GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans provides guidance to local planning authorities to help them make well informed and effective local plans. GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision- Making includes technical advice on the repair and restoration of historic buildings and alterations to heritage assets to guide local planning authorities, owners, practitioners and other interested parties. GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets replaces guidance published in 2011.

At present there are some gaps in guidance, formerly provided by PPS5 Practice Guide. It is hoped that these gaps will be filled by the emerging GPA 4: Enabling Development and Heritage Assets, and the two Historic Environment Advice Notes entitled Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (HEA 1) and Making Changes to Heritage Assets (HEA 2), for which the consultation process finished on 17 April 2015.

**Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 1 (GPA1): The Historic Environment in Local Plans**

This advice note focuses on the importance of identifying heritage policies within Local Plans. The advice echoes the NPPF by stressing the importance of formulating Local Plans based on up-to-date and relevant evidence on economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area, including the historic environment.

**Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2 (GPA2): Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment**

This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision making in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to that significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information:

- 1) Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- 2) Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- 3) Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
- 4) Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- 5) Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable

development objective of conserving significance balanced with the need for change; and

6) Offset negative impacts to significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

**Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 (GPA3): The Setting of Heritage Assets**

This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This guidance updates that previously published by English Heritage (The Setting of Heritage Assets 2011) in order to ensure that it is fully compliant with the NPPF and is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 document. It does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

Setting is defined as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset or a heritage designation and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset itself. Elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of a heritage asset.

While setting is largely a visual concept, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, setting, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, can also be affected by other environmental factors, including historic associations.

This document states that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset. It is further stated that the contribution made to an asset's significance by their setting will vary depending on the nature of the asset and its setting. Different heritage assets have the capacity to accommodate change differently within their settings, possibly without harming the significance of the asset (or even enhancing its significance) and, therefore, setting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Although not prescriptive in setting out how this assessment should be carried out, Historic England recommend using a '5- step process' to assess any effects of a proposed development on the setting and significance of a heritage asset:

- 1) Identifying the heritage assets affected and their settings;
- 2) Assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);

3) Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s);

4) Maximising enhancement and minimising harm; and

5) Making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes.

**1.3.2 Local Planning Policy and Guidance**

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in the context of Local Planning Policy and Guidance, with particular reference to the Fulford Road Conservation Area, which was designated by the City of York Council in 1975, within which the western section of the proposed development site resides and which will, in turn, be impacted upon by the proposals.

**1.4 The Objectives of this Heritage Impact Statement**

The objective of the Heritage Impact Statement is to establish the historic development of the site and its setting, and provide an evaluation of the significance of the building and its context, to inform the development of an appropriate heritage-led scheme for the site.

**1.5 The Structure of the Heritage Impact Statement**

In line with the previously-mentioned guidance, this Heritage Impact Statement has been set out in six main sections with an Executive Summary.

Section 1 explains the objective of the project and why changes are desirable or necessary.

Section 2 - 'Understanding the Heritage' - seeks to summarise the key information known about the study location - its historical development and principal phases - through historical and architectural research.

Section 3 - 'Understanding the Significance of the Historic Asset' - takes the form of a Statement of Significance, which involves appraisals based on the Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal Value of the heritage asset, drawn from what the 'Understanding the Heritage' research reveals.

Section 4 identifies and explains the proposed changes to the heritage asset and its context.

Section 5 assesses the impact of the proposals against the respective Values and Significances already established.

Section 6 sets out the reasoning / justification behind the preferred option, including the design concepts and principles, in the light of the assessment process.

## 2.0 Section One - A Statement that Explains the Objectives for the Project and why Changes are Desirable or Necessary

The proposed development site is now set within a residential area. It currently accommodates the Mecca Bingo Club and a car park.

The proposals seek to demolish the existing Mecca Bingo Club and re-purpose the site for Purpose Built Student Accommodation, providing a high-quality development that responds appropriately to the existing and emerging context of the immediate area.

The proposals seek to develop an architecture which is more in keeping with the area than the current Mecca Bingo Club; and to provide a new use which is well suited to the growing demand for student accommodation in the area.



Existing View



Proposed View 01 Looking South From From Fishergate Road

Existing and Proposed View from Fishergate to the north east of the site

### 3.0 Section Two - Understanding the Heritage

#### 3.1 Location & Setting

The development site's address is:

68 Fishergate  
York  
YO10 4AR

The site is just to the south of the centre of the city of York - only about 200 metres from the City Walls - on the main road that is Fishergate.

#### 3.2 Use

The Site is currently in use as a Mecca Bingo Club and its associated car park.

#### 3.3 Age

The Mecca Bingo Club dates to 2003. Nothing on the site pre-dates this.

However, the first half of the 19th century saw the early development of the southern part of the 'site', with a series of small and medium sized domestic or commercial buildings (none of which remain), with a strip of orchard, garden or park just to the west of them. These were added to in the second half of the 19th century and again in the early 20th century, such that, by 1929, the south half of the 'site' was fully developed with a series of small connected structures. Again, none of these remain, as they were demolished in 2002 to make way for the current 'Mecca Bingo Club'.

Previously undeveloped, the northern half of the 'site' underwent significant development in the early 1900s, with the construction of the 'Rialto Picture Theatre' on Fishergate and the 'City Roller Skating Rink' behind. These were burnt down in 1935, and immediately replaced with a larger 'Rialto Cinema'. The 'Rialto Cinema' - which became the original 'Mecca Bingo Club' was, in turn, demolished in 2003, and became the car park to the current 'Mecca Bingo Club', which was built on the southern part of the 'site' in 2002-3. It, and the car park, still remain.



*Aerial view of the site, within its context, courtesy of GoogleEarth  
(the site identified in red)*

### 3.4 Historic Appraisal of the 'Site' and the Wider Setting

The 'Site' - identified on the maps to the right, below and on future pages - is approximately 200 metres almost due south of the 'Fisher Gate' of the York historic City Walls; and approximately 300 metres south south east of the Castle complex, albeit separated by the River Foss and the Tower Street dual carriageway. It is, therefore, beyond the city walls, however, relatively close to the walls themselves, the Fisher Gate and the Castle complex within.

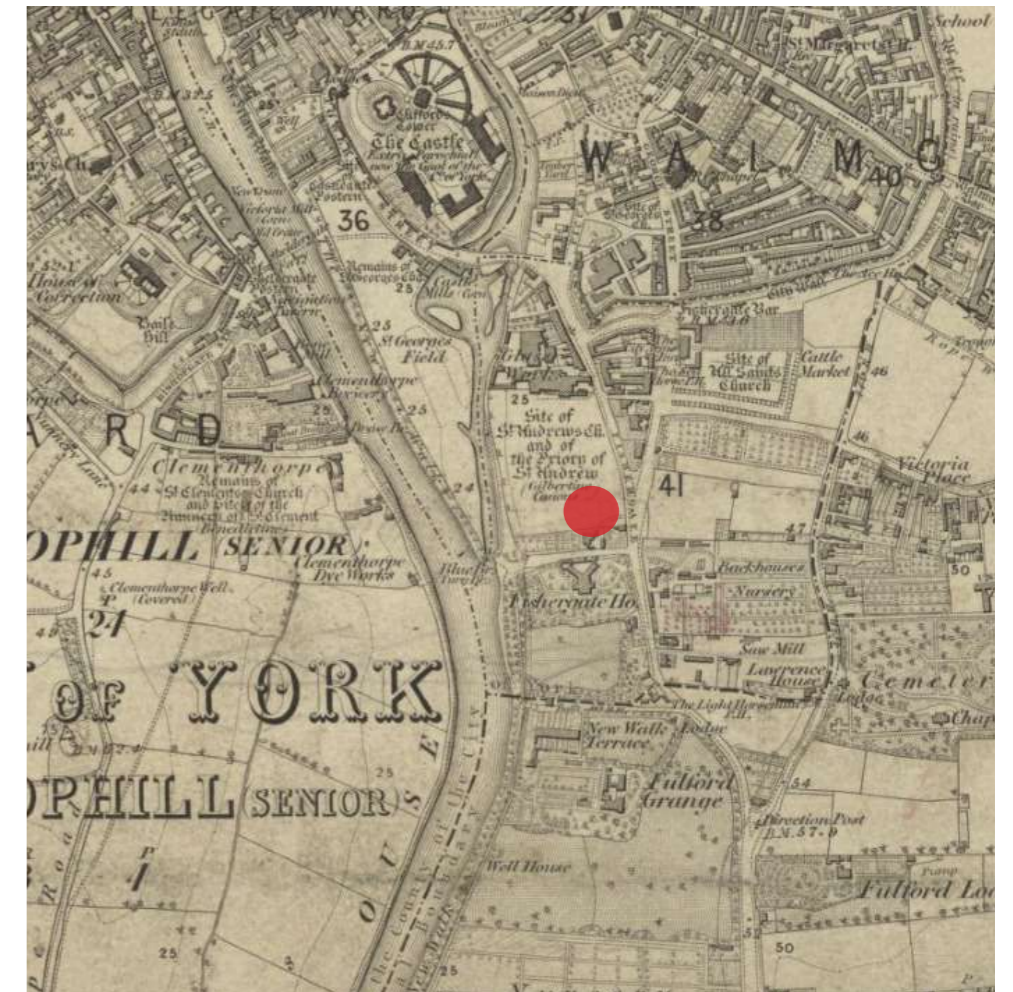
In 1100, as shown in the map below, the site was in an area just beyond the built city, within an area of fields and open land, albeit with some local sporadic developments nearby. This was much the case in 1500, as seen in the map below; in 1611, as seen in John Speed's map to the right; and in 1694, as seen in Benedict Horsley's detailed map.

However, the 1500 map identifies the 'Church and Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew' in the area at the north end of the site. The 1851 Ordnance Survey map identifies this area as the 'Site of St Andrews Church and of the Priory of St Andrew (Gilbertine Canons)'.

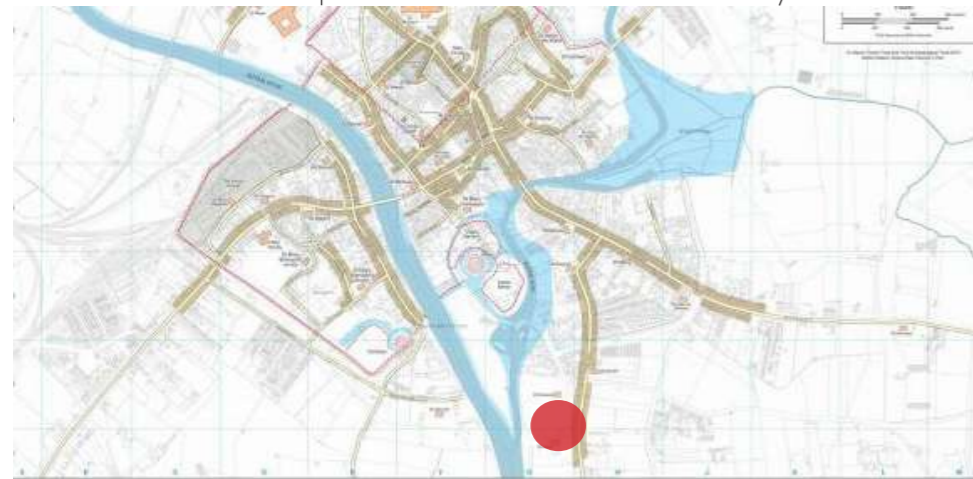
The 1851 map also identifies a series of 4no. varying sized structures, with a strip of orchard, garden or park just in the southern half of the site. None of these remain now. This map also shows 'Fishergate House' directly to the south of the site, on the other side of Blue Bridge Lane. This is known to have been built in 1837 and still remains. It also shows a 'Glass Works' development to the north of the old Priory site.



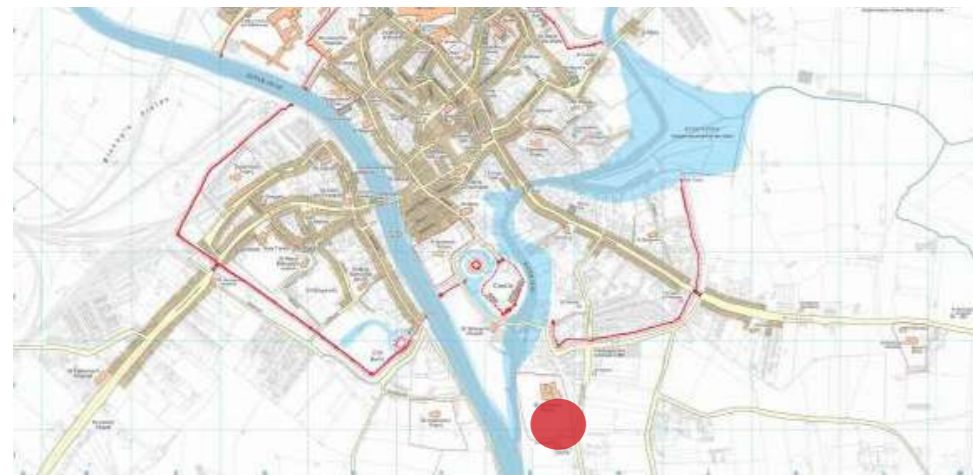
1611 John Speed map, site shown in red (source: Friends of York Walls)



1851 map of area, with site identified in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



Suggestion of extent of city in 1100, with site in red (source: York Press)



Suggestion of extent of city in 1500, with site in red (source: York Press)



1694 Benedict Horsley map, with site identified in red (source: Alamy)



Extract of 1851 map, with site identified in red (source: Ordnance Survey)

### 3.4.1 York Castle & Clifford's Tower

As stated, the 'site' is only about 300 metres south of York Castle, and only about 200 metres south of the 'Fisher Gate' of York's City Walls.

York Castle is a fortified complex consisting of a sequence of castles, prisons, law courts and other buildings, which were built over the last nine centuries on the south side of the River Foss.

York Castle is a well-documented example of a tower keep castle overlying an important urban motte and bailey castle. The now-ruined keep of the medieval Norman castle is commonly referred to as Clifford's Tower.

Clifford's Tower is one of the best-loved landmarks in York. It is the largest remaining part of York Castle built by William the Conqueror, once the centre of government for the north of England. The 11th-century timber tower on top of the earth mound was burned down in 1190, after York's Jewish community, some 150 strong, was besieged here by a mob and committed mass suicide. The present 13th-century stone tower was probably used as a treasury and later as a prison.

