



SUGGESTED CHANGES TO YORK STATION FRONT DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

This document is based on a fundamental assumption that appears not to have been built in to the CYC/Arup proposals for the Station Front development. The CYC/Arup proposals appear to assume that a modest increase in bus interchange capacity is all that need be provided. We believe a very substantial increase in bus capacity at the railway station will be needed in the long term, and that in the shorter term more capacity would be useful.

YBF suggests modifications to the Station Front Development with the following in mind:-

- a) the general principle of demolishing Queen Street Bridge and using the space released for a better bus interchange is most welcome;
- b) future public transport capacity must be much greater than at present, necessitating a bus interchange far much higher capacity than provided by the current Station Front Development proposals;
- c) the budget for demolishing the bridge and remodelling the area is limited, so the Station Front project on its own cannot deliver all that might be desired, and is best thought of as a first step towards greater things;
- d) the best strategy is therefore to aim to maximise capacity in the long term, keeping options for future expansion as open as reasonably practicable in the short term;
- e) a longer-term strategic vision for the location's future could lead to reduced costs and disruption when the time comes to take the Station Front development further; and
- f) a fully-fledged 'bus station', as has often been proposed, is not a very practical proposition because there is too little space, but something almost as good can be achieved.

This document expands on an earlier YBF one, *York Station Front Development - Keeping Options Open*, by adding sketch maps and explanatory text showing how the development might be modified in line with the conclusions below.

Summary

Each of the conclusions summarised in this list is treated in more detail in its own section below.

- 1 *YBF welcome the Station Front development as a whole, but urge modifications providing better bus facilities.*
- 2 *The Station Front bus interchange development could, and therefore should, be designed as a first step towards something greater in the longer term.*
- 3 *In the long term, a very large increase in bus usage is inevitable, and all planning strategy should take this into account*
- 4 *The station-front bus interchange area should be safeguarded in a way that maximises its potential for capacity growth.*
- 5 *The present Station Front development need not provide the whole of the capacity increase ultimately needed. Significant increase coupled with provision for growth at a later date is all that is needed now.*
- 6 *Better integration between the bus interchange and railway station is achievable, and should therefore be provided for.*
- 7 *YBF has put forward proposals containing options we believe are practicable and should not be closed off unless it can be convincingly demonstrated there are valid reasons for rejecting them.*
- 8 *Due consideration should be given to the possibility of moving the taxi waiting queue away from the train shed wall, and putting a bus lane there instead.*
- 9 *The drop-off facilities would be better placed away from the bus interchange area, so they do not compete for space and limit its potential for future growth.*
- 10 *The proposal for a crossing directly outside the portico lengthens some walking distances without significantly reducing any others.*
- 11 *The central crossing does not solve any congestion issues not also solved by other interventions proposed in the same plan.*
- 12 *'Legibility to the City Centre is at best a very weak justification for a central crossing.*
- 13 *The central crossing closes off options by dividing up the space outside the portico.*
- 14 *The central crossing has no significant practical advantages, yet has a number of very real disadvantages, and should be dropped from the scheme.*
- 15 *Undesirable fragmentation of part of the cycle track can be reduced.*
- 16 *There is scope for reducing the degree of conflict between cyclists and pedestrians, especially if the central crossing is abandoned.*
- 17 *There is an opportunity to create a major bidirectional cycle route direct from Lowther Terrace to the War Memorial, at negligible extra cost, mostly along existing, largely traffic-free back roads.*
- 18 *Removal of infill from some of the train shed arches should not be an insuperable obstacle on listed building grounds.*

A Most Welcome Development

YBF welcome the fact that, after many years, there is now a serious proposal to demolish Queen Street Bridge and make better use of the space thereby freed up.

We also agree that this space is the most suitable location for a bus interchange near the railway station, as the Arup *Illustrative Masterplan* proposes.

We are therefore broadly in support of the scheme. But our analysis suggests it gives bus facilities too low a priority, at a time when there is a clear need for better public transport. In York, in practice, and for the foreseeable future, local public transport means buses.

1. YBF welcome the Station Front development as a whole, but urge modifications providing better bus facilities.

A Bus Station for York?

It has often been remarked that York lacks a bus station. YBF have looked into this question and concluded that a single central facility for all services is not really feasible. Instead, we see a future in which there continue to be hubs dotted around the city, with the addition of one at the west entrance of the railway station.

This vision goes half way towards providing a full-blown central bus station. It would be as near as can actually be achieved, and would quite possibly come to be regarded by the public as York's bus station.

The Station Front development budget is insufficient to achieve something this ambitious. We fully accept that the present Station Front scheme cannot immediately result in the greatly improved interchange we would like to see in the long term.

