

Artwork Installation Brief

2027 is the 1400th anniversary of the building of the first Minster in York and the baptism of King Edwin. York Minster would like to commission an artwork that will be a focus for this commemoration and celebration.

York Minster

Vision: To inspire everyone to experience God's love through our welcome, worship, and work.

Mission: Delivering innovation and excellence in worship, heritage, and outreach, welcoming everyone and offering an outstanding experience as part of our living tradition, where faith is nurtured and shared.

Values:

- **Integrity:** We behave ethically and professionally and consider the impact of our actions
- **Purpose:** We are aligned and focused on what we do and why we do it
- **Humility:** We are grounded and respectful in all that we do
- **Compassion:** We are thoughtful in our attitudes and behaviours

York Minster and 2027

Vision for 2027: Celebrating 1400 years of York Minster, through the fruits of our baptism, worshipping, welcoming and witnessing to God's love in the world.

2027 Objective: With the help of God, we will commemorate the 1400th anniversary of the foundation of York Minster for the baptism of the Anglo-Saxon King Edwin, proclaim God's love, and celebrate the continuity of faith in the north.

2027 Measures of Success:

- Deliver a vibrant programme of worship, activities and events that raises the profile of York Minster
- Engages our existing communities and new audiences
- Generates funds
- Creates a legacy to support and sustain this holy and historical place

2027 Tagline: With the help of God, we will...

Project Overview

Title/Theme/References/Influences: Baptism

The act of baptism represents a transformation. Theologically this is described as an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace. The Artist is invited to consider conceptually what it means to be reborn into a new life, and to be part of a community through personal and universal narratives. Using the 1400th anniversary as a starting point for a journey that communities and individuals have witnessed to the present day and into the future.

Mood/Style: The Artworks will be placed in the Minster throughout the liturgical seasons of Lent, Eastertide, Ordinary Time, and Creationtide, and will need to speak to and work with the tone of each season.

Considerations: The Minster holds tensions, which could be explored through the Artwork, including:

- Church and Business
- Awe and Intimacy
- Religion and Spirituality
- Gravity and Humour
- Heritage and Innovation
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Audience: The Artwork will engage a wide range of audiences as part of their Minster experience, including regular worshippers, day-visitors and concert audiences.

Possible Locations: Nave, Central Crossing, North Transept, Chapter House, Crypt, and Dean's Park – each of these locations pose particular constraints and opportunities.

Technical Requirements

Materials: Limited by weight, size, and safety (fabric, visitors)

Lighting and Power: See the Minster Plan – Works and Operational Information for details on location of power supply and access at height

Structural Needs: Detailed, technical designs would need to be reviewed and approved by the Cathedral Engineer

Budget

Total Budget: £10,000

Expected costs for materials, labour, transportation, contingency – request a detailed and realistic budget breakdown to be submitted with the proposal

Timescale: To be agreed with the artist and staged to reflect work undertaken. To include an upfront payment on contractual agreement and final payment on successful delivery of all of the agreed outputs.

Ownership: To be discussed as part of contractual agreement

Timeline

Deadline for artist proposal: 9th June 2025

Artist pitches: w/c 14th July 2025

Decision for concept approval: 25th July 2025

Installation: w/c 18th January and w/c 25th January 2027

Launch: 4th February 2027

Duration: To be in place until w/c 1st November

De-installation: w/c 1st November 2027

Additional: *Request for Artist talk/workshop during exhibition period.*

Other activities taking place in the Minster in 2027:

- Daily services
- Visitor opening
- Evening Compline
- Lent and Autumn Study Groups
- Easter services
- Special Nave Services
- Concerts
- Organ Recitals
- Nave Light Show
- Flower Festival
- Nave Dinner

Stakeholders and Audiences

Stakeholders:

- Chapter of York
- Fabric Advisory Committee (external body concerned with the aesthetic of the cathedral)
- Cathedral Engineer
- Cathedral Architect
- York Minster staff
- York Minster volunteers

Audiences:

- Worshippers at regular daily and weekly services, including families and children
- Visitors
 - o Once in a Lifetime
 - o Family Focused
 - o Modern Pilgrims
 - o Culturally Engaged
 - o Proud Locals
 - o Special Interest
- Groups
- Schools and Learning groups
- Concert and Evening Events audiences

Audience Involvement: Plans to engage audiences and enable people to respond to the Artwork in a variety of ways: through services, music, art, and reflection.

