

BRIAN PAGE VISITS A CONTEMPORARY CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT –
AND IS WOWED BY SOME GREAT MINSTER VIEWS

Downtown dozen

"I think you might be impressed by this," Ben Pilgrim says as he turns the key in the lock and opens up the door to the apartment.

We step into the hallway and then take a few steps into the living room and... wow!

The view from the full-length glass windows is simply astonishing. The Minster appears so close you could reach out and pat a gargoyle on the head.

Impressed, I should say so.

"It's just fantastic," Ben says as we stand staring out of the windows. I have seen that view hundreds of times now and it still makes a fantastic impact on me."

Ben is head of communications for the Skelwith Group, the developers behind a remarkable project at the city end of Bootham.

Aspire is an imaginative mix of office and apartment accommodation on the corner of Bootham Row – a development, incidentally, which has regenerated what, not so long ago, was a bit of an eyesore.

When the project is completed, in around six weeks time, it will see a Sainsbury's local on the ground floor, office suites on the first floor

and apartments on the second and third floors.

The Skelwith Group, Ben tells me, is very keen on investing into a future "iconic mixed use city centre schemes".

As a showcase for their ideas, Aspire certainly does the trick.

There is a modern, highly contemporary feel to the 12 apartments here with the emphasis very much on city centre living.

Each of the flats has a central kitchen/living/dining space, varying in size and layout from apartment to apartment, each has two bedrooms with one having an en-suite.

Each has a smartly fitted bathroom. And they are all remarkably convenient for the city centre – with the Bootham bar walls literally just a two-minute walk away.

But it is the views which really make this development. Let's go back to the first flat we visited. There is an entrance hallway which leads through to a decent-sized living/dining area with the well-fitted kitchen area to the left. Then, to the front there is that floor to ceiling glass and steel frontage... and the Minster standing loftily in the background.

Light streams into the room – another clever aspect of the design here is that the living rooms are all south-facing and planned to capture the sunlight.

Along the corridor there is a master bedroom with a smart en-suite and another good-sized double bedroom. This apartment, like all the others, is wired for sound – so you can have your choice of music in your ipod in one room and hear it in all the others.

Ben takes me on a tour of several other of the apartments and, while they all have slightly different layouts, they all have the same stylish air about them.

"Let me show my favourite," Ben says, opening up another door. "I really like the way this one works..."

Indeed, it is different from the others. It is based on the end of the building and curves round the corner so that to the front there are views of the city walls and off over to Marygate, while to the side you can, admittedly just, see the Minster. There are again deep windows, in this instance to two sides, letting in lots of lovely light. The bedroom next door does, however, have a



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION:
The remarkable project
at the city end of
Bootham

stunning view of the cityscape rooftops and the Minster, while the bedroom to the front has a smart shower room en-suite.

"We're delighted with the way the development has turned out," Ben says. "And we have been attracting interest from a wide range of people from older people looking to down-

size to younger professionals working in the city to those who just want a base in the city."

Iconic, modern and contemporary – and with a price tag of £249,950 each not out of reach. A little like those views of the Minster...

Further information from marketing agents Savills, 01904 617820.