2. The Station Front development bus interchange could, and therefore should, be designed as a first step towards something greater in the longer term.

Bus Service Capacity Growth

York is growing, but its historic nature means significant expansion of road capacity is impracticable, and much of it is already congested. This leads to the inescapable conclusion that buses must play a much greater rôle in the future.

It is not simply a question of bus services expanding in proportion to the general rate of traffic growth. Since the roads are already at capacity, public transport must bear the entire burden, not just its own share. Without a large increase in bus travel, we face gridlock. Higher quantity and higher quality bus services are in the interests of all road users.

The number of passengers using the railway station is projected to increase considerably. The Station Front consultation document anticipates a tripling over the next 30 years. Even if this turns out to be an overestimate, dispersal of passengers will require higher bus interchange capacity than at present.

Presently, too few services terminate at the station due to lack of facilities. It would be beneficial to bring more Park & Ride services to the station. Greater use by rail travellers of Park & Ride instead of station car parking would ease pollution and congestion.

These considerations all point in the same direction ...

3. In the long term, a very large increase in bus usage is inevitable, and all planning strategy should take this into account.

Where Capacity Growth is Needed

The 'York Central' proposals include additional stops at a new west entrance to the station. While this would usefully add to capacity, it is hard to see how this would be enough to avoid the need for a large front-of-station capacity increase in the long run. The west entrance is on the 'wrong' side of the railway for most services, and double deckers are unable to pass through Leeman Road tunnel. The station front interchange is on the inner ring road and is where the greatest scope for capacity increase will be needed.

It has often been observed that the space between the station and the Bar Walls is too small to accommodate a bus station. There is some truth in this: the space available is limited, and in the very long term it is to be expected that capacity constraints will eventually become problematic.

It is difficult to predict when this will occur, but common sense suggests the best strategy would be to defer this eventuality until as late as possible by provisions and safeguards that devote most of this area to a future bus interchange. Other uses should therefore be temporary, or if not, located elsewhere.

4. The station-front bus interchange area should be safeguarded in a way that maximises potential for capacity growth.

When Capacity Growth will be Needed

An immediate increase in exchange capacity would be useful because it permits a greater number of buses to serve or turn round at the station. Nevertheless, much of the demand for expansion will be due to long-term trends.

While a capacity increase at this location would be beneficial now, it is not necessary to maximise capacity immediately. Rather, the present plans should be designed to make future expansion easier to achieve with minimum disruption and cost. The present plans need modifying if they are to meet this end.

5. The present Station Front development need not provide the whole of the capacity increase ultimately needed. Significant increase coupled with provision for growth at a later date is all that is needed now.

Bus Interchange Location and Integration

YBF agree that the space freed up by demolition of Queen Street Bridge is the most suitable location for a bus interchange, as Arup propose.

One complaint levelled against the Station Front proposals is that it increases the walking distance between trains and buses. There is however less truth in this that might at first be imagined. Since its opening in 1877, the station has been expanded, with more and longer platforms, mostly towards the south. If the modern station has a 'centre of gravity' it is south of the original middle. Provided access to the buses is more direct than via the Portico, the proposed location for the new interchange is entirely acceptable.

While YBF agrees with CYC about the broad location and nature of the interchange, we believe it could be more closely integrated with the railway station, with considerable benefits for the travelling public. We have outlined ideas as to how such better integration can be achieved without compromising the scope for long-term capacity growth.

6. Better integration between the bus interchange and railway station is achievable, and should therefore be provided for.

YBF's Alternative Proposals

Various investigators into the proposition of a bus station between the railway station front and Bar Walls have concluded that the space available is too small. We agree that, even after demolition of Queen Street Bridge, this would remain true in the case of a complete bus station, including associated buildings. But if the object of the exercise is to provide a much expanded hub, and space can be found elsewhere for a concourse, there is enough space to achieve far more than the current Station Front proposals offer. And if it can be done, it should be done, in the long term if not immediately.

The claim that it can be done needs backing up, of course. Claims that a better long-term outcome is possible would be unconvincing without at least one outline proposal as to how. We came up with our own proposal, which integrates the bus interchange and station far better. Fuller details are in this online document:-

www.tinyurl.com/YorkbusYBF1

The council was good enough to come back to us with a detailed response, which rejected our proposal, and we do have to admit it had a couple of weaknesses. The first was increased delay, especially to southbound bus passengers. The second was the potential for traffic congestion because all southbound buses had to cross the northbound traffic, not just once but twice.