York Castle Scheduled Monument comprises several elements within a single area (Electoral Ward/Division: Guildhall), all designated a Grade I listing, which include:

- Clifford's Tower (Grade I)
- Curtain Wall (Grade I)
- Castle Museum, the Female Prison (Grade I)
- Castle Museum, the Debtors Prison (Grade I)
- Crown Court and Railings Attached to Front (Grade I)



York Castle, with Clifford's Tower at the rear, and York Minster further behind, as seen from just above the 'Site' (source: My Castle Gateway)



Clifford's Tower (source: Wikipedia)

### 3.4.2 City Walls, Fishergate Bar & Fishergate Postern Tower

The City Walls from the Red Tower to Fishergate Postern Tower (which includes **Fishergate Bar** (which is just 200 metres to the north of the 'site'), **Fishergate Postern Tower** (which is just to the west of the Bar), The Red Tower, Walmgate Bar) is protected by a grade I listing, which was designated on 14 June 1954 and was last amended on 14 March 1997.

The listing - with an Historic England ID No. of 1259296 - states:

City Wall from the Red Tower to Fishergate Postern Tower  
(Formerly Listed as: The City Walls and Walmgate Bar)  
(Formerly Listed as: Fishergate Tower and Postern/Fishergate Bar)

Includes: Fishergate Postern Tower PICCADILLY.

Includes: The Red Tower FOSS ISLANDS ROAD.

Includes: Fishergate Bar PARAGON STREET.

Includes: Walmgate Bar WALMGATE.

Defensive walls, gates, gatehouses and towers between The Red Tower and Fishergate Postern Tower, including 5 intermediate towers in addition to the 3 main towers.

Walls mid C14, restored 1857-58, 1864 and later.

The Red Tower built c1490, heavily restored and re-roofed 1857-8, restored 1958.

Walmgate Bar and barbican C14 incorporating mid C12 gate, house added c1585, repaired 1645-48, restorations 1840 and later.

**Fishergate Bar** incorporating earlier gate c1440, blocked 1489-1827, restored 1961.

Fishergate Postern c1440, Tower c1505, re-roofed C17, restored 1838 and 1960.

All structures except The Red Tower of magnesian limestone ashlar; The Red Tower of red-brown brick in random bond with limestone dressings. House on Walmgate Bar timber-framed with plastered infill: Bar has lead roof. The Red Tower and Fishergate Postern Tower have hipped roofs of tile with gablets and overhanging eaves.

**Exterior:** Walls carried on foundation arches, embedded in rampart, and stepped with the slope, has chamfered plinth where visible; short buttresses have offsets. Parapet is plain or crenellated with sloped copings, and pierced with musket loops or arrow slits, some canopied. On inner side, stone paved walkway edged with moulded coping, carried on segmental arches in places. Towers are rectangular with chamfered plinths; some have cruciform arrow slits with oilllets; all are crenellated, one with merlons pierced with canopied arrow slits. Inner side of tower at south angle has doorway with chamfer-stopped jambs and segment-arched lintel.

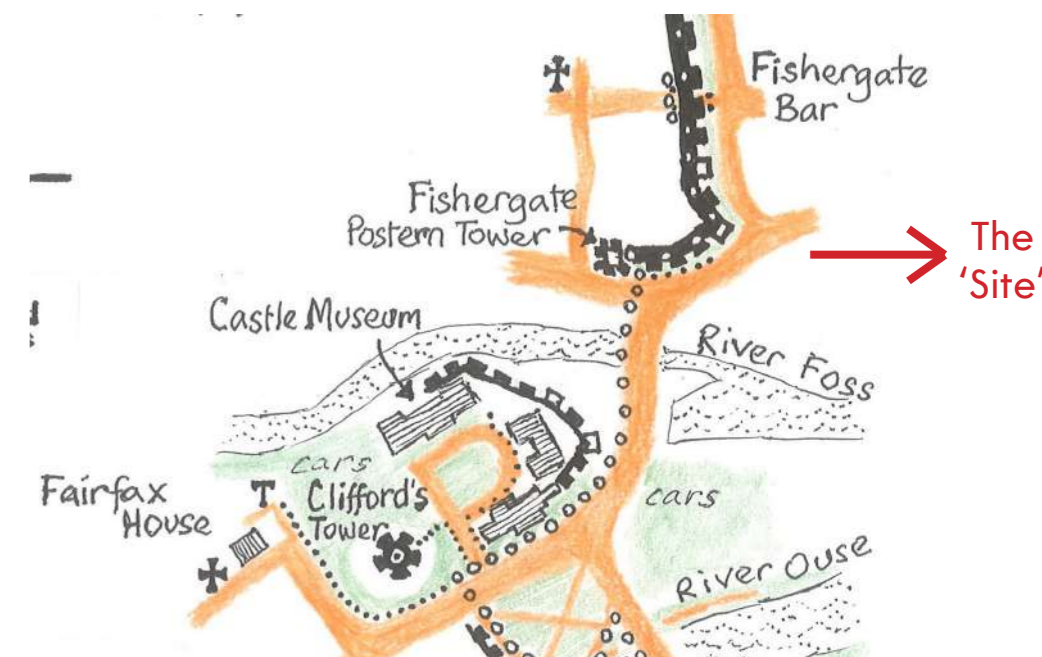
The Red Tower: 2 storeys and attic. Entrance on inner side is quoined and chamfered doorway with 4-centred head. Generally, ground floor openings are plain slits with ashlar sills and lintels; first floor openings either segment-headed or brick blocked by board shutters or cruciform slits with oilllets cut from ashlar blocks. One side has dummy garderobe projecting on corbels. Attic windows are gabled dormers closed with board shutters.

Walmgate Bar: 3-storey gate and gatehouse with 1-storey barbican. Barbican has moulded plinth, weathered angle buttresses, moulded corbel course to embattled parapet and corbelled-out bartizans. Archway is chamfered and 2-centred with moulded impost. Parapet has central painted and carved City of York arms in moulded and pedimented surround, over defaced datestone originally dated AD.1684. Returns have embattled parapets over hollow chamfered corbel courses. Gatehouse front within barbican has chamfered round arch with inscribed slate panel recording 1840 restoration above. Upper storey between embattled bartizans joined by plain parapet has reset painted and carved Royal Arms in moulded surround flanked by 1-light windows. Square-headed doorways open to barbican walkways. Moulded strings beneath upper storey and parapet.

Gatehouse front to Walmgate: chamfered round arch on impost closed by massive wooden gates with wicket. Upper storeys obscured by extension raised on Doric columns on tall pedestals, carrying entablature with moulded cornice. First and second floors flanked by tiered columns, Doric on first floor with triglyph frieze blocks and moulded cornice, Ionic on second floor beneath entablature with enriched cornice. First floor window of 6 mullioned and transomed lights with triglyph keyblock on first floor, on second floor similar 5-light window. Balustraded parapet with turned balusters and square newels surmounted by obelisk finials. Access to gatehouse through shouldered doorway on first floor of right return.

**Fishergate Bar:** 1-storey gateway. Truncated wall finished with plain parapet with sloped coping has round carriage arch of 2 chamfered orders with portcullis slot: on each side are weathered block buttresses pierced by foot passages with corbelled lintels. Parapet incorporates through datestone recording construction of 60 yards of the city wall in 1487 by Lord Mayor Sir William Todd, carved with the City of York arms.

**Postern and Tower:** 4-storey tower with postern attached. Postern is pointed arch of 4 chamfered orders incorporating portcullis slot. Tower, originally embattled, part on moulded plinth, has clasping buttresses at two angles, one incorporating projecting garderobe on first floor. Doorway on inner side is chamfered with 4-centred head and C20 nail-studded door. Windows are slits in chamfered openings or of 2 segment-arched lights in square-headed surround. Original embrasures converted to unglazed windows by roof construction.



Layout of City Walls with Castle & Fishergate (source 'yorkwalls.org.uk')



Fishergate Bar (source: QR Tour)



Fishergate Postern Tower (source: Friends of York Walls)

### 3.4.3 The Church and Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew

St. Andrew's Priory of Gilbertine Canons was built in c.1200, founded by Hugh Murdac, Archdeacon of Cleveland. It was probably built in the 'Early English' style of architecture. It was subsequently dissolved in 1538. It appears to have been preceded by a timber church on the same site. The buildings immediately adjoined those of the small Benedictine nunnery of St. Clement.

Part of the southern boundary wall was apparently visible in 1958, on Blue Bridge Lane. However, there are no longer any visible remains of the Priory, however, some renovated sections of the tower courses of the precinct wall are incorporated with modern walling in two areas of the site.

The 'Historic England Research Records' states that "Only part of the precinct wall remains. Excavations have most of the plan, excepting the claustral West range which has been totally destroyed. The cloister was arranged to the North of the church. There was a timber church on the site in the 12th century prior to the construction of the priory, which probably began in 1195. The earliest stone church was an aisleless structure with a central crossing, had short transepts with eastern chapels, and a presbytery. The dormitory and chapter house were in the East range of the cloister, and the refectory in the North range. Altered in the late 13th and early 14th centuries, when the church was demolished and rebuilt as a smaller, aisleless, buttressed building with reduced transepts and presbytery. The East range was rebuilt, the chapter house taken out of use."

As stated on the previous page, the 1500 map (below) identifies the 'Church and Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew' in the area at the north end of the site; whilst the 1851 Ordnance Survey map (right) identifies this area as the 'Site of St Andrews Church and of the Priory of St Andrew (Gilbertine Canons)'. Its dissolution in 1538 would explain why the buildings do not appear on either John Speed's 1611 map or Benedict Horsley's 1694 map.



Suggestion of extent of city in 1500, with site in red (source: York Press)



Extract of 1851 map, with site identified in red (source: Ordnance Survey)

### 3.4.4 Fishergate House

Built in 1837, Fishergate House is protected by a grade II listing, which was designated on 17 January 1980 and has not been amended since.

The listing for Fishergate House (Electoral Ward/Division: Fishergate) with an Historic England ID No. of 1257845 states:

#### Description:

House, now offices. 1837 with some C20 alterations. Designed by JB and W Atkinson. For Thomas Laycock Esq. Grey brick with stone dressings. Hipped slate roof.

#### Exterior:

2 and 3 storeys. The entrance facade, facing east, is divided into 3 bays by paired brick giant pilasters with stone bases and caps. The left-hand bay is of 2 storeys, with 2 glazing bar sash windows on each floor. The narrower central bay has a C20 casement window with glazing bars at 1st floor level above the porch. The right-hand bay has 2 glazing bar sash windows on the ground floor, with a small sashed window to their left. The upper windows have been altered to correspond with the internal 3-storey arrangement at this end of the house. At both first and second floor level there are 6-pane sash windows. The ashlar porch has 2 Ionic columns in antis, and an entablature with cornice and blocking course. The side walls have round-headed windows within brick panels. The eaves of the main roof project, and the roof has a central balustraded flat surrounding a lantern light, with brick chimneys at each corner. Further chimneys on side walls.

#### Interior:

Not inspected. RCHM records good quality original plasterwork and fittings including cantilevered stone staircase with cast-iron balustrading and curved landing with 2 composite columns to windows. Entrance hall has arched recess and moulded ceiling; vestibule has pilasters, niches and domed oval openings. First floor has arcaded gallery around oval light well, with pilasters and round arches.

(An Inventory of the Historical Monuments of the City of York: RCHME: Outside the City Walls East of the Ouse: HMSO: 1972-: 69-70).



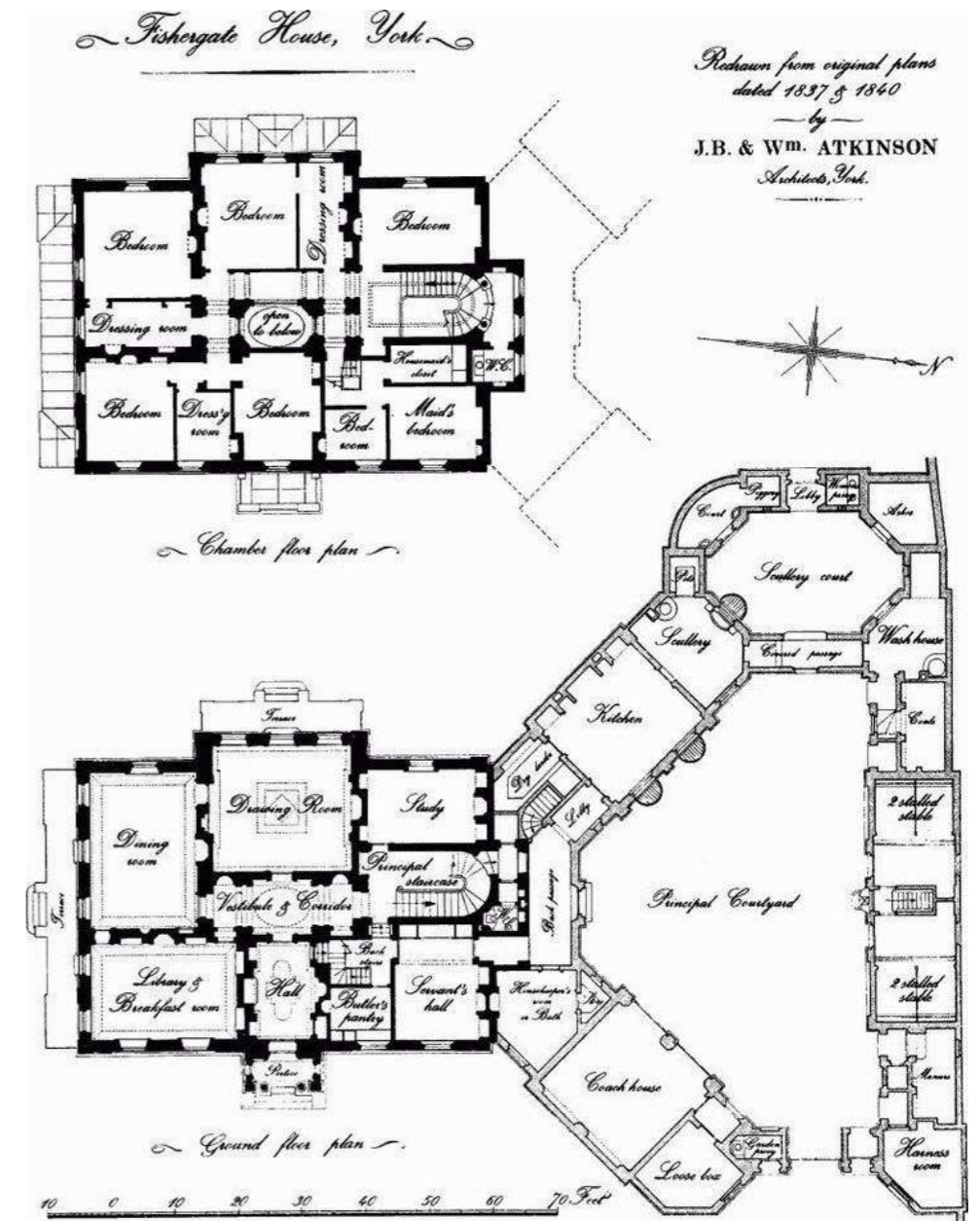
Fishergate House East Elevation (source: British History Online)



Fishergate House East Elevation (source: fffhyork.weebly.com)