Practical Considerations

Approvals: Designs reviewed and approved by Cathedral Engineer and Cathedral Architect

Accessibility: Considerations for Artwork to be accessible for all

Safety: Compliance with safety standards (H&S, Safeguarding etc) and risk management

Maintenance: Upkeep during installation's lifespan – consider a plan for access required and roles and responsibilities for maintenance

Documentation

Deliverables: Sketches, 3D renders, mock-ups required for approval

Photography/Video: Plans for capturing the artwork creation and installation for records/promotion

Appendix

1. What is Baptism?
2. 627 Historical Outline
3. Minster Plan – Dimensions and Works and Operations Information
4. Photographs
5. York Minster Audience Segmentation Model

What is baptism?

Baptism is the moment when someone is initiated as a member of the Christian faith, the Church (Body of Christ). The act of baptism represents an entry into the family of the church – a sign of dying to one life and being born into a new life, lived out in community with all the baptised. Theologically this is described as an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace.

The consequence of this act is that, as baptism marks spiritual rebirth, it becomes the point at which Christians are called to grow in faith. This happens in a number of ways, one of which is a commitment to a life of prayer. Through prayer, Christians are called to sustain and develop a conversation with God. This conversation may involve personal discovery, a deepening connection and an awareness of the needs of other people. Christian faith is not a life lived in isolation but a deep commitment to others and to the world God has created.

Prayer used over the water before a person is baptised.

We thank you, almighty God, for the gift of water
to sustain, refresh and cleanse all life.
Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.
Through water you led the children of Israel
from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.
In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John
and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ,
to lead us from the death of sin to newness of life.
We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.
In it we are buried with Christ in his death.
By it we share in his resurrection.
Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.
Therefore, in joyful obedience to your Son,
we baptize into his fellowship those who come to him in faith.

Now sanctify this water that, by the power of your Holy Spirit,
NAME may be cleansed from sin and born again.
Renewed in your image, may they walk by the light of faith
and continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be all honour and glory, now and for ever.

627: Historical Outline

The origins of York Minster lie in a hastily built wooden church, prepared specifically for the baptism of a king.

King Edwin of Northumbria (r.616- 633) converted from Paganism to Christianity through the influence of Paulinus, an Italian missionary, sent by Pope Gregory the Great to convert the English. Accounts of Edwin's conversion survive through Bede (writing in the 8th century), and oral traditions passed down into British texts.

Edwin's conversion was initiated by his marriage to Princess Æthelburh of Kent. Æthelburh was Christian, and the marriage agreement rested on Edwin agreeing to consider conversion, and for Paulinus to accompany the princess to Northumbria.

Several factors led to Edwin's eventual conversion, including the safe birth of his and Æthelburh's daughter, Enflæd. Enflæd was in fact among the first Northumbrians to be baptised, shortly after her birth, as a pledge of her father's commitment to consider his own conversion.