CYC's full analysis can be found here:-

www.tinyurl.com/YorkbusCYCresponse

Having taken that into account, we came up with an alternative, so we now have two alternatives on the table. The second is described in this next document, produced in response to their analysis:-

www.tinyurl.com/YorkbusYBF2

It includes detailed comments as to why we disagree with some of what the Council had to say, and also contains detailed analysis showing why our proposals offer:-

1. better integration with the railway station;
2. higher capacity to cater for inevitable growth and more services to the station;
3. better turn-round facilities for more services terminating at the station;
4. far better undercover passenger waiting facilities;
5. shorter, better sheltered walking routes; and
6. potential for clearer and more dementia-friendly passenger information and signage.

We are not trying to push for a specific solution to the exclusion of all others. Alternatives which meet the same strategic objectives would be most welcome. But the existing Arup Station Front proposals fail to maximise the site's potential. Our suggested alternatives are intended to demonstrate the possibility of something better.

We are not aware of any longer-term options closed off by our proposals, but not CYC's.

7. YBF has put forward proposals containing options we believe are practicable and should not be closed off unless it can be convincingly demonstrated there are valid reasons for rejecting them.

Location of Taxi Rank and Waiting Queue

The Arup proposals use some of the bus interchange space for the taxi rank, waiting queue, and drop-off lanes. The YBF proposals have found a way to accommodate the taxi rank and waiting queue without too much of an impact on bus interchange capacity and integration.

But the Arup proposals suffer from a significant weakness: because the taxi rank and queue are alongside the train shed wall, they create a barrier to fuller integration of the railway station and bus interchange. Taxi passengers do want good access to and from the inside of the station (and waiting passengers can shelter inside), so it would help to put the pick-up area close to the train shed wall, but there is no need whatever for the waiting queue to be so close.

The YBF proposals leave the taxi rank itself by the train shed wall, but relocate the waiting queue away from it. The space between the queue and train shed can then be used for bus lanes, making for better integration between interchange and station, and in the long term making it easier to put a bus interchange concourse inside the train shed, avoiding the need for a building outside the railway station, which would compete for limited space.

The second YBF alternative achieves higher capacity by putting two bus lanes between the taxi queue and train shed, but a single lane will probably suffice in the shorter term. We are not arguing that the Station Front development should provide two bus lanes. Rather, we urge that the development should include provision for its future addition.

8. Due consideration should be given to the possibility of moving the taxi waiting queue away from the train shed wall, and putting a bus lane there instead.

Location of Drop-Off

While the YBF proposals have found a way to accommodate the taxi rank and queue without too much of an impact on bus interchange capacity and integration, we have not been able to do the same for the drop-off lanes. The Arup proposals for the location of the drop-off facilities reduce the space available for the bus interchange by reducing the number of bus stops that can be fitted in. Drop-off facilities here would prevent construction of a second northbound bus lane.

In the short term it might be possible to locate the drop-off here, with the intention of moving it elsewhere if and when the space is needed for more buses. But it would seem more sensible not to put the drop-off here in the first place. But obviously that means an alternative space must be found, and the plans would have to provide for it.

9. The drop-off facilities would be better placed away from the bus interchange area, so they do not compete for space and limit its potential for future growth.

Location of Pedestrian Crossings

This document is primarily about the bus interchange and its future capacity, so location of pedestrian crossings might not at first sight seem very relevant. But it is. And of course part of a bus user's journey is on foot.

A central feature of the Station Front proposals is a pedestrian crossing from the middle of the Portico to the opposite side of the road, henceforth referred to as the 'central crossing'. Unfortunately, the reasoning put forward to justify it collapses under close examination.

Walking Distances

At present, there are bus stops on the other side of the road, opposite the portico. The proposed central crossing would reduce the walking distance to these, so would have been most welcome had the bus stops not been moved further south, to where Queen Street Bridge now is.

Unfortunately, that no-longer-needed pedestrian route to the bus stops opposite is the only important one the central crossing would significantly shorten. All other routes either remain substantially the same length, or are made longer.

The CYC/Arup proposal gives the impression it has been designed on the assumption that the portico is the station's only entrance. If that were so, the case against a central crossing would be weaker. But the station has more than one entrance, so the interests of pedestrians using the others should be taken into consideration too.

One example is someone arriving at Platform 4 on a train from Scarborough, and heading towards the city centre. The natural route is to leave the station via Tea Room Square, not the portico. The existing crossing outside the Principal Hotel is far better located for this traveller.

As noted above, the station's 'centre of gravity' is actually south of the Portico. For most passengers connecting with southbound bus services, a crossing near Parcel Square – roughly where the present one is – would be much more convenient.

Wherever the central crossing lengthens walking distances it also encourages jaywalking.

So overall, from this point of view, the central crossing is significantly worse than the existing arrangements. This is very difficult to square with the *Illustrative Masterplan's* claim to have given pedestrians top priority.