Fishergate House West Elevation (source: On The Market)



© English Heritage  
<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

Plans of Original Fishergate House East Elevation (source: Pinterest)



Fishergate House - View from north east (source: Zoopla)

### 3.4.5 Historic Map Appraisal

The 1889 Ordnance Survey map (reproduced, as wide and close views, in the centre column) shows, as developments to the 1851 map:

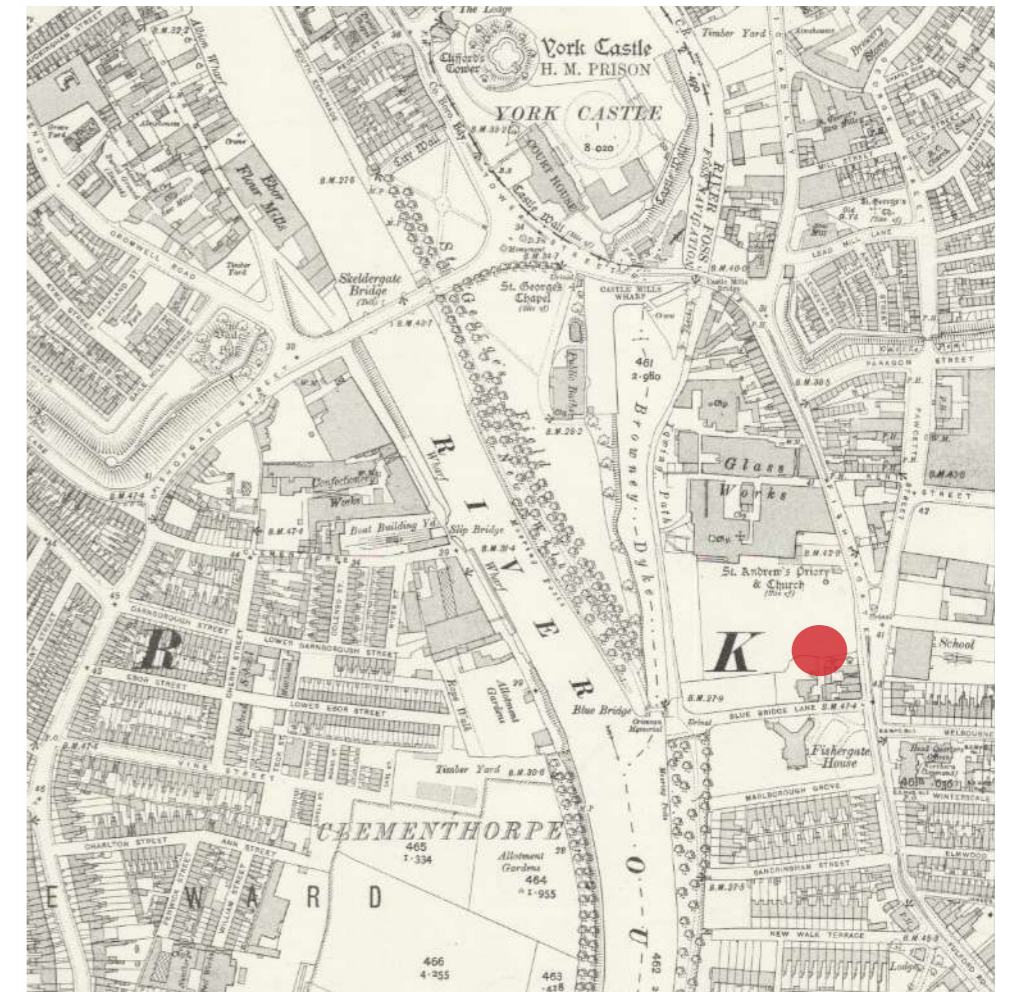
- An additional 4no. small structures to the south east corner of the 'site', to accompany the 4no. pre-1851 structures;
- The expansion of the 'York Glass Works' southwards - towards the 'site' - with a further set of sizeable structures, more than doubling the original footprint of the Glass Works;
- The identification - as 'Stone Wall Close' - of the land between the large York Glass Works to the north of the site and 8no. small structures at the south east of the site; the open area noted as 'The Site of St Andrews Priory and Church';
- Some further development to the east of the 'site' over the 'Fishergate' road, in the form of the 'Salvation Army Barracks' and a run of terrace housing along the newly formed 'Melbourne Street' and 'Tower House' - the Offices for the 'Northern Command';
- Further considerable residential development to the south of the 'site' on the other side of Fishergate House.

The 1907 Ordnance Survey map (reproduced, as wide and close views, in the right hand column) shows, as developments to the 1889 map:

- The construction of the 'Fishergate County Primary School' (which was built in 1895), just to the right of the 'site', on the other side of the 'Fishergate' road.



1889 map of area, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



1907 map of area, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



Extract of 1889 map, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



Extract of 1907 map, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)

### 3.4.6 Tower House - the Offices for the 'Northern Command'

Built in 1878, Tower House was opened as the headquarters of the North-Eastern Military District in October 1878. It became the headquarters of Northern Command in 1905, when 'Northern Command - a Home Command of the British Army - moved its headquarters to York from Manchester. The site was named Imphal Barracks in 1951, but closed in 1958, when Northern Command HQ moved to a new Imphal Barracks on Fulford Road, a little further south down Fishergate.

Tower House was adapted as a business centre in the early 1990s.

Very much a building designed in the Victorian style, it is not nationally listed, however, it is described as a 'building of merit' in the local Conservation Area Appraisal. Its corner clock tower is particularly distinctive, with its tall pyramidal slate roof. Indeed, apparently the tower still houses the original winding gear.

Tower House pre-dated most of the other late 19th century buildings which followed along Melbourne Street and further north up Fishergate (as seen on the photo below with no buildings to the left (north)).



View up Fishergate in 1905 with Tower House (Northern Command War Office) on the right (source: thecardindex)



Tower House from Fishergate to the south (source: GWPA)



Tower House from Fishergate dated to the late 19th century (source: fffhyork.weebly.com)



Tower House from Fishergate to north (source: militaryhistories.co.uk)



Tower House - Headquarters Offices Northern Command (source: militaryhistories.co.uk)



Tower House from Fishergate (source: Wikipedia)



Tower House from Fishergate to the south (source: GWPA)

### 3.4.7 Fishergate County Primary School

Built in 1895, Fishergate County Primary School is protected by a grade II listing, which was designated on 14 March 1997 and has not been amended since. It was commissioned by the York School Board in 1893 as a result of the closing of St. George's Wesleyan school. The site was what was known as Mollett's Field. The school was designed by the architect Walter Henry Brierley of the firm Demaine & Brierley, as part of his programme of impressive Gothic-style schools in York (such as Scarcroft, Poppleton Road, Park Grove and others), to accommodate 1,250 children. The building cost £14,000, with the main contractor Mr. T.P. Barry of York.

The listing for Fishergate County Primary School (Electoral Ward/Division: Fishergate) with an Historic England ID No. of 1257844 states:

Primary school. 1893-95. By WH Brierley. For the York School Board.

**Materials:**

Orange-brown brick in English bond on chamfered brick plinth; windows in quoined surrounds of orange brick with orange brick arches; with dressings of orange and moulded brick. Slate roofs, hipped at front, surmounted by square louvred cupolas with lead sprocketed roofs and tapering finials; tall brick stack to hall range. Ornate cast-iron tie rod ends.

**Exterior:**

2-storey 9-window centre range between 3-window crosswings: crosswings are quoined on ground floor and break forward. First floor articulated by thin pilasters on high pedestals the coping of which forms a moulded sillstring beneath first floor windows: pilasters support frieze and cornice of moulded brick. Main doors are of raised shaped panels and are deeply recessed beneath round arch with lion keyblock on rusticated Ionic responds enriched with swags; dentilled pediment is broken by segment-headed date panel containing the Royal Arms and dated 1894. Doorcase flanked by narrow unequal 10-pane sash windows with keyed segmental arches. All other windows are 18-pane sashes with cambered heads and flat arches of rubbed brick. All are framed in orange brick quoins; those on ground floor have moulded sillstring.

Behind front range rises taller 6-bay hall range with dormer windows with triangular or segmental pediments. Returns have shaped gables with tall multi-light windows in segment-arched heads.

Rear: 2 storeys, 16 bays, first floor articulated as the front without crosswings. Ground floor has 1-storey extruded block: otherwise openings are mostly flat or segmental arches screened with small pane glazing.

Left return: 11 unequal bays with irregular ground floor fenestration. At left end is altered segment-arched recess blocked with 4-pane casement windows. Centre bays have four windows of paired narrow 12-pane sashes and bay further right has standard 12-pane sash. First floor windows are 12-pane sashes with moulded sillstring. All windows have flat brick arches.

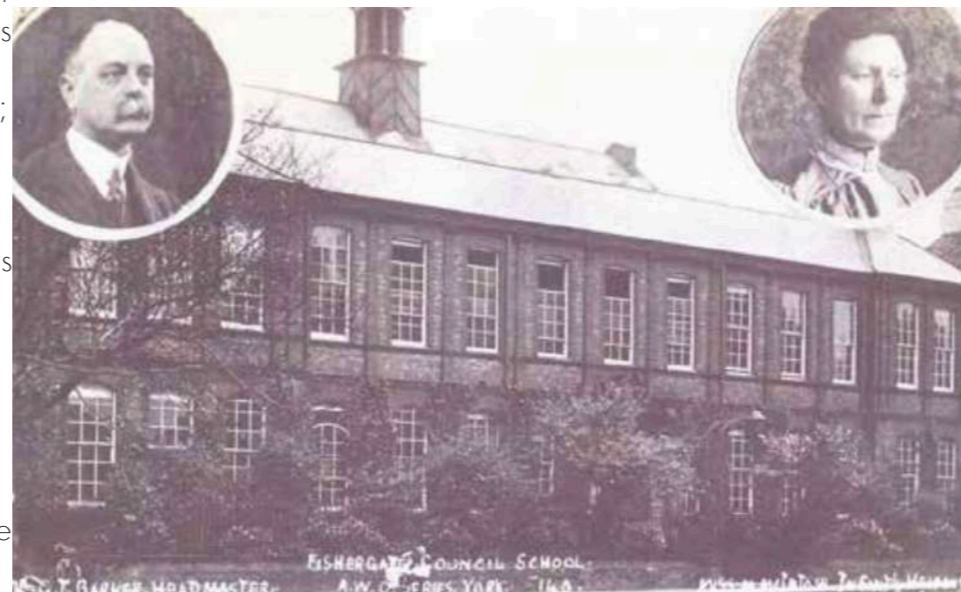
**Interior:** Not inspected.



Fishergate School c.1950. Notice the elegant central tower, which has been removed sometime since (source: fishergate.weebly.com)



Fishergate School as seen from the 'site' (source: GWPA)



Fishergate School c. 1910 with photos of Headmaster, George Barker and Infant's Headmistress, Miss M McIntosh. (source: Cardindex)



Fishergate School from Fishergate (source: geograph.org.uk)



Fishergate School in 1905, photographed by Dr Evelyn (source: YAYAS)



Fishergate School from Fishergate (source: QR Tour)

### 3.4.8 Historic Map Appraisal

The 'site' itself underwent significant development between 1907 and 1929, with the construction of the 'Picture Theatre' on Fishergate and the 'Skating Rink' behind - see the maps in the central column.

In addition, the 8no. smaller structures to the south half of the 'site' were accompanied by a further series of structures which, between them and the previous incumbents, all but filled the space making up the southern half of the 'site'. This result is that, by 1929, the 'site' was fully developed.

Just to the north of the 'site', between the 'site' and the 'Glass Works', also facing onto Fishergate, was the 'Tramways Club'; and just to the west of the 'site', there is one single, long new structure. There remains still a large open area between the 'site' and the river which is undeveloped.

Whilst, in 1907, on the other side of the 'Fishergate' road, there was a gap in the streetscape just to the north of the 'Fishergate County Primary School', by 1929, this was filled with a further run of terraced residential units.

In 1929, 'Fishergate House' was identified as the 'Ordnance Survey Office'.

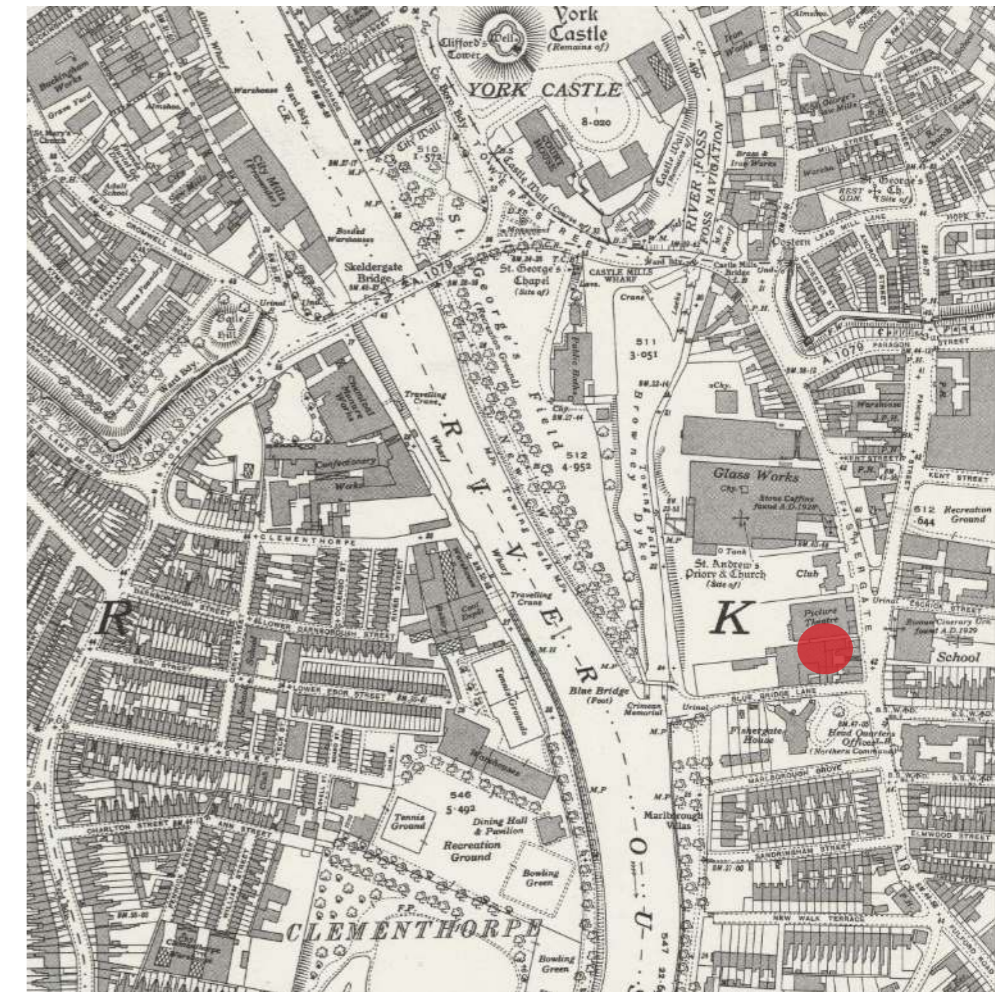
Between 1929 and 1938, the maps to the right show few developments in close proximity to the 'site', aside from the emergence of a row of 5no. residential units within the previously landscaped area to the west of 'Fishergate House'.