Part of Edwin's considerations included consulting with his nobles and priests. Bede reported that one of the king's chief advisors agreed to convert, seeking more knowledge about what comes after life. When doing so, he compared the fleetingness of life to the flight of

a sparrow through a grand banqueting hall on a winter's day:

‘inside is warm, while outside the wintry storms of rain and snow are raging; and a sparrow flies swiftly through the hall. It enters in at one door and quickly flies out through the other. For the few moments it is inside, the storm and wintry tempest cannot touch it, but after the briefest moment of calm, it flits from your sight, out of the wintry storm and into it again. So this life of man appears but for a moment; what follows or indeed what went before, we know not at all. If this new doctrine brings us more certain information, it seems right that we should accept it’.*

After much deliberation, Edwin was baptised in York on Easter Day (12th April), 627. Following the king's baptism, Paulinus preached across the kingdom, and is reported to have baptised many more people, including the Northumbrian nobility, Edwin's children, and many of the general population. Indeed, according to Bede, among other river baptisms, Paulinus baptised people in the River Glen at Ad Gefrin (near Yeavinger, Northumberland) every day from dawn to dusk for 36 days straight.

Edwin's baptism at York in 627 can be seen as a crucial moment in the history of Christianity in northern England.

* Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Book II.13

The Baptism

The exact ritual of Anglo-Saxon baptisms remains largely lost to the historical record. However, from surviving texts, we can speculate that there was some sort of submersion or covering in water. Edwin's baptismal ceremony may have taken place in Latin or Old English. Paulinus, as a Roman missionary, would have spoken Latin, but Edwin may only have spoken Old English.

The sole surviving evidence of what words could have been spoken at Edwin's baptism comes from the 'Old Saxon or Utrecht baptismal promise.' This text is written within a German manuscript but includes some features of Northumbrian Old English. The instructions below are in Latin, with the responses in Old English. A modern English translation is opposite.

Original Text

Forsachistu diabolae? Æt respondeat. ec
forsacho diabolae.

end allum diobolgelde? respondeat. end ec
forsacho allum diobolgeldae.

end allum dioboles uercum? respondeat.
end ec forsacho allum dioboles uercum and
uuordum, Thunaer ende Uoden ende Saxnote
ende allum them unholdum, the hira genotas
sint.

gelobistu in got alamehitgan fadaer? ec gelobo
in got alamehtigan fadaer.

gelobistu in crist godes suno? ec gelobo in crist
godes suno.

gelobistu in halogan gast? ec gelobo in halogan
gast.*

English translation

"Do you forsake the devil?" And he should
respond, "I forsake the devil."

"And all idolatry?" And he should respond, "And
I forsake all idolatry."

"And all the devil's works?" And he should
respond, "And I forsake all the devil's works and
words. Thunar and Woden and Seaxnot and all
those devils who are their followers."

"Do you believe in God the Almighty Father?"
"I believe in God the Almighty Father."

"Do you believe in Christ, God's son?" "I
believe in Christ, God's son."

"Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?" "I believe
in the Holy Spirit."*

* Rudolf Simek, "Saxon Baptismal Vow," *Dictionary of Northern Mythology*, (Boydell & Brewer, Suffolk: 1993).

* Translation by Isabel Hedgecock.

The First Church

The wooden church Edwin's baptism took place in was most likely located in what is now Dean's Park, north of present-day York Minster. Although no archaeological evidence of this building has yet been found, we can guess that it was made from oak, and was likely rectangular.

The wooden church may have been decorated on the inside. The floor was perhaps "opus signinum" – a Roman technique of mixing crushed terracotta and mortar. The walls may have been painted with scenes, or else decorated with carefully embroidered textile (possibly silk) ecclesiastical wall-hangings and/or rugs.

Suggestions for the themes and colours of this decoration can perhaps be drawn from illustrations in surviving manuscripts and artefacts from this period: see below for a list of examples.

The wooden church was soon replaced by a larger stone building that enclosed the first structure. However, before the building work was complete, Edwin died in battle in 633. The construction of the first stone church was continued by his successor, King Oswald.

Art and Artistry

Surviving artefacts from the seventh century reveals the rich artistic skill and intricate decorations that adorned books, jewellery, and clothing. Listed below are several examples from the period, and following centuries, that can give a sense of the colours and styles of the time. Images of these objects can be found freely online.

- **The Harford Farm Brooch**

Probably Kent; first half of 7th century. Norwich Castle Museum, 1994.5.78.