10. The proposal for a crossing directly outside the portico lengthens some walking distances without significantly reducing any others.

Congestion

At present, a direct crossing would also simplify the route to the city centre because the passage out via Tea Room Square is severely congested. Pedestrians must squeeze past the end of the taxi rank – where people abandon luggage trolleys and congregate waiting for taxis – and then pass over no less than three small pedestrian crossings just to escape as far as the Principal Hotel, on the way to the fourth crossing over Station Road.

Clearly a central crossing would improve this state of affairs. But the Portico is due to be entirely pedestrianised inside, and Tea Room Square congestion eliminated, so this other practical reason for the central crossing is done away with.

11. The central crossing does not solve any congestion issues not also solved by other interventions proposed in the same plan.

'Legibility to the City Centre'

Arup also claimed that the central crossing provides better 'legibility to the city centre', meaning visitors will find navigation towards the city centre easier via this central crossing.

Why? Pedestrians unfamiliar with the area will at some stage have to decide whether to turn left or right. Why is it easier to defer this decision until the opposite side of the road has been reached?

Clear signage is the answer. A large and clear sign inside the outer concourse, saying *city centre, left, buses right*, for example. Or a big 'you are here' tourist info map in the middle of the Portico, with a clear sign pointing towards Lendal Bridge. There are no doubt plenty of other options.

12. 'Legibility to the City Centre' is at best a very weak justification for a central crossing.

Use of Space outside the Portico

The central crossing also divides the space outside the portico, which limits the use it can be put to.

For bus users the relevance of this goes beyond increased walking distances, because the central crossing also threatens to jeopardise the long-term aim of maximising bus interchange capacity.

In particular, since the drop-off point is best not located alongside the taxi rank because that competes for space with an expanded bus interchange, it should go elsewhere. The central crossing makes it more difficult to put it outside the portico, which is, after all, an obviously convenient location for it.

If the existence of the central crossing divides up the space outside the Portico in a way that rules out putting the drop-off there, we could end up with a situation where an unfortunate choice of crossing location limits the potential for interchange capacity growth. That would be an inexcusable case of the tail wagging the dog.

13. The central crossing closes off options by dividing up the space outside the portico.

Conflict between Pedestrians and Cyclists

The central crossing also leads to more conflict between cyclists and pedestrians than necessary. This is discussed under *Location of Cycle Tracks* below.

Conclusion

We're left with a splendid-looking crossing that answers no practical need, is in significant respects less convenient than two crossings at the present locations, leads to more conflict between cyclists and pedestrians than necessary, and precludes other practical uses for the area outside the portico, which indirectly closes off options for future development, but has nevertheless been made a central feature of the scheme.

14. The central crossing has no significant practical advantages, yet has a number of very real disadvantages, and should be dropped from the scheme.

Location of Cycle Tracks

Segregation and Fragmentation

The northbound cycle track is fragmented, as a consequence of its segregation from the main road. While this segregation reduces conflict with traffic on the main road, there are still conflicts with other traffic, and with pedestrians.

Furthermore, the segregation provides little encouragement to timid cyclists when it is only applied to the short stretch between Queen Street corner and Tea Room Square. For most of the distance between Micklegate Bar and the Lendal Gyrotory the cycle track is

alongside the road. The benefits of segregation are therefore likely to be largely illusory. If the proposal below for a new cycle route is adopted, cyclists who prefer to stay away from motor traffic will use this instead.

It should also be borne in mind that the extent to which segregation has an advantage depends on the widths of the cycle lane and adjacent motor vehicle lane. Wider is less intimidating.

While segregation may reduce the deterrent to more timid cyclists, the fragmentation is an inconvenience to the bolder ones. This is especially so here, because the run from Micklegate Bar to Queen Street corner is downhill. Negotiation of the crossings and bends in the cycle track require braking, whereas going round the road does not, so many cyclists can be expected not to use the proposed paths.

A rethink would not go amiss. This YBF alternative scheme, by transposing the northbound taxi queue and bus lane, removes conflict between cycles and buses on this side, so routing the cycle lane alongside the road is preferable.

15. Undesirable fragmentation of part of the cycle track can be reduced.

Conflict Reduction

Although the interests of cyclists is not the main purpose of this document, bus users are pedestrians, and minimising the extent to which cycle routes cross pedestrian ones is in the interests of both. Conflict between cyclists and pedestrians cannot be eliminated entirely, but the CYC/Arup proposal creates more than necessary.

On the east side, between the bar walls and southbound bus stops, the cycle track runs unnecessarily close to the bus shelters, as shown in map A on page 13. Conflict here can be reduced by moving the cycle track nearer to the walls, as shown in map B on page 14.