However, the most significant development on the 'site' is the fact that the 'Skating Rink' behind the 'Picture Theatre' has been removed, and the 'Picture Theatre' was extended to the rear partly into the space which the 'Skating Rink' used to be in.

In fact, it appears as though the original 'Rialto Picture Theatre', identified on the 1929 map, and which is shorter than that on the 1938 map, was destroyed in a fire in April 1935. One might assume that the 'Skating Rink' was destroyed in the same fire.



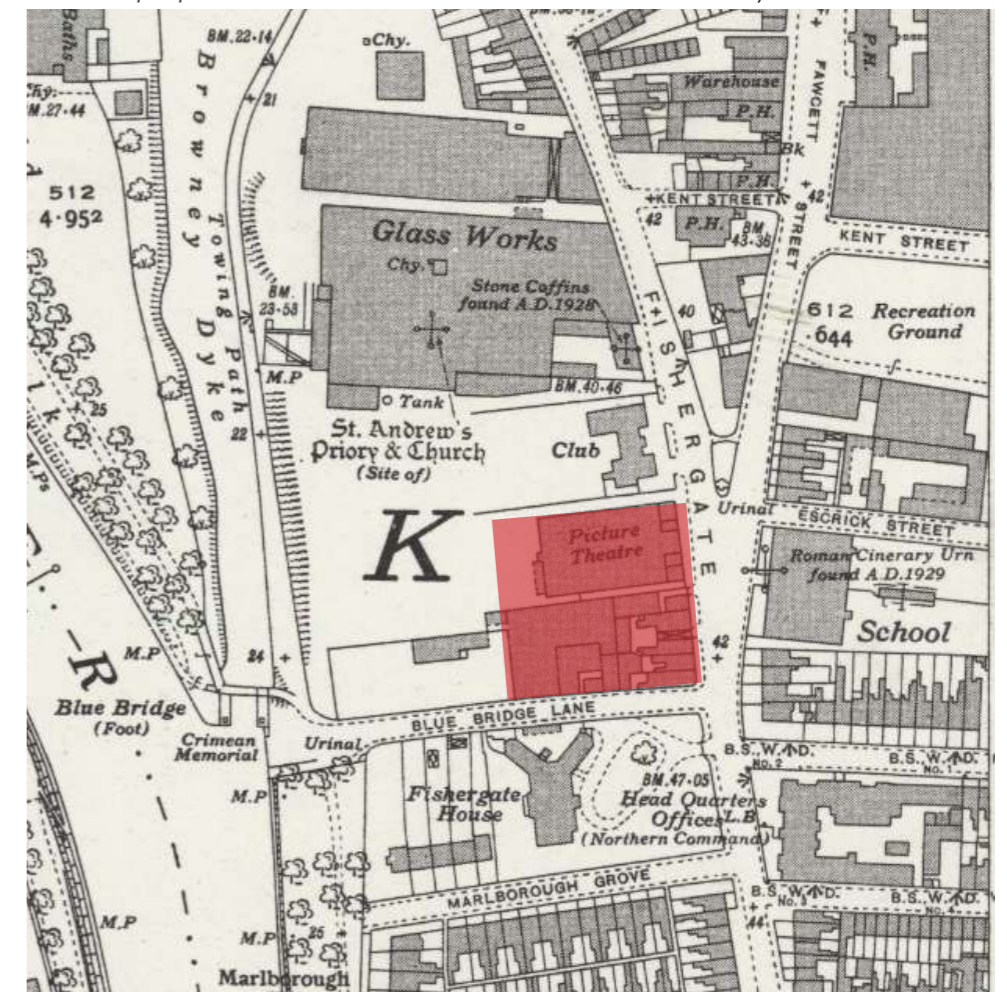
1929 map of area, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



1938 map of area, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



Extract of 1929 map, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



Extract of 1938 map, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)

### 3.4.9 The Rialto Picture Theatre

As stated, it appears as though the original 'Rialto Picture Theatre', identified on the 1929 map, and which is shorter than that on the 1938 map, was destroyed in a fire in April 1935. One might assume that the 'Skating Rink' was destroyed in the same fire.

The replacement 'Rialto Cinema' - designed by Frederick Dyer in the Art Deco style of the age - was opened on November 25, 1935 with "Gold Diggers of 1935". It had 1,800 seats and a proscenium 45ft wide. There was a shallow stage which was apparently rarely used. It was equipped with a Compton 3Manual 5 Ranks organ, which was opened by Hal Sherwin. The wide proscenium came in handy when CinemaScope was installed in 1955, when the opening accommodated a massive 42ft by 20ft screen. The Rialto was also the first venue in the North to be fitted with electricity controlled machinery for the projection of three-dimensional films, although this was a short lived craze.

The 'Rialto Cinema' was owned and operated by Jack Prendergast, father of the world famous film score composer John Barry, who apparently first started out on the stage here with the John Barry Seven. From the very beginning, Jack Prendergast sought to bring the best in entertainment to the inhabitants of York both of the film and live variety. Many famous people played at the Rialto, including Louis Armstrong, Frankie Vaughan, Gracie Fields, Johnny Mathis, Freddie Star, the Rolling Stones and The Beatles.

Originally there were four tall narrow fins running up the façade and above the parapet between the windows in the central block - as seen on the photograph to the right. These were subsequently removed.

The last film was shown on 15th October 1961 with William Holden in "The World of Suzi Wong". The 'Rialto Cinema' went over to bingo which it continued to be used for until its closure in 2002 as a 'Mecca Bingo Club'.

In April 2003, the former 'Rialto Cinema' was demolished to make way for a car park for a new 'Mecca Bingo Club' nearby and a new housing development further beyond.



Louis Armstrong at the Rialto in 1932. Jack Prendergast is on the left. (source: YorkPress.co.uk)



Mick Jagger at the Rialto in 1964. (source: YorkPress.co.uk)



The 'Rialto Cinema' as seen from Fishergate road, in November 2001, operating as the 'Mecca Bingo Club' soon before its closure. (source: cinematreasures.org)



The 'Rialto Cinema' as seen from Fishergate road, before the removal of the 4no. fins. (source: cinematreasures.org)

3.4.10 The Mecca Bingo Club - *These photographs were taken in 2002/2003, just before the Rialto Picture Theatre / Mecca Bingo Club was demolished, as posted on the 28dayslater.co.uk*



*The front of the Rialto with the newly-built Mecca club to the left in April 2003 (source: 28dayslater.co.uk)*



*The interior of the Rialto soon after its closure in 2002 (source: 28dayslater.co.uk)*



*View from roof of Rialto, looking towards Minster, taken in 2002/2003 (source: 28dayslater.co.uk)*



*View from roof of Rialto, looking down Fishergate, taken in 2002/2003 (source: 28dayslater.co.uk)*

### 3.4.11 City Roller Skating Rink

As stated, the 'City Roller Skating Rink' - built at the west end of the original 'Rialto Picture Theatre' in 1907/8 - appears to have been demolished by 1938, presumably having been damaged or destroyed by the fire in April 1935.

The new 'Rialto Cinema' was then built on the sites of the two previous buildings.

To the right are two photographs of the 'City Roller Skating Rink' dating to 1908 and c.1910.



The City Roller Skating Palace on the site of the later Rialto Cinema, c. 1910 or a little after. (source: The Cardindex)



Interior of the Roller Skating palace, with the hockey team posing for a photograph in 1908. (source: The Cardindex)

### 3.4.12 York / Redfearn Glass Works and Tramways Club

The first Glass Works at Fishergate apparently opened in 1794 - we know that it appears on the 1851 map. It was opened by Hampston & Prince and made flint glass and medicine phials. The York Flint Glass Company was set up in 1835; and, in 1930, it was incorporated as the National Glass Works (York), which, in 1967, became Redfearn National Glass. They were a significant employer to the area and were renowned for making glass milk bottles and jars.

The historic map appraisal shows the original Glass Works being considerably extended, southwards towards the 'site' between 1851 and 1889.

The Glass Works closed on December 23, 1983; and the buildings were demolished between 1985 and 1986.

The factory had three chimneys for many years, but they were replaced by a single 180ft chimney, to send emissions higher into the sky, cutting pollution. In 1982, an extension was added, taking it to 235ft - making it the only structure in York taller than the Minster. The chimney was brought down on 20 April 1986, following the demolition of the rest of the factory, and the Minster regained top spot in the city after the four-year interruption.

The Tramways Club, visible in the top left hand photograph, with the Glass Works behind - as pictured in the 1970s - was built between 1907 and 1929; and demolished between the 1970s and 2002.



Tramways Club with Glass Works behind in 1970s (source: York Press)



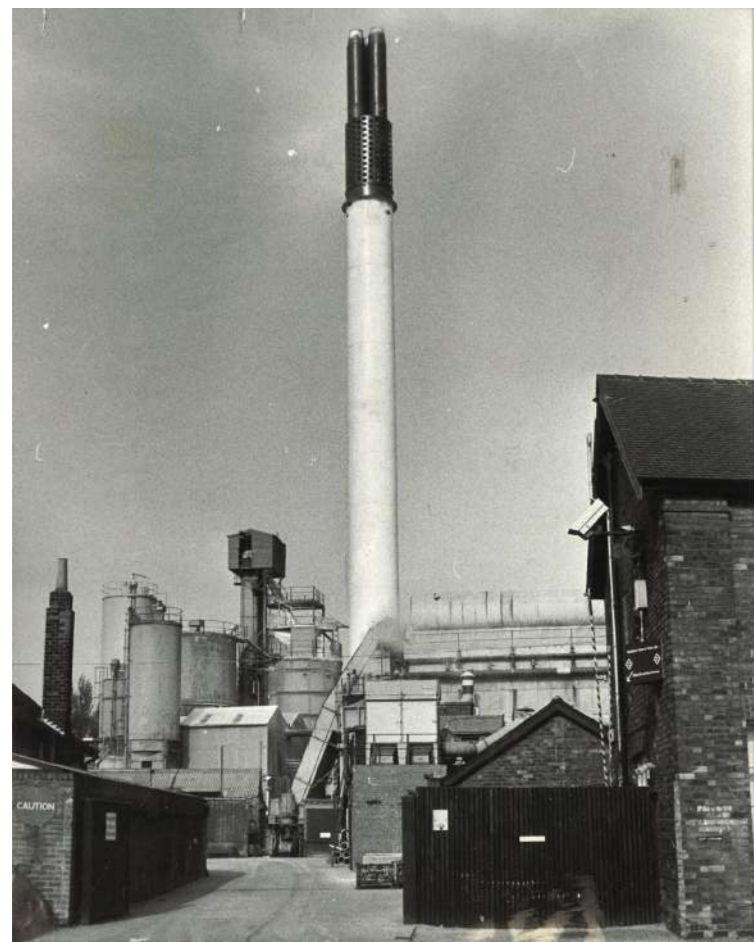
Redfearn Glass Works, seen from river, in 1985 (source: geograph-co.uk)



Redfearn Glass Works in 1984 (source: York Press)



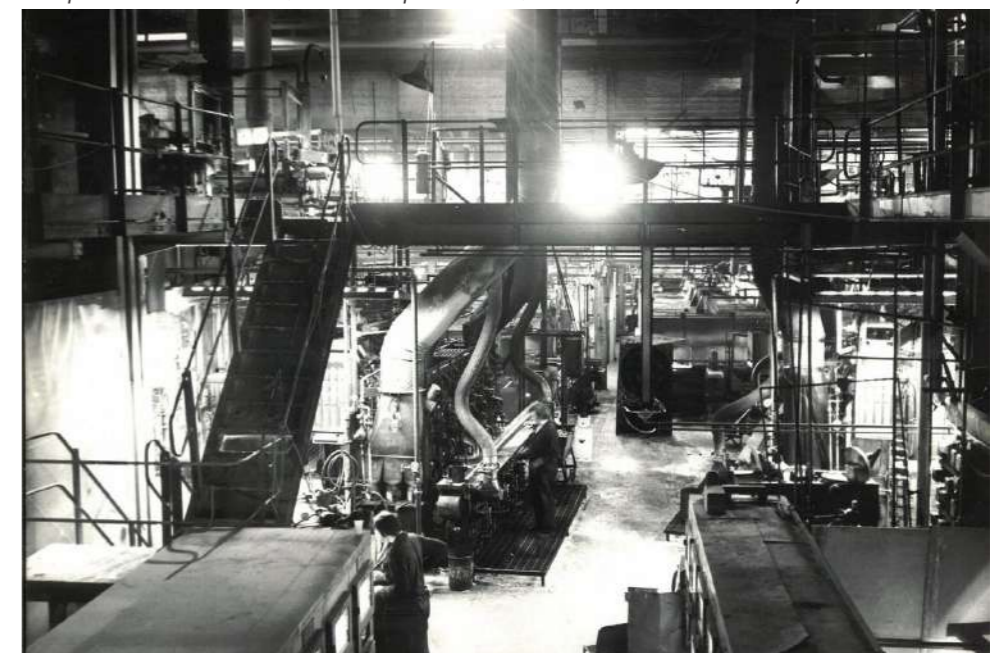
Redfearn Glass Works, as seen from river, in c1977 (credit: Andy Tuckwell)



The Redfearn Glass Works in 1983, with the 235ft tall chimney (source: York Press)



Chimney being demolished in 1986 (source: York Press)



Interior of the Redfearn Glass Works in 1977 (source: York Press)

### 3.4.13 Historic Map Appraisal

The changes between 1938 and 1950 are, again, minimal, and of no direct impact to the 'site' itself or its immediate setting.

However, between 1950 and 2002, there were considerable changes to the site and its environs.

One can see, on the southern half of the 'site', that in 2002, the new 'Mecca Bingo Club' was under construction, with the roof half complete when this GoogleEarth image was taken. The former 'Rialto Cinema' / current 'Mecca Bingo Club', just to the north, still exists on the image, however, would be demolished in April the following year.

As a result, all of the 19th and early 20th century structures - possibly houses - to this southern half of the site were demolished by 2002.

Also by 2002, a relatively large simple structure, possibly light industrial, had been constructed just to the west of the 'site' alongside the river.

