



York Central

York Central... Gathering momentum



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Natalie Webster

What's been happening at York Central?

Since our last newsletter, York Central has been gathering momentum. Progress has been made on infrastructure, expanding engagement and we've welcomed visitors from all over the world!

November 2022 saw many of you join us to ask questions and share your feedback on emerging designs for the new Square and proposed Government Hub. We gathered some great insights which have helped shape the designs for future reserved matters planning applications (see page 3 to 6).

In February 2023, we joined the launch of the York BID video, featuring York Central as one of the key city development projects. We also met with York Central MP, Rachael Maskell, to discuss the project's wider vision and aspirations. Government departments responsible for homes, communities and the environment also visited site.

As a flagship city centre regeneration project, we were proud to host the first Cabinet Office Policy School to be held outside of London. We also welcomed the Nairobi Transport Minister and colleagues to learn about York Central's masterplanning and links with the railway.

A positive pop-up event in Parliament Street (complete with a coffee van and very cold feet) kicked off the next stage of community engagement events. March saw many meetings and events to collect further feedback and build on the emerging designs for the new Square.

In May, an army of volunteers removed invasive species, Himalayan Balsam, at Millennium Green to make way for a wildflower meadow.

In June, we represented the project at the Big Tent Ideas Festival, discussing lessons for and from York Central, plus hosted a walking tour of the infrastructure progress on site with Sisk and a panel session around 'How communities can shape their own futures - lessons for York Central'. The team were there to answer questions and share information on latest developments.

Infrastructure works are progressing at pace on the site. At Water End, piling is underway in preparation for the bridge over the East Coast Main Line. Access into the site from Leeman Road is well underway with the installation of utilities and services.

Selection of a master developer is going to plan and we're expecting to be able to announce the successful bidder in autumn.

There's some great news from our partners, with funding secured from City of York Council for the improvements to the neighbouring riverside pathway running between Jubilee Terrace and Scarborough Bridge in York. Plus, the National Railway Museum's Wonderlab exhibition opens at the end of July.

We've been working hard to incorporate everyone's feedback and prepare the submission for The Square's reserved matters planning application for this July. There's plenty in the pipeline too, find out more on page 8. We're always interested in your ideas for York Central, have your say via email at yorkcentral@homesengland.gov.uk.

Natalie

By **Natalie Webster**, Senior Project Manager at York Central, acting on behalf of Homes England and Network Rail

You said, we did

From outline concepts in the initial masterplan, the proposed design for the new Square has evolved considerably following the "Have your say" activities from November 2022 to June 2023. In preparing the reserved matters planning submission for The Square, the team has worked through the feedback provided and implemented design changes based on these ideas.

How has your feedback has been incorporated into the designs?



Planting

You said: Feedback suggested that people were keen to maximise the amount of planting at The Square. This is in line with our overall sustainability ambitions and improving local biodiversity.

We did: We've looked at this for The Square and the wider York Central scheme and have incorporated street trees, ground level planting and tree clusters to separate areas, define routes and provide shaded seating areas. We've also included shrub wild planting to create a 'ballast' character forming an edge to the historic feature, the reinstated weighbridge.

Wayfinding, safety, accessibility, transport and movement

You said: Everyone was interested in how people will navigate The Square as a destination and as a link between existing neighbourhoods, including the city centre and future phases of York Central. People were also keen to understand how walking, cycling and vehicle movements will be managed and the specific approach to safety and accessibility.

We did: We've proposed clearer separation of pedestrian pathways and cycleways to manage the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists across the site. Hudson Boulevard cycleway has been extended to meet the cycleway on Cinder Street and bollards and trees help to give clear definition to the 'shared space' where pedestrians and cyclists will be able to safely navigate to, from and across The Square. More detailed work has also been undertaken to identify the careful specification of materials to ensure a safe, accessible and inclusive space.

Seating

You said: Providing seating areas and places to relax were key bits of feedback.

We did: Proposed designs include bench seating across The Square to maximise opportunities for viewing events and rest points for visitors and places for social interaction. All bench seating will feature backrests and armrests to aid accessibility and a number are located with clear space adjacent to offer inclusivity for users.