Map B assumes the central crossing has been abandoned, and one near Parcel Square is installed instead. The cycle lane crosses the pavement to the north of this crossing, so pedestrians walking between the southbound bus stops and railway station do not have to cross the cycle track. The only pedestrians who do have to cross the track are those walking along the east side, adjacent to the bar walls. With the bus stops along here relocated, there will be comparatively few.

A similar arrangement is proposed at the corner of the bar walls, where the only pedestrians having to cross the cycle path are those walking along the north side of Queen Street towards Micklegate Bar.

16. There is scope for reducing the degree of conflict between cyclists and pedestrians, especially if the central crossing is abandoned.

An Important New Route?

Another feature of map B is that the cycle track is bidirectional, whereas the CYC/Arup proposal is not. This is because this short stretch naturally forms a link between the back road between the Railway Institute buildings and the road inside the bar walls towards the War Memorial. Between them they would form a direct cycle route all the way from the entrance to the long-stay car park in Lowther Terrace to the War Memorial, and which only crosses a main road in one place, at the Queen Street corner.

Since the Queen Street crossing would be controlled by the same traffic lights as the pedestrian crossing nearby, this could be achieved at very little extra cost. Being direct and well segregated, this route is likely to become a popular among cyclists.

17. There is an opportunity to create a major bidirectional cycle route direct from Lowther Terrace to the War Memorial, at negligible extra cost, mostly along existing, largely traffic-free back roads.

Terrorism

YBF are aware that the design needs to take the possibility of terrorist attack into account. Current wisdom is that attacks using motor vehicles to run down pedestrians are a particular threat.

We are of course no experts, but do not see how our proposals are any worse than the CYC/Arup ones. In particular:-

- a) putting a bus interchange concourse inside the train shed wall has obvious and considerable advantages from this point of view;
- b) putting pedestrian crossings in the existing locations and the pedestrian entrances to the portico at the ends would reduce the length of walkway alongside Station Road;
- c) we cannot see how segregating the west side bus lanes from the main road could make this area more vulnerable, and imagine it would likely make it easier to protect;
- d) the merits of narrow angle echelon bus bays compared to traditional bus stops need to be looked into, but it seems to us non-experts that they cannot be worse.

Railway Station Listed Building Status

The proposal works on the assumption that the proposed modifications to the railway station, to put the bus interchange concourse inside the train shed, will be possible not as part of the Station Front development, but at some future date. Without this modification it is doubtful whether a second bus lane alongside the train shed wall can be accommodated.

And in any case, if it could be, buildings associated with the bus interchange would likely have a worse visual impact than the proposed modifications to the arches. The outcome would be worse all round.

Naturally, the question arises as to whether this would meet insuperable objections on the grounds that it is a grade II* listed building.










The modifications involve removing infill from some of the arches to allow access through the wall, between the buses and the concourse. In defence of this idea:-

- a) there is a precedent at Hull Paragon, which is only grade II listed, but the modifications were far more drastic;
- b) there are precedents at York station too: some of the arch infill has been removed in the past to allow access, e.g. to platform 9;
- c) most of the arches will remain as is: plenty of examples of the original structures will remain on both sides (the arches on the west side are narrower due to the station's curvature);
- d) the CYC/Arup proposal appears to make modifications to the arches in the portico front, and all of them too;

- e) modifications to railway stations are permitted when they are required to permit changes to their essential function;
- f) removal of the infill would be a small price to pay for a greatly improved interchange facility and its contribution to easing future traffic congestion;
- g) done sympathetically, it could be a positive improvement to what is currently a rather drab, forbidding station wall.