- **The Sutton Hoo belt-buckle**

Suffolk, England; early 7th century. British Museum, BEP 1939, 1010.1

- **The Hockwold Mounts**

North or West Britain; second half of 7th century. Norwich Castle Museum, 2010.292.1, 2010.292.2.

- **Durham Gospel-book**

Iona or Northumbria; mid-7th century. Durham Cathedral Library MS. A.II.10, folios 2-5 only.

- **The Staffordshire Hoard**

England; later-6th to mid-7th century. Birmingham Museums Trust and the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent.

- **The Lindesfarne Gospels**

Northumbria; c.700. British Library, Cotton MS Nero D IV.

- **The Book of Durrow**

Probably Durrow, County Offaly, or Iona; c.700. Dublin Trinity College Library, MS 57.

York Minster – Operational and Technical Considerations

Internal considerations:

- Limited access to 3 phase power supply
- No known safe working load
- Limited safe access to above-ground areas
- Consideration for maintenance access needed

External considerations:

- Limited access to power supply
- Scheduled monument status
- Security

Chapter House
(For Sound Installation)

- Point loading issues
- Conserved tile floor
- No safe access to gallery
- Used for concerts
- 220 max capacity

North Transept

- 3 phase power supply
- Restricted Triforium access to Works team
- Existing hoarding in place
- Significant scaffolding in 2026-27
- Access needed to Chapel and Chapter House
- Used for coffee mornings, drinks receptions



Nave and Nave Crossing

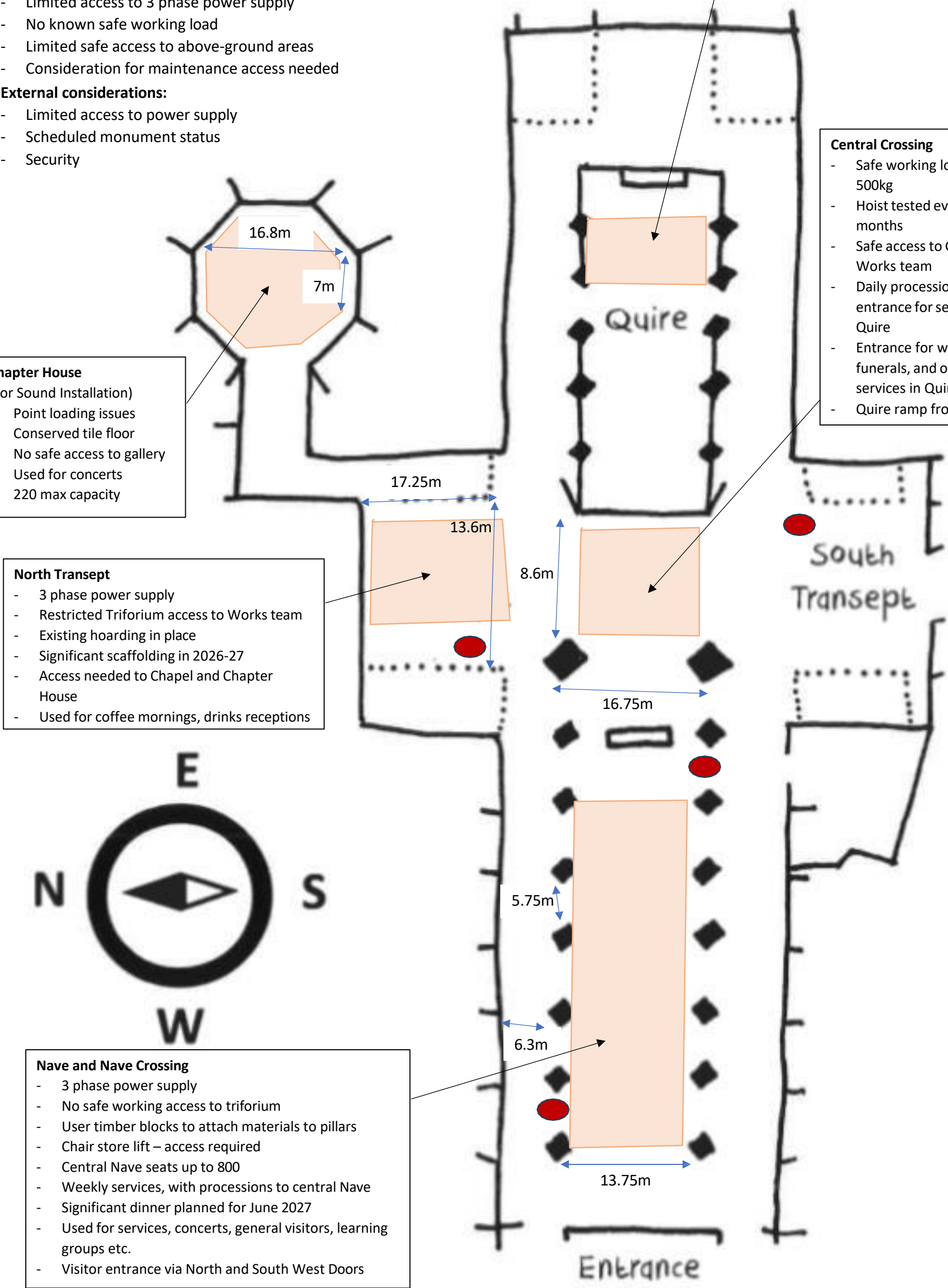
- 3 phase power supply
- No safe working access to triforium
- User timber blocks to attach materials to pillars
- Chair store lift – access required
- Central Nave seats up to 800
- Weekly services, with processions to central Nave
- Significant dinner planned for June 2027
- Used for services, concerts, general visitors, learning groups etc.
- Visitor entrance via North and South West Doors