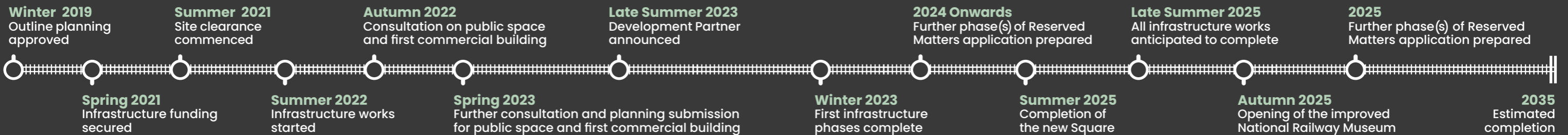
Lighting

You said: This was a very important feature for many for both safety and creating ambience. Several lighting views were presented illustrating the potential look and feel of lighting columns, and the specific role of lighting in shaping the character of The Square.

We did: A specialist lighting designer was commissioned to work alongside the landscape architects to develop the final proposals for The Square. The design will create a safe, comfortable and visually stimulating environment which combines specific lighting with practical functions and stylish features.

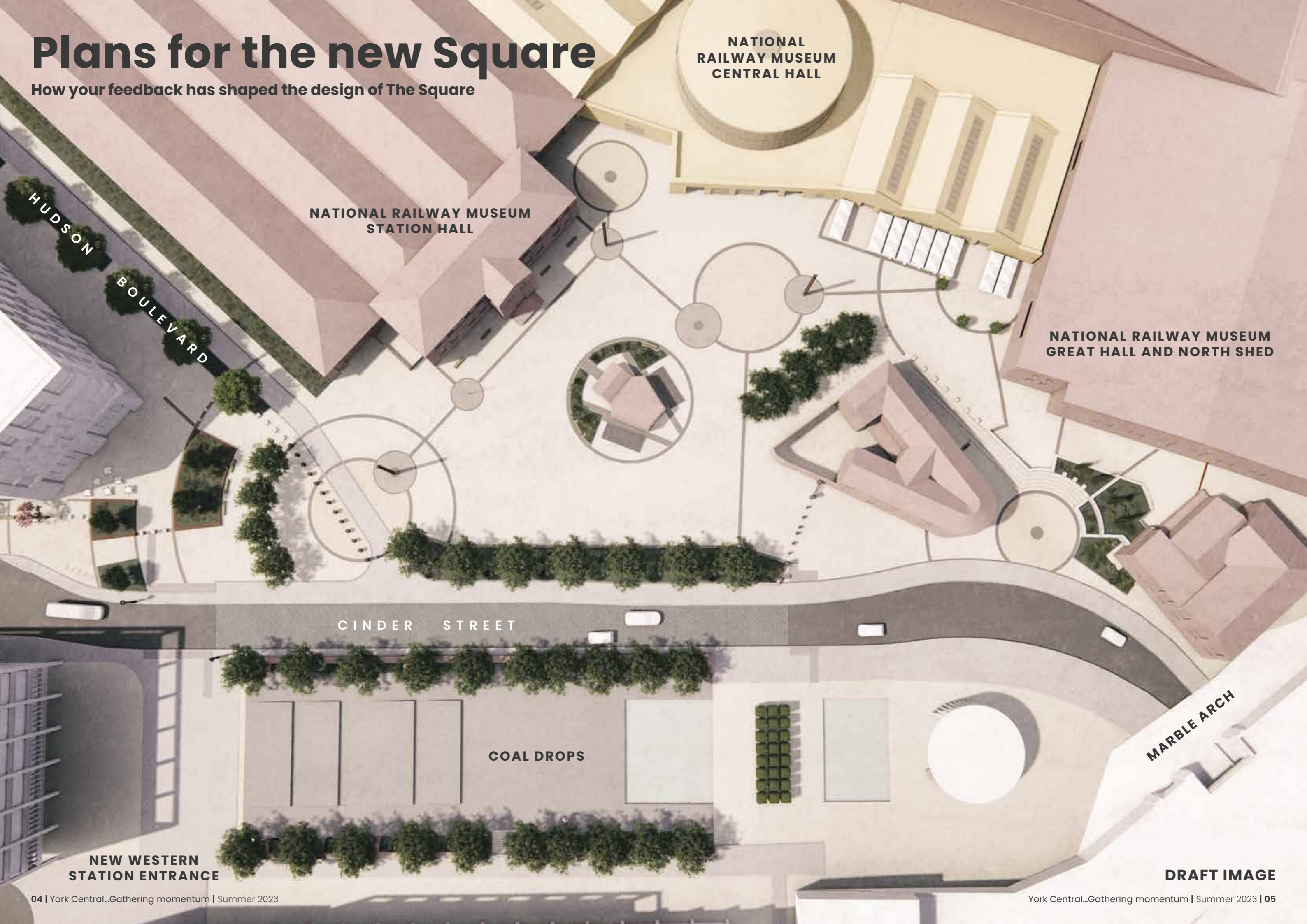


(Continued on page 6)