18. Removal of infill from the train shed arches should not be an insuperable obstacle on listed building grounds.

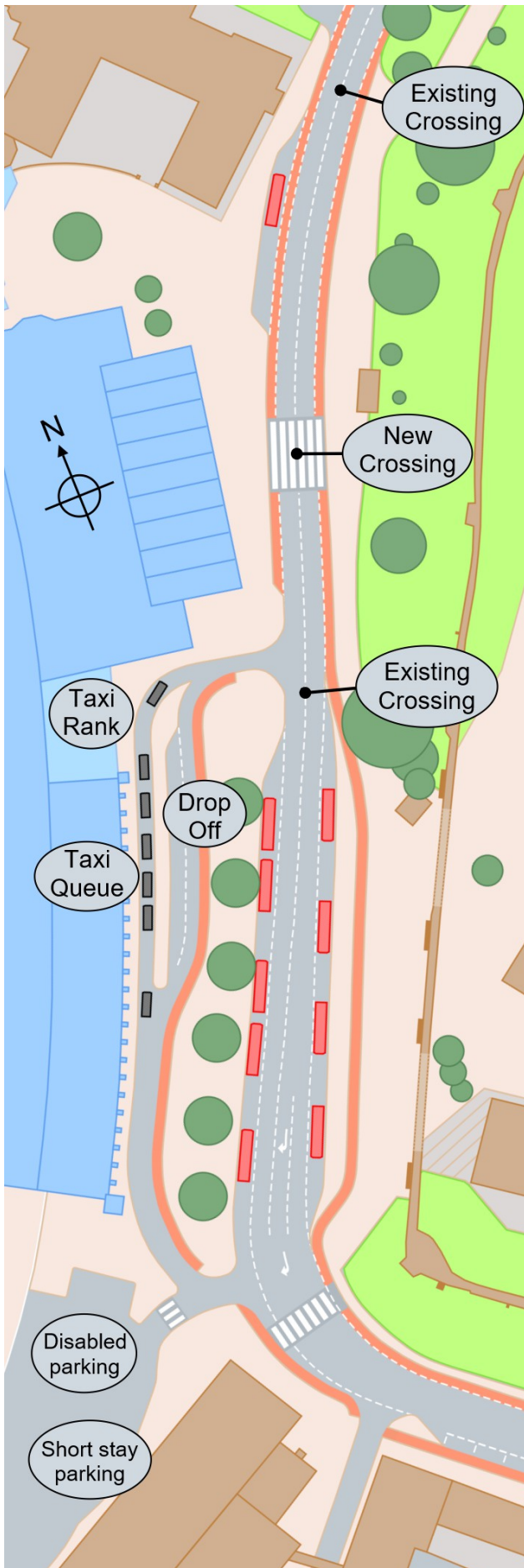
Key to Maps

	Pedestrians
	Roads
	Cycle Lanes
	Train Shed
	Station Buildings
	Other Buildings
	Buses
	Taxis
	Trees

Maps

The following maps and explanatory text have been added. The starting point is the CYC/Arup proposal, and the end point an ultimate outcome similar to the second 'flow-through' bus interchange proposal put forward by YBF.

Differences are a slight reduction of the number of stops (which may or may not be necessary), and the proposal for a cycle track from the War Memorial to Lowther Terrace. Small differences in the suggested layout exist, but the maps are only intended to be illustrative in any case, so these are of little consequence.



A: The CYC/Arup Proposal

This shows the plan as drawn up by Arup for CYC.

Closer integration of the bus interchange and the railway station is prevented by the location of the taxi queue. There is no practical requirement for waiting taxis to be close to the train shed wall, but bus stops in this location could very usefully be integrated with a concourse inside the train shed. We do not however propose this be done at this stage. The Station Front development would be a first step towards this ultimate goal.

The drop-off also lies between the northbound bus stops and the train shed, also limiting scope for integration, so from this point of view would be better located elsewhere.

The new central crossing outside the portico appears to have been conceived with the sole aim of making it more pleasant for visitors to go from the station portico to the city centre. But the station has numerous entrances, and therefore many other pedestrian movements to consider. The location of the crossing makes some of these longer without any significant reduction in others.

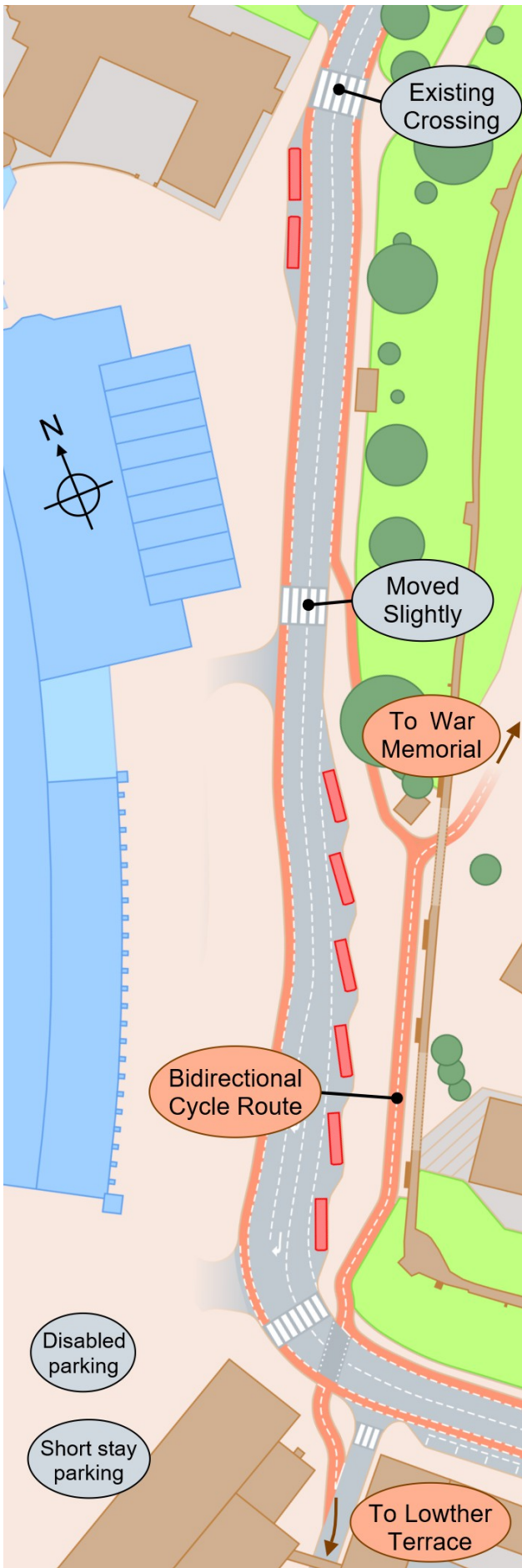
The original locations of the crossings outside the Principal Hotel and Parcel Square are on the whole better from a walking distance point of view.