Crypt (Below ground)

- Used for services
- 50 approx max capacity

Central Crossing

- Safe working load of hoist – 500kg
- Hoist tested every 6 months
- Safe access to Gallery for Works team
- Daily procession and entrance for services in Quire
- Entrance for weddings, funerals, and other special services in Quire
- Quire ramp from 2026



● Location of three phase power supply

↔ Approximate measurements

Nave



Nave



Nave



Central Crossing



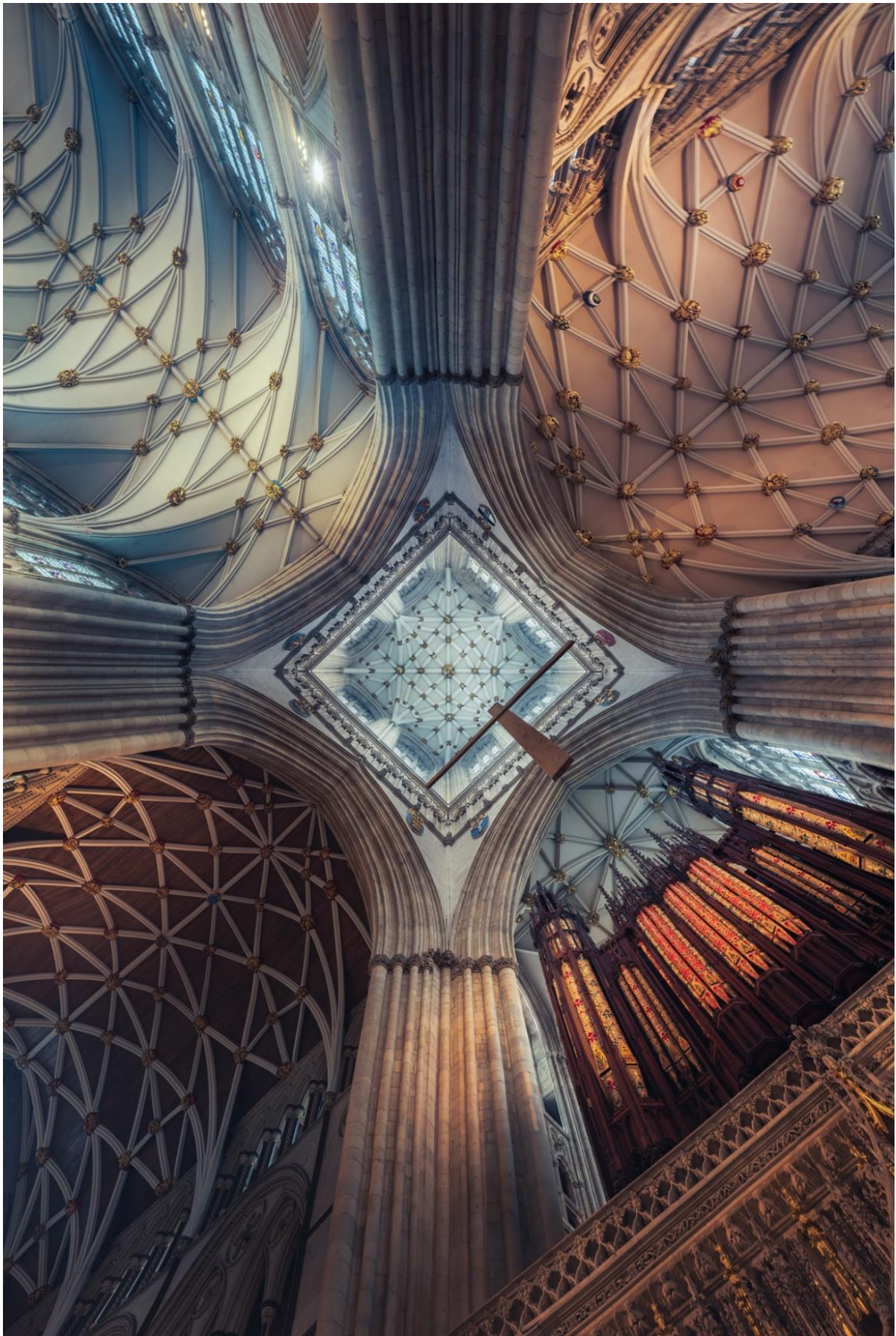
Central Crossing



Central Crossing



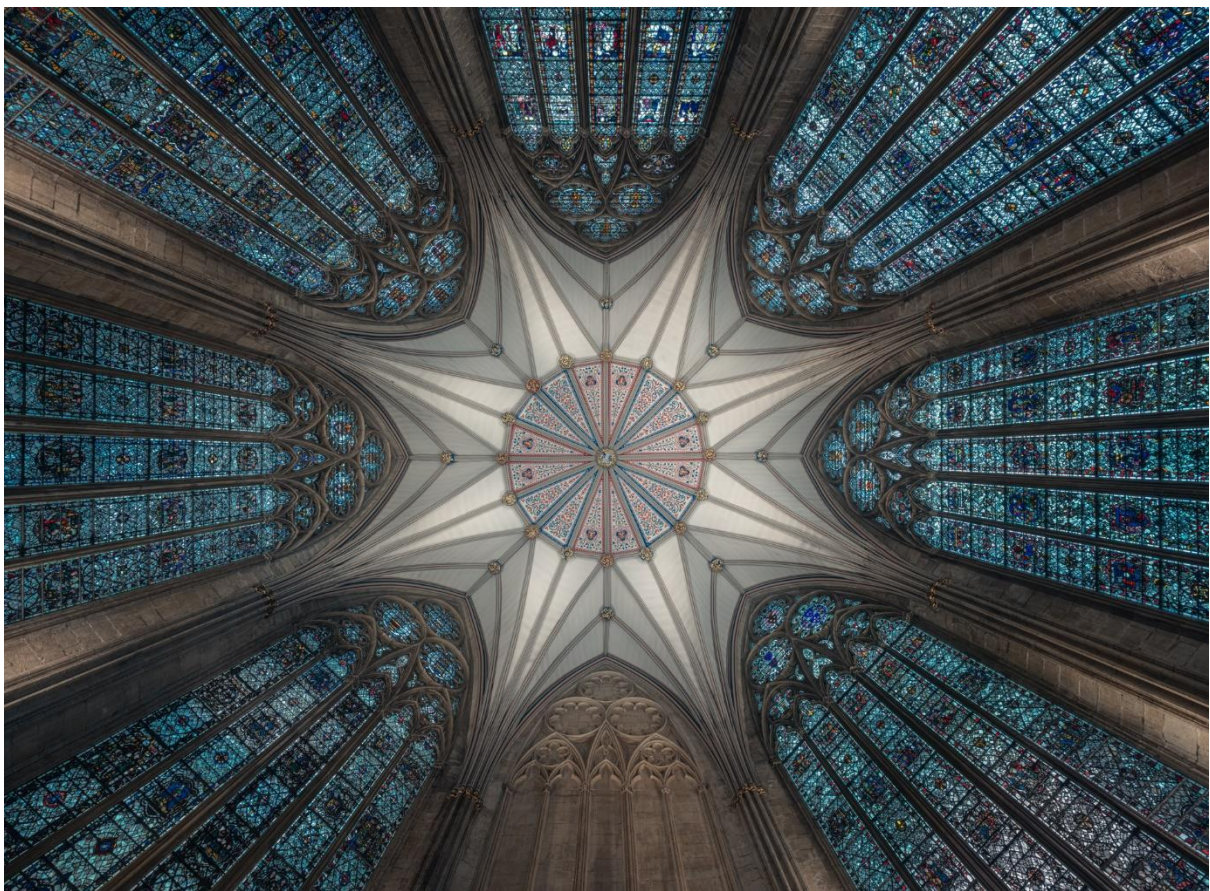
Central Crossing



Chapter House



Chapter House



North Transept



Crypt



York Minster Audience Segmentation Model Overview

| | Family Focussed | Culturally Engaged | Modern Pilgrims | Proud Locals | Once-in-a-lifetime | Special Interest |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| Key motivation | This group is primarily defined by the 'life stage' of being a family. Children's learning and interest, spending time together, a place to meet, have fun/be entertained. | Keen