Plans for the new Square

How your feedback has shaped the design of The Square



NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM CENTRAL HALL

NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM STATION HALL

NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM GREAT HALL AND NORTH SHED

HUDSON BOULEVARD

CINDER STREET

COAL DROPS

MARBLE ARCH

NEW WESTERN STATION ENTRANCE

DRAFT IMAGE

You said, we did...

(Continued from page 3)

Public art

You said:
Opportunities for public art were strongly supported within all feedback.

We did:
We have identified potential locations for public art space including the circular paved area next to the stepped/terrace feature. We will be working closely with the National Railway Museum to ensure a joined up approach.

Other options for public art across the wider site are also being explored.

Uses, events and activities

You said:
Feedback showed a desire to see The Square used for a wide range of events and activities, creating a fitting gateway to York Central which complements the city. Questions were also raised about how this would be managed.

We did:
The primary function of the space is to encourage social interaction, walking and cycling, visiting the National Railway Museum and moving through the site.

The space could also be used for small scale events including local specialist markets, art fairs and exhibitions. To facilitate this appropriate power points will be incorporated to support "pop-up" events.

Larger events could be accommodated within the Coal Drops and other future areas of the site, which has been noted for future designs and plans.

In terms of the governance and management of the space, the current proposals are for the cycle route adjacent to Cinder Street and Hudson Boulevard to be adopted by City of York Council with the remainder of The Square to be managed by a Management Company.



Heritage and design

You said:
As a medieval city proud of its heritage, understandably there were a range of views expressed about the design aesthetics, with general support for retention and celebration of historic buildings and features.

We did:
The Heritage Impact Assessment assessed the impact of the proposals and highlights a positive response to this feedback. Balancing a contemporary design whilst retaining historic character is important. The Mineral Office building and Weighbridge buildings are being celebrated as key features of The Square.

The overarching design concept of circular and link elements seeks to reflect the distinctive geometric aspects of locomotives. The planned use of hard materials, street furniture and planting reflects the historic character of York and the site.



Air quality

You said:
Some feedback raised questions relating to air quality associated with passing traffic via Cinder Street to the immediate south of The Square.

We did:
The overall approach to traffic and air quality was considered as part of the outline planning process. However, a further air quality study has been prepared for information alongside the reserved matters planning application.

York Central is also covered by a site wide Emission Mitigation Strategy and The Square is supported by a Site Specific Emission Mitigation Strategy.

Coal Drops: A future phase

You said:
Several comments noted the importance of considering the Coal Drops as part of the overall approach to public space alongside The Square. Use of water features were also suggested for these areas.

The Coal Drops could host larger gatherings and events, complementing The Square. It could also be a more suitable space for a potential water feature. The Coal Drops space will be designed in detail in future phases and there will be further opportunities to have your say and shape designs.

Meet the York Central team

York Central Partnership is made up of Homes England, Network Rail, City of York Council and the National Railway Museum. With a project as complex as York Central, we draw on the specialist expertise of consultant

partners who help develop specific areas of the scheme. In the last newsletter, we introduced John Sisk and Son Ltd, who many of you will already have seen working on the project infrastructure.

For the design of York Central we work with award-winning urbanists and architects, Allies and Morrison, and landscape architects, Barton Howe. Find out more...



Allies and Morrison

www.alliesandmorrison.com

Allies and Morrison is a practice of architects based in London, Cambridge, Manchester and Dublin who strive to design beautiful buildings that have long life and can adapt over the generations. They shape enduring places, whether new pieces of city or settlements, at any scale. All their projects are concerned with the crafting of every detail and an appreciation for the uniqueness of each context.

The team undertakes all aspects of masterplanning and planning, including policy, planning applications, masterplans and Area Action Plans. With particular expertise in community consultation and engagement, they specialise in a wide range of consultation techniques including pop-up shops, exhibitions, market stalls

and surveys. Our project work is underpinned by a track record in producing original and thoughtful urban research.