There is no longer a need for a direct crossing to the bus stops opposite because they are to be relocated southwards.

There is no longer a need for a new uncongested route from the portico to the city centre because the portico and Tea Room Square are to be pedestrianised.

So on the whole the new crossing has no practical advantage, numerous disadvantages, and limits the use that the space outside the portico can be put to.

Crossings at the existing locations are on the whole a better proposition.



B: East Side Modifications

First, a look at some changes on the east (bar walls) side of the road.

Compared to the CYC/Arup plan, the road itself is slewed a little to the east. This reduces the amount of pedestrian space on this side, and increases the amount of space on the station side. The reason for this will become apparent below.

The cycle path in the CYC/Arup proposal passes unnecessarily close to the bus stops, creating needless conflict between cycles and pedestrians.

A better alternative would be to route it nearer to the bar walls as shown.

This proposal goes further in suggesting a major and remarkably direct bidirectional cycle route between the War Memorial to the north and Lowther terrace (off Holgate Road) to the south, using largely traffic-free roads that already exist.

Conflict between cyclists and pedestrians is also reduced because the walking route from the station side to the southbound bus stops does not cross the cycle path. With no bus stops opposite the portico, the number of pedestrians walking along this side can be expected to be a lot lower than at present.

A similar reduction in conflict applies at the corner of the bar walls, where the cycle crossing is controlled by the same traffic lights as the pedestrian one. Only those pedestrians walking along the north side of Queen Street need to cross the cycle path.

Compared to the CYC/Arup proposal, the cycle track on the station side is directly alongside the road, which avoids the fragmentation of the route in the CYC/Arup proposal. As the following pages will show, the potential conflict between cycles and buses is much reduced.



C: West Side Modifications

On the west side, the drop-off is removed elsewhere and the buses and taxi queue transposed, so that there is nothing between the buses and the train shed.

Although the taxi queue has been moved over to the other side, the rank remains where CYC/Arup propose.

Moving the taxi queue towards the middle, but on the west side of the central reservation eliminates conflict between cycles and buses that would exist if the bus stops were where CYC/Arup propose, so routing it alongside the main road (at road level or pavement level – it matters little which) is possible. The cycle track is defragmented as a result, and there is no need for cycles to pass through the bus and taxi area.

Objections to running the cycle track directly alongside the road can be countered by pointing out that more timid cyclists will prefer the segregated bidirectional route on the east side anyway.

Slewing the road to the east has reduced the pedestrian space on that side, and increased it on the west side. So far, this has no benefit, but the next map shows how it keeps open the option of a future expansion of the bus interchange as and when the extra capacity is needed and funds are available.

The Station Front development cannot be expected to deliver all that might ultimately be desired, so this is probably about all it will deliver. But as the next map shows, it leaves a layout ready for something bolder and more visionary later on.

The large space between the train shed and the bus stops, won at the expense of slewing the road eastwards, reducing the pedestrian space on that side, is an important part of this future-proofing.



D: A Future Possibility

By sacrificing the most southerly of the bus stops on the west side, another bus lane and row of stops can be accommodated in the large paved area left by the Station Front development.

With two lanes the limited space available makes it difficult to provide a wide enough and uncongested paved area between the buses and the train shed wall, but the wall contains a succession of arches. By removing the infill from some of these, a bus station concourse can be put inside the train shed.

The arrangement would have parallels with the bus interchange at Hull Paragon Station, though a very different architectural treatment, sympathetic to the external environment, would seem to be needed.