culture consumers, to experience or learn something different, attending events and exhibitions, learning, to have fun/be entertained, seeking value, inherent in return visits (annual pass). | Pilgrimage, to be with likeminded people, travel in family or church groups, worship and spiritual reflection. | Local pride, relaxing and escaping, spending time together, a place to meet. | Must see destination, to experience or learn something different. | Specialist personal, academic, or professional interest, to be with likeminded people. |
| Aim | A strong family offer, with child engagement a growing reason to visit. | Visiting the Minster is a key motivator of repeat visits to York, for shopping, food and drink, and special and seasonal programming. | New well-defined offer for Modern Pilgrims. | The Minster is a cultural hub, a destination of choice, local people visit regularly, and bring their visiting friends and family. | Once-in-a-lifetime for all. | The fabric and collections are opened up to a wide range of special interests with a warm welcome to nonspecialist audiences making first contact. |
| Build | Clear welcome for family audiences foregrounding value of visit, 0-15. | Culturally engaged, heritage audiences. | Existing pilgrims, church groups. | Adult residents, couples. | Overseas visitors, and UK cultural tourists | Existing specialist audiences, volunteers, students and academics including self-guided educational groups. |
| Broaden | Targeted family programming in the local area, working with community groups and organisations. | Wider range of motivations and interests and interests to visit and take part. | Accessibility, interfaith - welcoming those of all faiths and none. | Younger adult audiences. Older adults, living alone or facing social isolation. Young people in formal education (students and school children). | Visitors who may face barriers to access across one or more protected characteristics. Other languages. | Wider range of interests and motivations, broadening demographics and motivations. Grow non-specialist audiences. Interdisciplinary academic and cultural connections. |