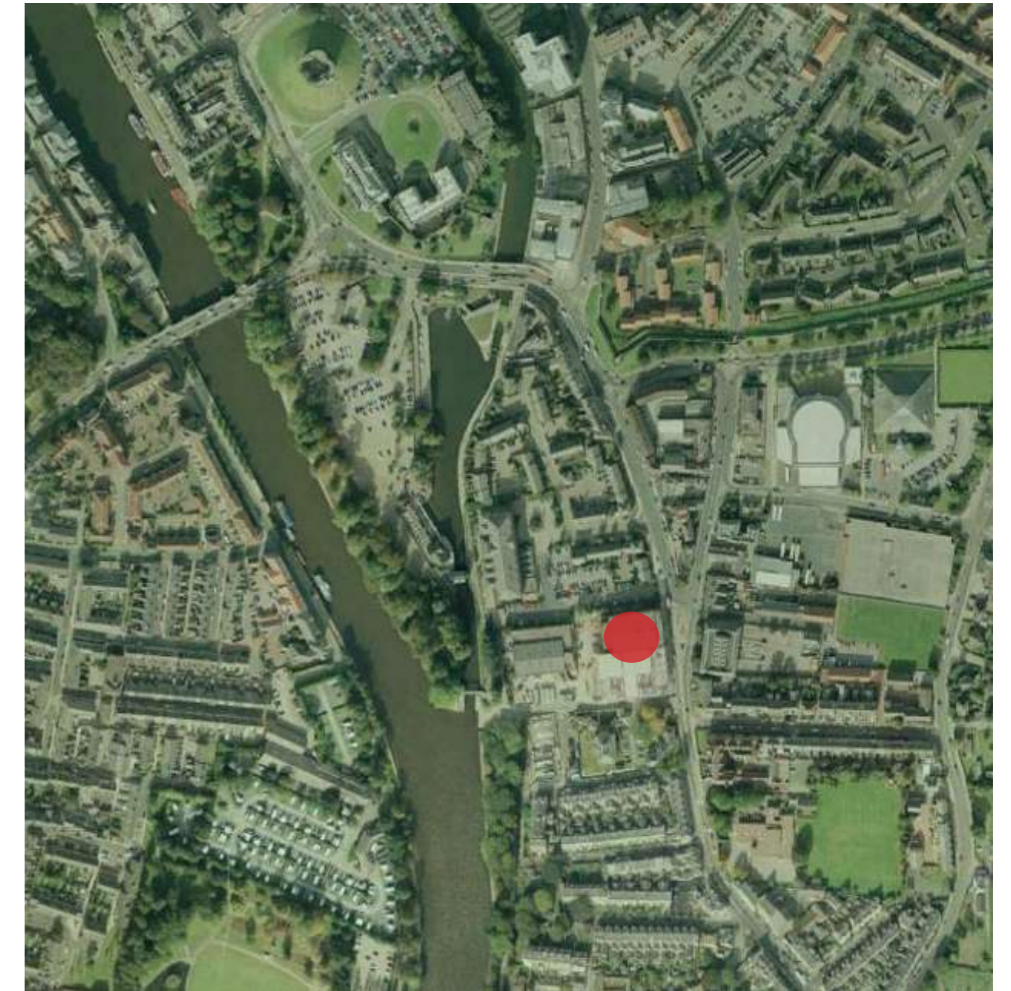
By 2002, the 'Tramways Club' just to the north of the 'site' and the site of the old 'Rialto Cinema' had been demolished, as had the entire large 'Glass Works' a little further north. This had all been replaced by car parking, a large residential development, and a hotel just alongside the river.

The 2002 GoogleEarth image also shows a run of 6no. residential units, under one roof, being constructed just to the west of the 1837 Fishergate House. These appear to have replaced a terraced run of 5no. residential units in this location built in the 1930s. Also, just to the east of Fishergate House, a new structure had been built, very much reflecting the layout and roof design of Fishergate House, albeit smaller in plan form.

Also, to the north east of the 'site', on the other side of Fishergate road and to the north of 'Fishergate County Primary School', there were further residential developments, as well as the construction of the 'York Barbican' further to the north east.



1950 map of area, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



2002 map of area, with site in red (source: GoogleEarth)



Extract of 1950 map, with site in red (source: Ordnance Survey)



Extract of 2002 map, with site in red (source: GoogleEarth)

3.4.14 Aerial Photograph of the 'site' and area around, taken in 1978 (source: York Press)



### 3.4.15 Historic Map Appraisal

By 2007, as seen in the GoogleEarth maps in the central column, the demolition of the 'Rialto Cinema' in 2003 meant that the 'site' and the whole area to the north of the 'site' retained no remnants of its historic fabric or indeed its urban form. All that remained were the river to the west and the Fishergate road to the east. Gone are the Priory, the Glass Works, the Picture Theatre, the Skating Rink, the Club, and the 19th and early 20th century houses on the south east corner of the 'site'.

Between 2002 and 2007, just to the west of the 'site', the structure which might have been light industrial had also been demolished and replaced with further housing.

This being said, whilst the 'site' and the area to its north and west were, by 2007, completely altered and modern; to the south and east of the site much of the 19th century streetscape remained.

'Fishergate House', built in 1837, still remained directly to the south of the 'site' on the other side of Blue Bridge Lane; and 'Fishergate County Primary School', built in 1895, just to the east of the 'site', on the other side of the 'Fishergate' road, also remained. Both still remain in 2021.

The late 19th century terrace residential streets to the south and east of 'Fishergate House' and 'Fishergate County Primary School', most of which pre-date the School, remain with what appears to be little change, including the 'Offices for the 'Northern Command'' to the east of 'Fishergate House', which is now the 'Prestige Nursing & Care York'.

Insofar as the 'site' and its environs are concerned, they are, in 2021, much as they were in 2007.

The 'site' now holds only the 2003 'Mecca Bingo Club' and its car park.

To the north is a residential development and hotel, dating to around 2000.

To the west is a smaller 2002 residential development, with the river beyond. All historic fabric has been removed.

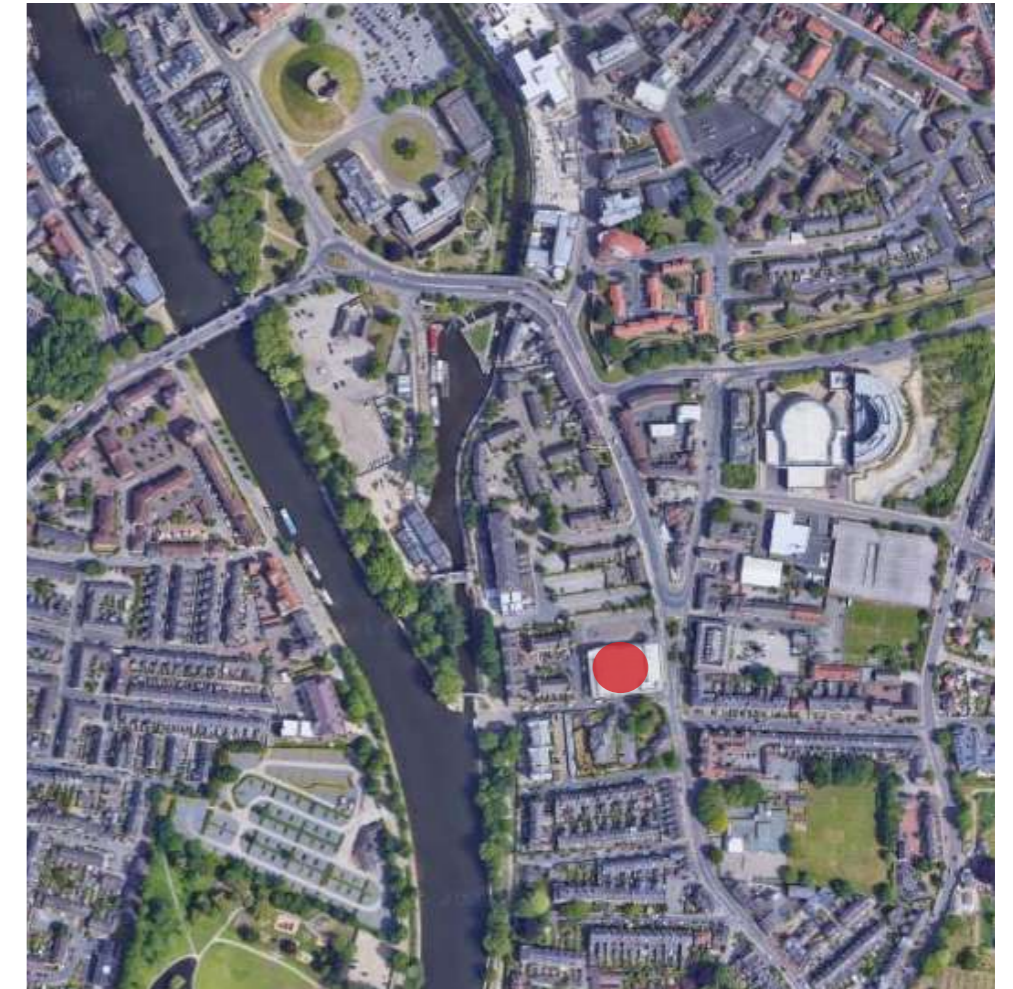
To the south, on the other side of Blue Bridge Lane is the 1837 'Fishergate House'. To its west is a 2002 small residential development. To its east is a development similar to Fishergate in design, but dating to the second half of the 20th century. Further south are terraced residential streets dating to the second half of the 19th century.

To the south east, on the other side of Fishergate road, are further terraced residential streets dating to the second half of the 19th century and the 'Offices for the 'Northern Command''.

Directly to the east of the 'site', also on the other side of Fishergate road is the 1895 'Fishergate County Primary School', with some early 20th century buildings further north.



2007 map of area, with site in red (source: GoogleEarth)



2020 map of area, with site in red (source: GoogleEarth)



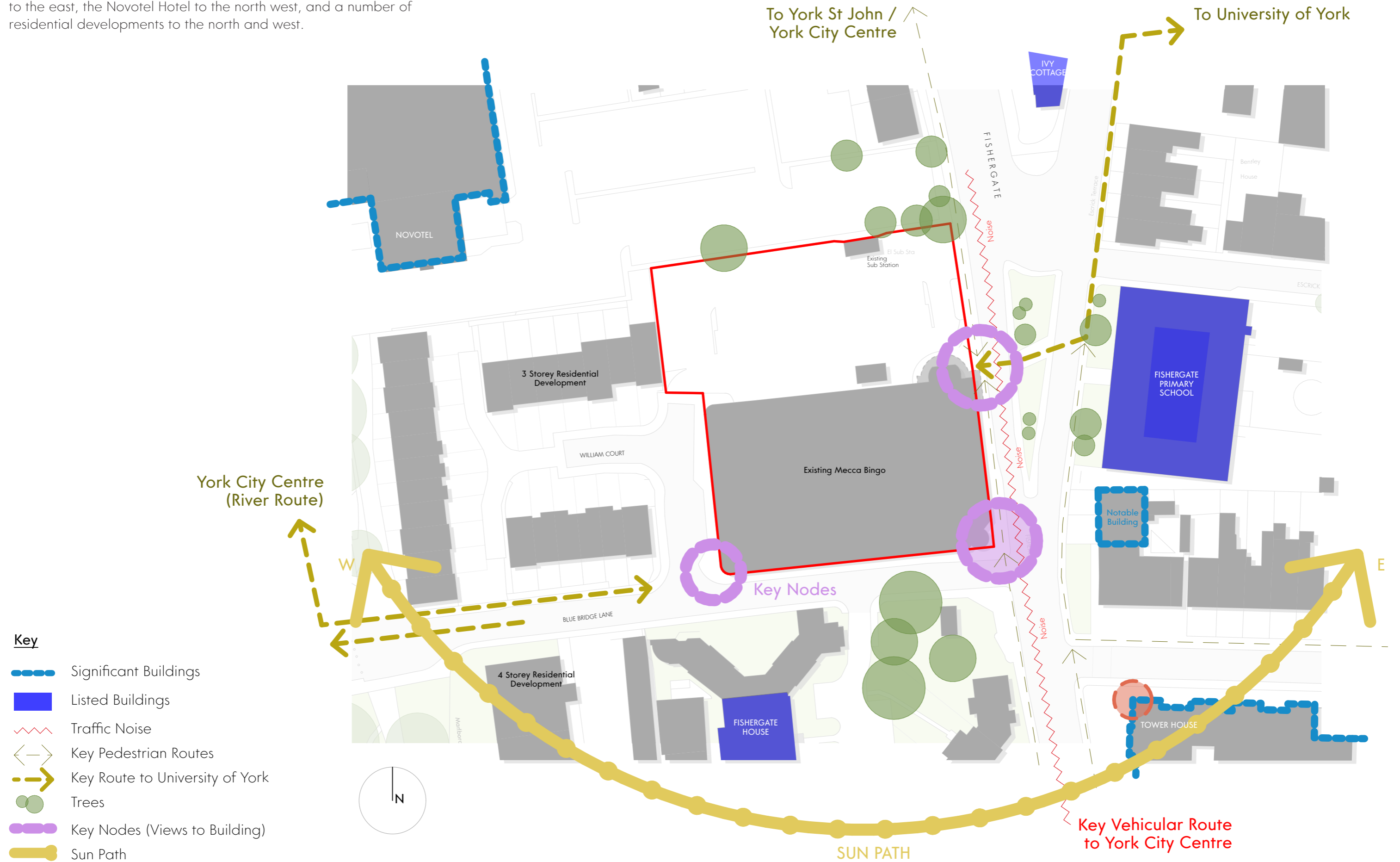
Extract of 2007 map, with site in red (source: GoogleEarth)



Extract of 2020 map, with site in red (source: GoogleEarth)

### 3.5 The Site and its Setting / Context

The 'Site' is now set within a relatively open area of urban fabric, with 'Fishergate House' to the south, 'Fishergate School' and 'Tower House' to the east, the Novotel Hotel to the north west, and a number of residential developments to the north and west.