Allies and Morrison led the design proposals for York Central masterplan. As design champions, their role is to work alongside the appointed architects to ensure the emerging proposals respond to the development parameters and guidance approved as part of the Outline Planning Permission. Homes England and Network Rail has also commissioned Allies and Morrison to feed into the design process for the proposed Government Hub and The Square.

Jason Syrett, Partner at Allies and Morrison, leads some of the practice's most complex



masterplanning projects with a focus on urban design, heritage and sustainability. Urban regeneration is central to much of Jason's work.

On behalf of the York Central partners, he has led the masterplan that will transform the disused railway lands in the city centre into a new, compact neighbourhood that builds on the character of the site's existing heritage.

He oversaw the practice's ongoing support for the King's Cross masterplan for many years and has directed several building projects there.



www.bartonhowe.com

Barton Howe Associates is a York based landscape design consultancy created by two award winning Landscape Architects with a shared belief that beautifully conceived spaces, meticulously designed and implemented with care will make a positive contribution to the places where we live, work and play.

Their input to the York Central project is led by award-winning York based duo, Designer **John Micklethwaite-Howe** and Chartered Landscape Architect, **Nick Wright**.

They have collectively gathered over sixty years' professional experience in the private and public sectors across the UK and overseas.

Their careers span a wide range of development types including masterplanning, urban regeneration, leisure and heritage conservation related projects in the UK and overseas with considerable experience in the design, management and co-ordination of regeneration projects with a strong emphasis upon community involvement.



As York residents, they are keen to ensure that the development of York Central meets the highest standards of design and implementation, offering a truly valuable contribution to this great Yorkshire city.

A Reserved Matters planning application for The Square is being submitted in July 2023.

For full details visit: www.yorkcentral.info/planning

For questions on design or planning at York Central, email yorkcentral@homesengland.gov.uk.

Spotlight on...

Making a Meadow at Millennium Green

Over 30 volunteers from the York Central team donated their time to remove invasive species, Himalayan Balsam from Millennium Green, replacing it with wildflower seeds, enhancing the area's natural beauty, while supporting the project's sustainability strategy.

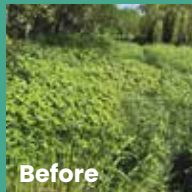


Organised by York Central's infrastructure contractor John Sisk & Son Ltd, the day saw volunteers from Homes England, property consultants Gleeds, Danny Sullivan construction recruitment and City of York Council, join Ebsford Environmental Consultants to clear the site.

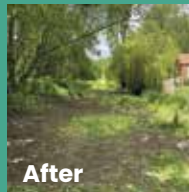
In addition to removing invasive Himalayan Balsam, specialist equipment was used to clear Giant Hogweed. The cleared ground was sowed with a mix of wildflowers and grasses to support natural regeneration.

Volunteers also worked on the pond, strimmed along the boundary fence and trimmed grass and nettles around the Garnet Terrace playground to make it nicer for local children.

Steve Maxwell, Chair of the Millennium Green Trust, said: "The open spaces around Millennium Green are so vital for the health and wellbeing of the entire local community. We are so grateful to every volunteer who gave up their time to proactively improve the area for everyone to enjoy."



Before



After

What's coming up at York Central?

July and August

- Continued work on site including preparation for drainage and attenuation tanks. Further work to install new utilities and services and access into the site
- Continued piling and ground improvement works at Water End. Completion of the Millennium Green access track
- Archaeology events 11th/12th August
- Potential reserved matters planning application for the proposed Government Hub

September onwards

- York Central strategic developer announced
- Continued work on drainage, attenuation tanks and utilities at Leeman Road and the new spine road
- Ongoing works at Cinder Lane junction
- Ground improvement works start at Water End
- Works starting on Station Rise

You're invited... Uncovering York Central

Come and meet the team, get the latest updates on York Central and discover what's been found hiding underneath the site so far.

What to expect:

With photos and exhibits, a discovery sand pit and a chance to dress up as an engineer or an archaeologist, there's fact finding fun for all the family.

When:

Friday 11 August
15:00 to 19:00

Saturday 12 August

10:00 to 14:00

Where:

Sisk Induction Room
York Central Project Office
Leeman Road York
YO26 4XD



Keep in touch with project updates:

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- 🌐 www.yorkcentral.info
- 📘 www.facebook.com/York.Central01
- 🌐 www.linkedin.com/company/york-central
- 🐦 www.twitter.com/YRKcentral

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