Objections to modifying the station – a grade II* listed building – do naturally arise, but can be countered. There is precedent for removing infill elsewhere in the station, and only a few need be modified: the majority of arches would remain as originally built. The changes made at Hull Paragon – which is admittedly only grade II listed – were far more drastic than this.

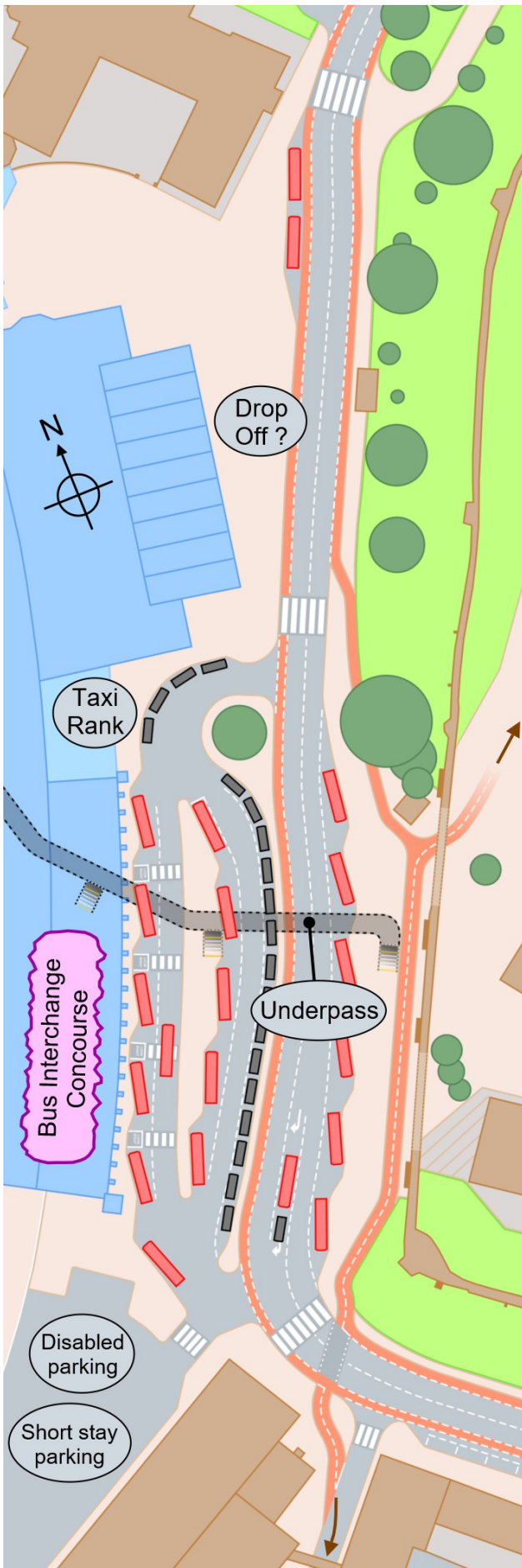
Thus the interchange's pedestrian area is much enhanced. The concourse is under cover without the need to construct a bus interchange building, and integration with the railway station is maximised.

Cost?

The stage depicted on the left is not envisaged as being part of the Station Front development.

That leaves little in these proposals looking like it might add significantly to the Station Front costs, because the proposal is only to relocate things that will exist anyway.

Some savings might be possible, even. If the pedestrian crossings are kept where they are, the more northerly one by the Principal Hotel could be left as is if need be.



E: An Underpass?

One addition would be very valuable. The previous map shows how the west-side (northbound) bus stops can be closely integrated with the railway station, but so far the east-side (southbound) ones have not been.

An underpass would go some way to improving this, as shown here.

The alignment shown links it up to one of the existing underpasses inside the railway station, providing a route from the bus interchange all the way across to platforms 10 and 11, and possibly through to the other side too, if the 'York Central' development includes such an extension.

It would thus become a direct route between the main bus interchange and the smaller one on the west side of the station, as well as a route between the Teardrop Site and the interchange.

Cost?

Here, though, there is a cost consideration.

Let's assume that during Queen Street Bridge demolition there will be a diversion around it, via a road roughly where the bus lane nearest the train shed wall is. The best time to construct the part of the subway beneath the new main road is while this diversion is still in use, and buses are still stopping outside the portico. Once the new road is in place and the bus stops have been relocated, its construction would cause far more disruption.

But of course that means it is best done as part of the Station Front scheme, and would add to its costs. It would be nice to think that will not be a barrier to the underpass ever coming into existence.

The continuation of the subway into and through the train shed can far more easily wait until later, so there is little case for making that part of the Station Front scheme.