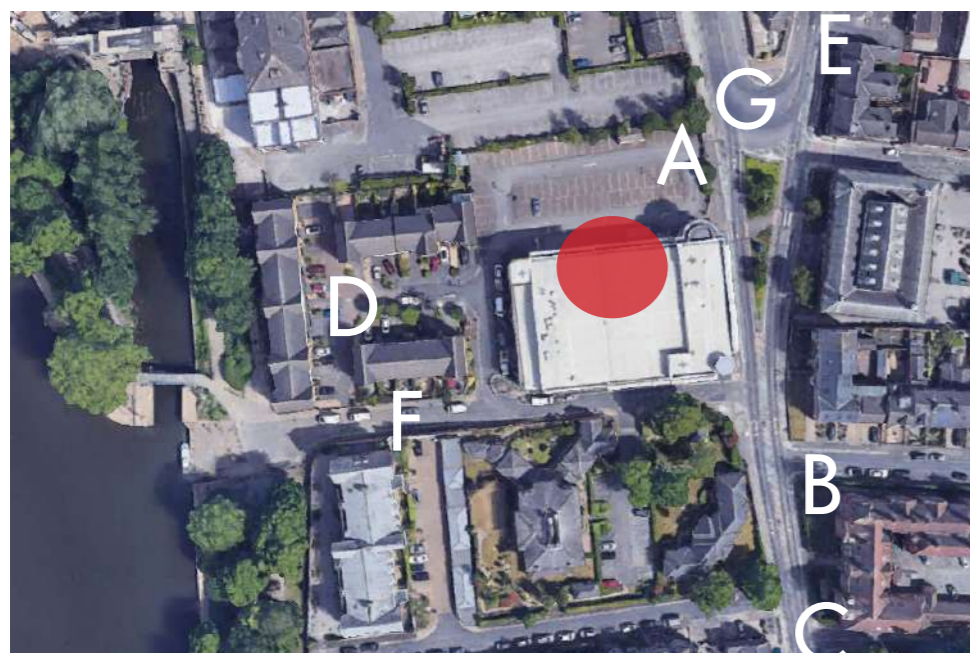
### 3.5.1 Character of the Site and its Setting / Context

#### 3.5.1.1 Views towards the Site

On this page are some of the views towards the 'site' from the wider setting.

The 'site' contains the Mecca Bingo building and its car park to the north. Pictured below, the building, built in 2003, of buff brick, cream cladding, curtain walling and flat roofs, possesses minimal architectural significance. Its scale is incongruous within the smaller 19th and 20th century buildings around it, as it rather dominates its setting.

It is notably visible from both south and north down and up Fishergate, and its 'rear' more blank elevations offer the views from the residential dwellings to north, west and south.



GoogleEarth image of the site with points of views identified with directions of views all towards the site, identified with a red dot

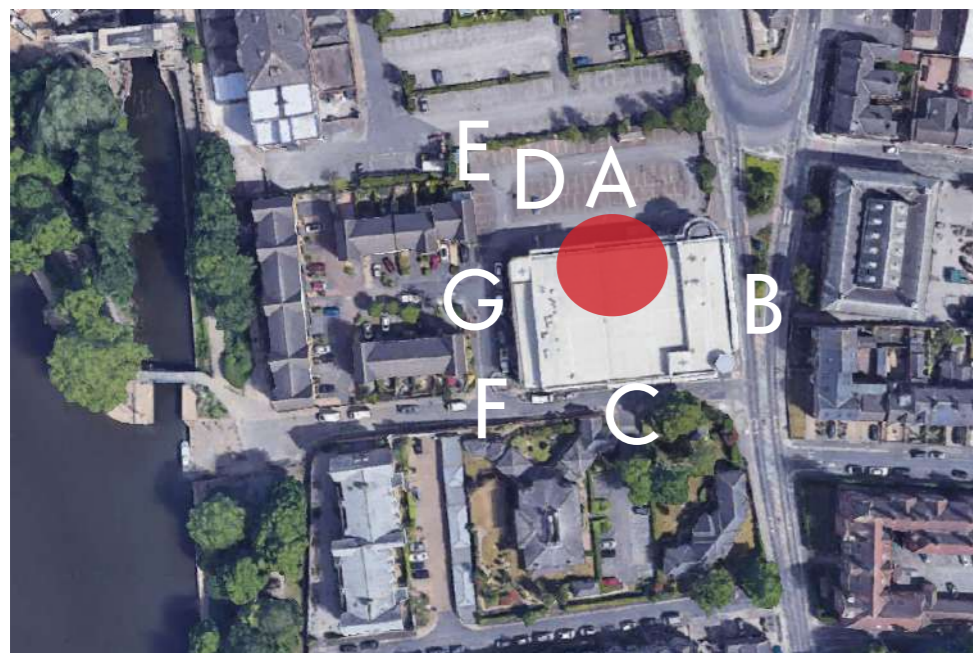
3.5.1.2 Views from the Site

On this page are some of the views looking away from the 'site' towards the wider setting and the surrounding buildings and streetscape.

The views to the east, across Fishergate, are to the Victorian streetscape of 'Fishergate School' (photo A) and 'Tower House' (B).

The views to the south, across Blue Bridge Lane, are to the Victorian 'Fishergate House' and the added units to the east (photo C).

The views to the west and north (photos D, E, F & G) are to the river and the modern residential and hotel development.



GoogleEarth image of the site with points of views identified with directions of views all away from the site, identified with a red dot

### 3.5.2 Character of the Site and its Setting / Context

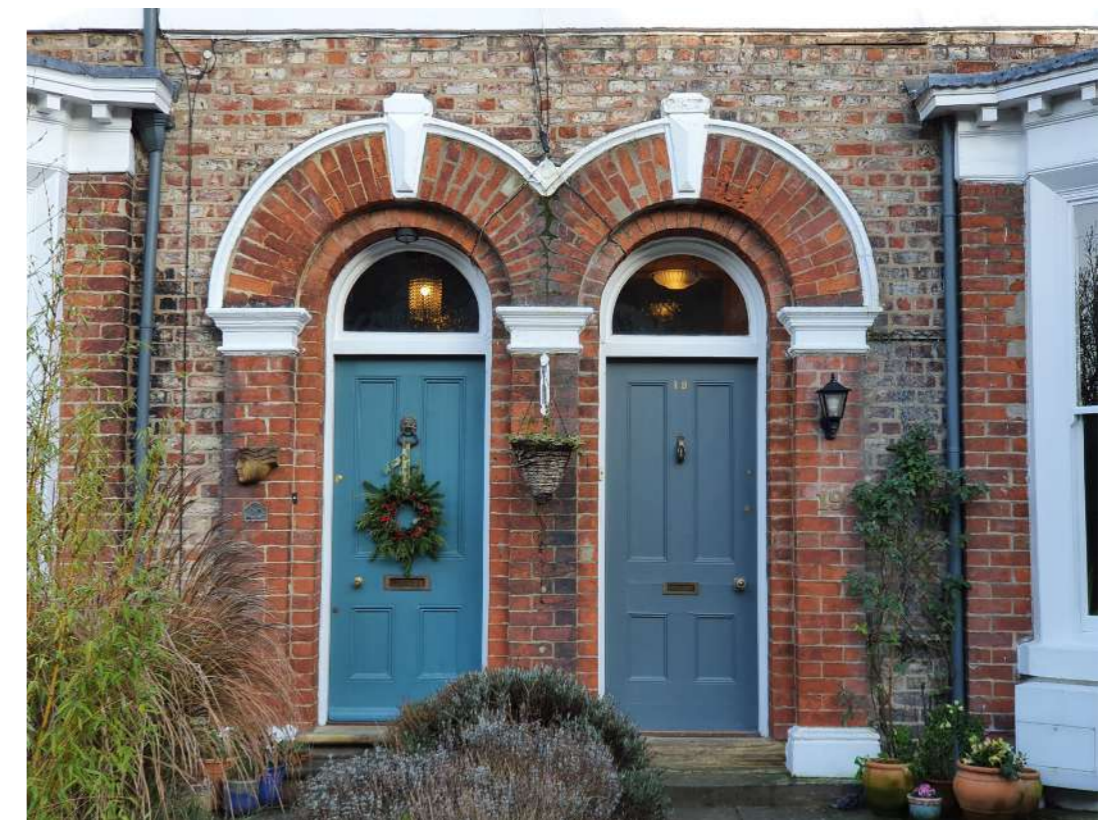
The character of the site's setting is one of domestic scale and proportions, with Victorian character and significant examples of distinctive detailing, principally within a use of brickwork as the primary building material, of varying colours, mainly red and buff.

Below are some photographs of the surrounding area.

Eaves variation, end terraces punctuated with higher elements (gables, chimneys and statement buildings)



Paired windows, set back brick, emphasis on playfulness and depth



Variation of spacing, size and materiality



Feature gables, windows, brick detailing and verticality



Gables punctuated with detail and depth



### 3.5.3 Conservation Areas

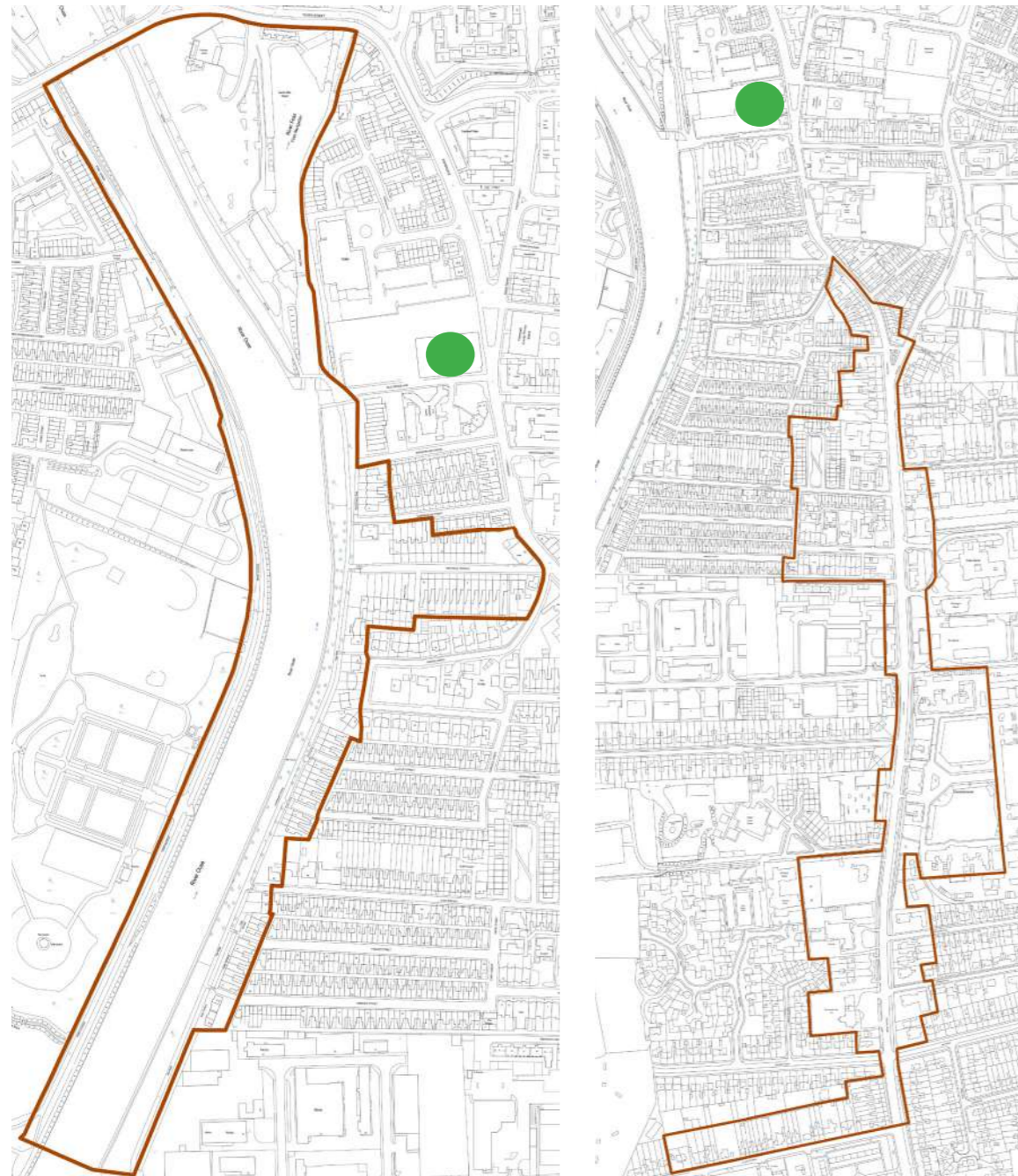
The Former Rialto Theatre/Mecca Bingo, Fishergate site is not located within a Conservation Area. However, it is in very close proximity to three Conservation Areas.

The site is immediately adjacent the 'York Central Historic Core Conservation Area' (see map to right with the site identified as a green dot with the Conservation Area within the red line).

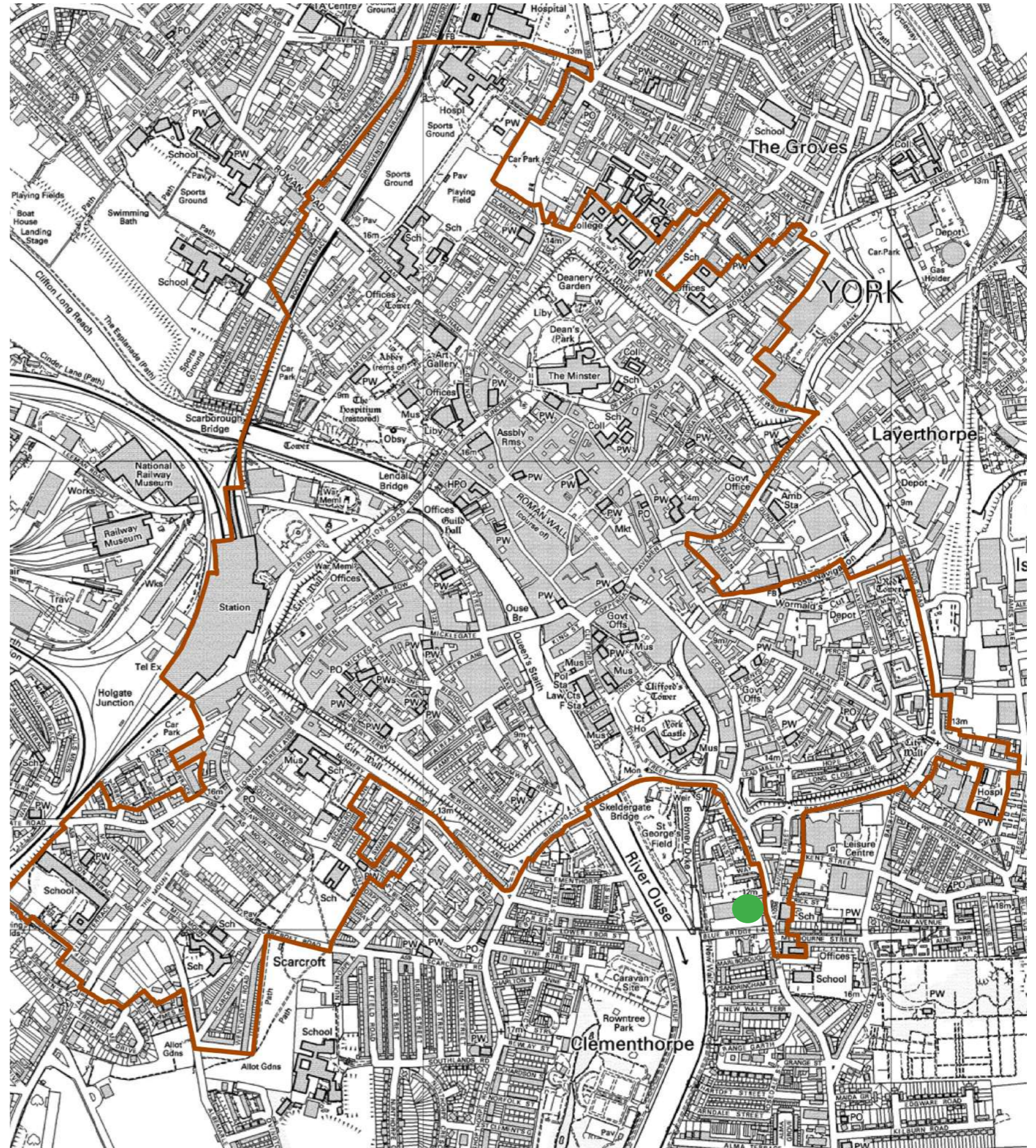
Additionally, directly to the east of the site sits the New Walk / Terry Avenue Conservation Area (see below left), with the site (identified as a green dot) just to the east of the area.

Also, to the south of the site sits the Fulford Road Conservation Area (see below right) with the site (identified as a green dot) just to the north of the area.

Possibly being an area incorporating onto 20th century buildings, the 'site' is flanked by Conservation Areas, but not included in any.



New Walk & Terry Avenue and Fulford Road Conservation Areas (within red boundaries); 'Site' as green dot on both. (source: City of York Council)



York Central Historic Core - Conservation Area Map - Conservation Area within red boundary; 'Site' as green dot (source: City of York Council and Alan Baxter & Associates)

3.5.4 Local Historic and Important Buildings

2.5 Local Context and Character

Local Historic and Important Buildings

A number of listed buildings are located in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site. Fishergate House and Fishergate Primary School are located directly adjacent the site and direct consideration should be given in the proposals.



1. New Walk Terrace, Grade II

2. New Walk Terrace, Grade II

3. The Lighthorseman Hotel, Grade II



4. Fishergate House, Grade II

5. Fishergate Primary School, Grade II

6. Ivy Cottage, Grade II



7. The Old Convent, Grade II

8. The Edinburgh Arms, Grade II

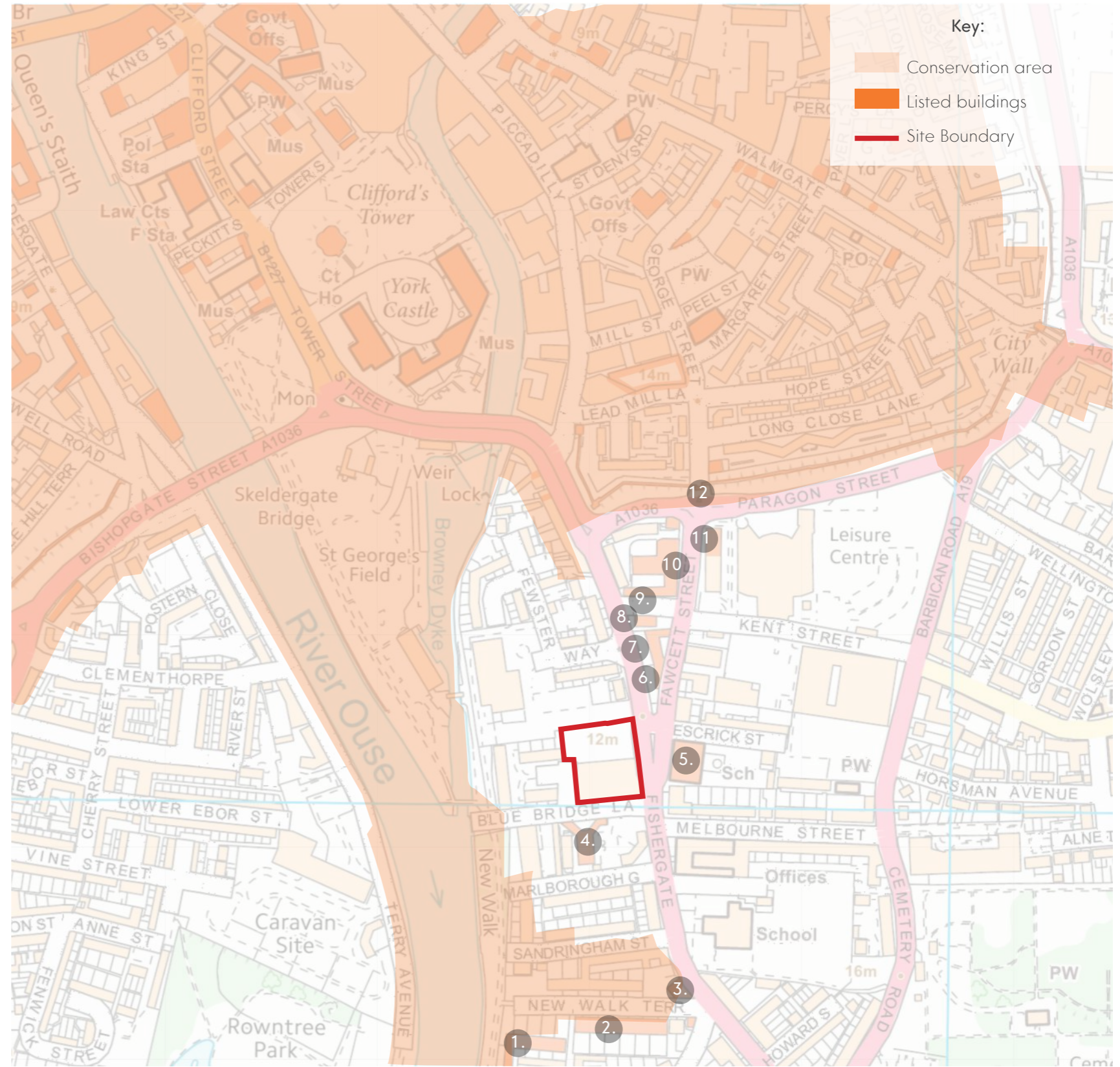
9. The Woolpack Public House, Grade II



10. Sea Horse Hotel, Grade II

11. York City Arms, Grade II

12. South City Walls, Fishergate Bar, Grade II



#### 4.0 Section Three - Understanding the Significance of the Historic Asset – ‘Statement of Significance’

##### 4.1 An Assessment of Significance

One of the real strengths of any historic building assessment is that it focuses attentions on what is of high importance about a cultural or national asset, whilst similarly defining aspects which are of little or no importance. Thus, in planning what or how to conserve, or develop, areas around it, it is possible to make decisions based on the best possible analytical process rather than on individual preference, or some other arbitrary method.

This section of the report seeks to set out, albeit briefly, what makes the heritage asset, the Mecca Bingo site, of value and should therefore be protected.

The assessment of significance has been provided to give an initial guidance on the proposals for the development.

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural, social and/or natural heritage values that make a building or place important to this and future generations. The aim of conservation is to sensitively manage change to a place to ensure that its significance is not only protected, but also revealed, reinforced and enhanced at every possible opportunity. It should also ensure that decisions regarding both day-to-day and long term use and management of the site take into account all of the values that contribute to a place’s significance.

The purpose of a Statement of Significance is to identify the areas and aspects of the Mecca Bingo site which have cultural significance. Cultural significance is a concept which helps us in estimating the value of a place and which:

- Helps us understand the past;
- Enrich our present lives;
- Will be of value to future generations.

Most historic sites or buildings are significant for a range of reasons, and it is important to understand all of its values in order that informed, balanced decisions can be made.

Many heritage values are recognised by the statutory designation and regulation of significant places. In statutory terms, the significance of the Mecca Bingo site is not formally recognised by any Listings on the site nor it being within a Conservation Area.

However, it is useful to go beyond this view to arrive at a deeper understanding of its values and significance.

We can analyse the public’s interest in heritage assets by sub-dividing it into evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values. These values can be used to inform the structured and consistent assessment of buildings.

**Evidential Value** is deemed to derive from those elements of a historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, and especially its historic fabric, supported in some cases by documentation. These may be visible and relatively easy to assess, or they may be buried below ground, under water or be hidden by later fabric. These remains provide the primary evidence for when and how an historic asset was made or built, what it was used for and how it has changed over time. The unrecorded loss of historic fabric represents the destruction of the primary evidence. Additional evidential values can be gained from documentary sources, pictorial records and archaeological archives or museum collections.

All buildings — domestic, commercial, religious, industrial etc — have the capacity to provide evidence of specific past human activity from one or perhaps several periods. The extent to which they do so depends on coherence and integrity, or an intelligible development sequence. The extent of survival of original or clearly phased fabric and layout, or of detail relating to use (including internal detail) are particularly important.

Context may also be relevant: the evidential value of a single industrial or agricultural building for example will be diminished if other associated buildings have already been lost or damaged.

**Historical Value** is deemed to be the associative or illustrative ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.

An historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life or it might be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement. These illustrative or associative values of an historic asset may be less tangible than its evidential value but will often connect past people, events and aspects of life with the present. Of course the functions of an historic asset are likely to change over time and so the full range of changing historical values might not become clear until all the evidential values have been gathered together. Historical values are not so easily diminished by change as evidential values and are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated them or concealed them.

In practice, much of the historical value of an asset is inseparable from its evidential value — a well-preserved building can illustrate an aspect of past life much better than can a damaged or heavily altered building. But historical value may also reside in the less tangible — in associations with notable people events or movements of proven regional or national significance. As in the criteria for listing, however, these associations will be more powerful if the building as it survives directly confirms the association (i.e. is recognisably the building with which connection is claimed).

The difference between evidential value and illustrative historical value may seem difficult to define, but in general, evidential value relates to the material evidence about how a particular building or site functioned, and historical value to the capacity of that site to illustrate broader historical themes — its contribution to our understanding of aspects of past life, be they for example the organisation of society, developments in agriculture or industry, or in religious observance.

Understanding historical value therefore requires a broader understanding of the asset in context, whereas a good understanding of evidential value can be reached by close physical analysis on site.

**Aesthetic Value** relates to the external appearance and form of an asset and its relationship to its context and setting, be it a designed landscape, a working agricultural or industrial landscape, or a townscape. Aesthetic Value derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset. It may relate to conscious design or style or it may be a seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which an historic asset has evolved and been used over time, or a combination of both. It may relate to adherence to tradition, to quality of craftsmanship or technology of construction, or it may reflect the results of development over time.

High-quality conscious design — so-called ‘polite architecture’ often associated with named architects — and vernacular building according to clear regional traditions (and perhaps unconscious design), have their own aesthetic codes. But for both, composition, plan, method of construction, materials, finish and detail — including interior detail — are the essential elements of design.

The form of an asset normally changes over time. Sometimes earlier pictorial records and written descriptions will be more powerful in many people’s minds than what survives today. Some important viewpoints may be lost or screened, or access to them may be temporarily denied. To assess this aspect of an asset, again the evidence of the present and past form must be gathered systematically. This needs to be complemented by a thorough appreciation on site of the external appearance of an asset in its setting. Inevitably understanding the aesthetic value of an historic asset will be more subjective than the study of its evidential and historical values. Much of it will involve trying to express the aesthetic qualities or the relative value of different parts of its form or design.

**Communal Value** derives from the meanings that an asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It includes social and economic value, as well as commemorative, spiritual or symbolic value.

It is closely linked to historical and aesthetic values but tends to have additional or specific aspects. Communal value might be commemorative or symbolic. For example, people might draw part of their identity or collective memory from an historic asset, or have emotional links to it. Such values often change over time and they may be important for remembering both positive and uncomfortable events, attitudes or periods in Wales’ history. Historic assets can also have social value, acting as a source of social interaction, distinctiveness or coherence; economic value, providing a valuable source of income or employment; or they may have spiritual value, emanating from religious beliefs or modern perceptions of the spirit of a place.

Each of these elements will be dealt with below.

The significance of a place is the sum of these values, brought together and expressed in a statement of significance. This statement forms the foundation upon which any proposals for change and enhancement of a place can be considered and carried forward.

In order to identify the relative contributions that these values make to the significance of a place and therefore the capacity for these values to be revealed and/or enhanced, a range of classifications are used.

For the purpose of this study we have adopted a fairly standard classification using five levels of significance, which are sufficient to measure each aspect of significance and to compare it to others consistently.

**High:** An aspect of value that strongly contributes to the significance of a place, forming a key piece of its history and cultural value which may be of national or international importance. In material terms, these aspects will best contribute towards the heritage values. Conservation will be a priority, and alteration is likely to be resisted unless it is demonstrated that significance will be greatly enhanced, reinforced or revealed as a result.

**Medium:** An aspect of value that will have some cultural importance (perhaps on a regional scale) and will make a moderate contribution to the significance of a place. In material terms they will play an important role in conveying the heritage values. Efforts should be made to protect and enhance these aspects, though a greater degree of flexibility is possible than with aspects of high value.

**Low:** An aspect of value that will make a slight (yet still noteworthy) contribution to the significance of a place, but perhaps only on a local scale. In material terms it will still add something to the heritage values (such as helping to maintain plan form and historic character), although this contribution may have been compromised by loss or uninformed intervention. A greater capacity for enhancement exists than for items of medium or high value, although a low designation does not necessarily mean that the feature is expendable.

**Neutral:** An aspect that has no discernible value that neither adds to nor detracts from the significance of the place. Informed change will be acceptable.

**Detrimental:** An aspect of the place that detracts from its values and therefore its significance. In material terms, removal or reversal of these aspects should be strongly encouraged.

## 4.2 Historical Value

The 'Site' is only about 200 metres south of the 'Fisher Gate' of York's historic City Walls; and only about 300 metres south of the Castle complex, albeit separated by the River Foss and the Tower Street dual carriageway. It is, therefore, beyond the city walls, however, relatively close to the walls themselves, the Fisher Gate and the Castle complex within, which dates as far back as the 13th century. In that regard, it is close to a highly significant part of not only regionally, but nationally and internationally, important heritage.

The 'Site' was once immediately adjacent to, or possibly even part of, the medieval 'Church and Gilbertine Priory of St Andrew', which also dates to the 13th century. In this regard, the 'site' bears considerable historical value; however, whilst the Castle and Walls still remain, the Church and Priory do not.

From the dissolution of the Priory in 1538 until about the early to mid 19th century, the 'site' appears to have been fields and open land. However, within the last 200 years, the 'site' has catered to a series of significant developments.

The first half of the 19th century saw the early development of the southern part of the 'site', with a series of small and medium sized domestic or commercial buildings (none of which remain), with a strip of orchard, garden or park just to the west of them. These were added to in the second half of the 19th century and again in the early 20th century, such that, by 1929, the south half of the 'site' was fully developed with a series of small connected structures. Again, none of these remain, as they were demolished in 2002 to make way for the current 'Mecca Bingo Club'.

Previously undeveloped, the northern half of the 'site' underwent significant development in the early 1900s, with the construction of the 'Rialto Picture Theatre' on Fishergate and the 'City Roller Skating Rink' behind. These were burnt down in 1935, and immediately replaced with a larger 'Rialto Cinema'. The 'Rialto Cinema' – which became the original 'Mecca Bingo Club' was, in turn, demolished in 2003, and became the car park to the current 'Mecca Bingo Club', which was built on the southern part of the 'site' in 2002-3. It, and the car park, still remain.

Beyond the 'site' itself, early to mid 19th century development also appeared – in the form of the 1837 'Fishergate House' directly to the south of the site, on the other side of Blue Bridge Lane. This still remains. Later on, in the second half of the 19th century, further considerable residential development ensued further to the south of the 'site', on the other side of Fishergate House. To the west of 'Fishergate House', a short run of 5no. residential units were built between 1929 and 1938. They were, however, demolished later and replaced with a larger residential development in 2002, which still remains. Also, just to the east of Fishergate House, a new structure was built in the second half of the 20th century, very much reflecting the layout and roof design of Fishergate House, albeit smaller in plan form. This also still remains.

Just to the north of the 'site', possibly dating to 1794, was a 'Glass Works' development on the old Priory site. These 'Glass Works' were considerably extended, southwards towards the 'site' between 1851 and 1889; and only demolished as recently as 1985/86, almost 200 years after they were established. Between them and the 'site', the 'Tramways Club' was built some time between 1907 and 1929. By 2002, the 'Tramways Club' and the entire large 'Glass Works' had all been demolished and replaced by car parking, a large residential development, and a hotel just alongside the river. These all still remain.

To the east of the 'site' – on the other side of the 'Fishergate' road – the late 19th century saw further developments in the form of the 'Salvation Army Barracks', a run of terrace housing along the newly formed 'Melbourne Street', 'Tower House' – the Offices for the 'Northern Command' (built in 1878) and the 'Fishergate County Primary School' (built in 1895). Further residential streets were developed in the early part of the 20th century. Many of these buildings still remain.

To the west of the site, nothing existed before 1907. A small structure had appeared between 1907 and 1929, which was replaced by a larger structure, possibly light industrial, sometime in the second half of the 20th century. Between 2002 and 2007, this was demolished and replaced with further housing.

The demolition of the 'Rialto Cinema' in 2003, preceded by the demolition of the Glass Works in 1985/6, and the construction of the new 'Mecca Bingo Club' and a large area of residential development and a hotel, dating to around 2000, means that the 'site' and the whole area to the north of the 'site' retained no remnants of its historic fabric or indeed its urban form. All that remains are the river to the west and the Fishergate road to the east. Gone are the Priory, the Glass Works, the Picture Theatre, the Skating Rink, the Club, and the 19th and early 20th century houses on the south east corner of the 'site'.

This being said, whilst the 'site' and the area to its north and west have been, within the last 20 years, completely altered and are very modern; to the south and east of the site much of the 19th century streetscape remains.

'Fishergate House', built in 1837, still remains directly to the south of the 'site' on the other side of Blue Bridge Lane; and 'Fishergate County Primary School', built in 1895, just to the east of the 'site', on the other side of the 'Fishergate' road, also remains. The late 19th century terrace residential streets to the south and east of 'Fishergate House' and 'Fishergate County Primary School', most of which pre-date the School, remain with what appears to be little change, including the 'Tower House – the Offices for the 'Northern Command'' to the east of 'Fishergate House', which was adapted as a business centre in the early 1990s.

The 'site' now holds only the 2003 'Mecca Bingo Club' and its car park. To the north is a residential development and hotel, dating to around 2000. To the west is a smaller 2002 residential development, with the river beyond. All historic fabric has been removed.

To the south, on the other side of Blue Bridge Lane is the 1837 'Fishergate House'. To its west is a 2002 small residential development. To its east is a development similar to Fishergate in design, but dating to the second half of the 20th century. Further south are terraced residential streets dating to the second half of the 19th century.

To the south east, on the other side of Fishergate road, are further terraced residential streets dating to the second half of the 19th century and 'Tower House'.

Directly to the east of the 'site', also on the other side of Fishergate road is the 1895 'Fishergate County Primary School', with some early 20th century buildings further north.

Historical Value is deemed to be the associative or illustrative ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. A historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life or it might be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement. Historical values are not so easily diminished by change as evidential values and are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated them or concealed them.

The 'site' and its wider context are certainly packed full of history – from the medieval 'Priory' and 'Church' between 800 years and 500 years ago; 200 years of the 'Glass Works' and all the stories relating to that; the 'Tramways Club'; and over 100 years of the 'City Roller Skating Rink' and the 'Rialto Picture Theatre / Cinema / Mecca Bingo Club', which can boast appearances from the likes of Louis Armstrong, Frankie Vaughan, Gracie Fields, Johnny Mathis, Freddie Star, the Rolling Stones and The Beatles. In this regard, the 'site' and environs would hold significant historical value, if there were any remains of these aspects of the site's history. The fact that they have all gone, and no remnants of that history remain, certainly reduces the site's historical value. However, since historic value is in the intangible, and remains, to an extent, even after the buildings have gone, suggests that the 'site' does hold some historical value. Its proximity to the Castle and the City Walls, particularly the Fishergate, and its proximity to a number of significant Victorian properties which still remain, give the 'site' **Medium Historical Value**.

### 4.3 Evidential Value

The difference between evidential value and illustrative historical value may seem difficult to define, but in general, evidential value relates to the material evidence about how a particular building or site functioned, and historical value to the capacity of that site to illustrate broader historical themes — its contribution to our understanding of aspects of past life, be they for example the organisation of society, developments in agriculture or industry, or in religious observance.

Insofar as Evidential Value is deemed to derive from those existing material elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, and especially its historic fabric, the proposed development site possesses evidential value only of the 20th century developments. No pre-20th century fabric remains above ground on the 'site'. There are no visible elements of historic fabric that can provide evidence about past human activity.

However, given the 170 or so years of confirmed development on the site and the possibility of some development going back to the 1300s, it is possible that remains of historic fabric existing beneath the ground, in the form of archaeology. The building of the 'Mecca Bingo Club' in 2003 might have destroyed much of any underground archaeology, with the foundations and excavations, not least as the predecessor structures appeared each to be fairly small in plan form. However, it remains possible, even probable, that the car park part of the site, in the northern half of it, may possess archaeology from the 1936 'Rialto Cinema', or even the early 1900s 'Rialto Picture Theatre' and 'City Roller Skating Rink'.

An Archaeological Assessment of the 'site' undertaken in June 2021 by the York Archaeological Trust, involving the digging of a number of trenches and boreholes, preceded by a desktop assessment, established that "Archaeological deposits were identified in situ in trenches 1 and 2, and in boreholes 1, 3 and 4. These deposits consisted of probable medieval soils and a possible Roman cobbled surface. Also present were structural remains of the 1930s Rialto Cinema, which was demolished in 2001." As expected, these all occur within the northern half of the site, being the current car park area. Refer to York Archaeological Trust's 'Archaeological Investigations' document for further information.

Evidential Value can also be established through documentation. Photographs and eye witness accounts of the old 'Glass Works' and the 'Rialto Cinema / Mecca Bingo Club' are available, even some photographs of the early 1900s 'City Roller Skating Rink', which includes significant footage of the 'Glass Works' in the late 70s / early 80s (from the York Press) and the 'Rialto Cinema / Mecca Bingo Club' in 2002/3 (from 28dayslater).

The proposed development site itself is therefore considered to have **Neutral Evidential Value** above ground, whilst it might possess **Medium Archaeological Value** below ground.

### 4.4 Aesthetic Value

Aesthetic Value relates to the external appearance and form of an asset and its relationship to its context and setting, be it a designed landscape, a working agricultural or industrial landscape, or a townscape. It derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset.

The 'site' contains the 'Mecca Bingo' building and its car park to the north. The car park area, covered in tarmac and brick pavers, possesses no aesthetic value. The building, built in 2003, of buff brick, cream cladding, curtain walling and flat roofs, possesses minimal architectural or aesthetic value. Its scale is incongruous within the smaller 19th and 20th century buildings around it, as it rather dominates its setting.

Indeed, the scale and architectural language of the building, being inconsistent with the Victorian architecture to the south and east, as well as the domestic 21st century architecture to the north and west, arguably affords the building **Detrimental Aesthetic Value**, being an aspect of the 'site' which detracts from its values, and that of its context and setting, and therefore its significance. In material terms, removal or reversal of these aspects should be strongly encouraged.

The being said, the character of the site's setting is one of far greater aesthetic value, albeit mainly to the east and south, rather than the north and west. Of domestic scale and proportions, with Victorian character and significant examples of distinctive detailing, principally within a use of brickwork as the primary building material, of varying colours, mainly red and buff, the setting of the 'site' possesses far more significant aesthetic value than the 'site' itself.

### 4.4 Communal Value

Communal Value derives from the meanings that an asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It includes social and economic value, as well as commemorative, spiritual or symbolic value.

Historic assets having social value can act as a source of social interaction, distinctiveness or coherence; economic value, providing a valuable source of income or employment; or they may have spiritual value, emanating from religious beliefs or modern perceptions of the spirit of a place.

For over 100 years, the 'Rialto Picture Theatre / Cinema / Mecca Bingo Club', and the 'City Roller Skating Rink', will have provided significant social value to the community. People will have been entertained by the likes of Louis Armstrong, Frankie Vaughan, Gracie Fields, Johnny Mathis, Freddie Star, the Rolling Stones and The Beatles. People will have enjoyed many a few hours watching blockbuster films. People will have enjoyed playing bingo and being entertained when the Rialto became a bingo club and for the 18 years since the new 'Mecca Bingo Club' was built. People will have enjoyed themselves in the 'City Roller Skating Rink'. This used to be for over 100 years, and still is, a site for entertainment and fun.

This value would also have been economic, being an important part of the local economy. Arguably, these uses are unlikely to have included much commemorative, spiritual or symbolic value.

The wider area, particularly the 'Glass Works' just to the north of the 'site', will also have possessed considerable communal value, with many people still able to recall working there up to the early 1980s.

However, the loss of the 'Glass Works' and the 'Rialto Cinema' and its predecessor 'Rialto Picture Theatre' and 'City Roller Skating Rink', means that this 'historic' communal value is all but lost, with photographs alone to remember the days. Of course, few would now remember the days of the 'Rialto Picture Theatre' and 'City Roller Skating Rink', but some will still remember the 'Glass Works' and the 'Rialto Cinema' / original 'Mecca Bingo Club'. There will, of course, be many who have memories of the newer 'Mecca Bingo Club'; and, given that it still remains and only relates to 18 years of memories, these memories will be fresh.

However, the loss of most of the historic fabric, and the minimal 'history' to the fabric which remains, suggests that the site has low communal value. It is only the fact that the current 'Mecca Bingo Club' is such a social building, that the site is deemed to have **Low / Medium Communal Value**.

## 5.0 SECTION 4 - EXPLANATION OF THE PROPOSALS

This Section 4 identifies and explains the proposed changes to the heritage asset and its context.

The proposed development site is now set within a residential area. It currently accommodates the Mecca Bingo Club and a car park.

The proposals seek to demolish the existing Mecca Bingo Club and re-purpose the site for Purpose Built Student Accommodation, providing a high-quality development that responds appropriately to the existing and emerging context of the immediate area.

The proposals seek to develop an architecture which is more in keeping with the area than the current Mecca Bingo Club; and to provide a new use which is well suited to the growing demand for student accommodation in the area.

The proposals seek to open up to the key boundaries of Fishergate and Blue Bridge Lane, forming a balance between massing and achieved space generated. This also allows for south facing courtyard space and picks up key views into the scheme.

The development of the site plan seeks to pick up the following three key adjacent spaces to the site whilst providing meaningful open space for the future users of the building. As part of this the design has sought to reflect the existing urban grain and massing and looks to avoid presenting overly linear and overbearing forms to the key adjacent streets.

### ***Fishergate Road***

At the juncture of Fishergate Road and Fawcett Street (and adjacent the proposed site), the urban realm changes to form a more open and natural form. The proposed scheme therefore aims to respond to this by setting back the site boundary and offering a hard landscaped space, lined with street trees, creating a public meeting space with cycle parking.

### ***Blue Bridge Lane***

Blue Bridge Lane towards Fishergate opens up adjacent to Fishergate House, with a landscaped private parking court featuring mature trees. The proposal again opens up to the street, with a landscaped south facing courtyard 'mirroring' the urban realm found here.

### ***William Court***

William Court, directly to the west of the proposed development, presents an incomplete courtyard. The scheme looks to complete this with a new 'residential' development, replacing the current Mecca Bingo structure. The proposed scheme is also set back circa 4m from the current boundary/extent of the existing building.

Notably the terraced dwellings perpendicular to this site are orientated north/south with minimal 'tertiary' fenestration looking east. The riverside block, with primary windows looking east, is also situated circa 60m from the proposed development.

The character of the site's setting is one of domestic scale and proportions, with Victorian character and significant examples of distinctive detailing, principally within a use of brickwork as the primary building material, of varying colours, mainly red and buff. The proposals seek to reflect this more domestic scale, with its character, materiality and articulation.

Fishergate presents a 'rhythm' of terraces, gables and detached buildings. The massing of the proposals aims to reflect this in presenting two distinct forms (a terrace and a gable) to Fishergate.

The existing materiality to Fishergate is primarily a mix of bricks in hues of buff/grey and red (typically a deeper plum and red/brown) 'multi' bricks. The proposed scheme's massing seeks to respond both to the existing street form and materiality.

The roofs of the proposals are pitched, terminating into gables with stepped forms at each block end. The roof form is designed such that windows and openings are visually minimised.

The scheme presents a consistent three plus one roof storey approach to Fishergate, William Court and the Novotel site. This is further made legible with a standing seam roof proposed at the upper most level. At the gables, the chimney elements assist in terminating this setback whilst providing an impression of weight and diversity to the scheme.

The pitched roof accommodation is designed so as to present a consistent approach to all the external elevations and are terminated at the ends of all the inear blocks with an articulated gable treatment, reflective of the local context. The central block linking the others, is designed as a four storey element - providing a visually strong central 'spine' element tying the scheme together.

The proposed building addresses a number of key pedestrian and vehicular routes (Fishergate and Blue Bridge Lane), and as such can be viewed from a number of vantage points. There is therefore a need to respond to each as the scheme 'moves' around the site. To assist this, architectural expression is given to each block's gable end, both picking up the architectural precedents in the area for gable detailing, and providing assistance to the building 'flow' around the site.

In this regard, the proposals respond to each facade of the site and reflect the local context, which is very different between the east of the site, the south and the north and west.

On the next series of pages are a selection of the proposal drawings.

5.0 THE PROPOSALS - Site Massing Principles

