

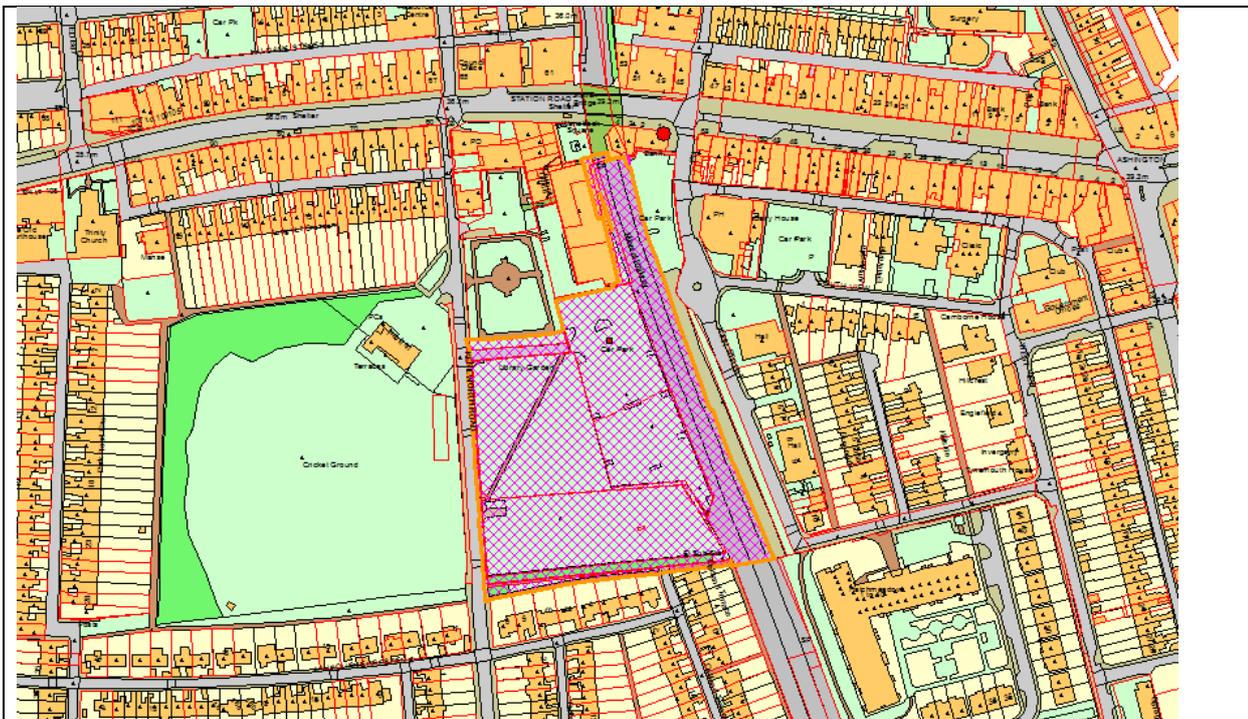


# Northumberland County Council

## Strategic Planning Committee, 7 September 2021

<b>Application No:</b>	21/00387/CCD		
<b>Proposal:</b>	Construction of a new single platform railway station including pedestrian lift, new highway access; modifications to existing highways including pedestrian footways; provision of parking for cars, electric vehicles, motorcycles, cycles, and taxis and other associated works including new crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. Construction of facilities ancillary to the station including, lighting, soft and hard landscaping, surface and subsurface drainage, utilities and other services, boundary treatment and other associated works.		
<b>Site Address</b>	Station Yard Car Park North, Wansbeck Square, Station Road, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 9XH		
<b>Applicant:</b>	Northumberland County Council County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF	<b>Agent:</b>	Mr Allen Creedy 72 B-Box Studios, Newcastle , NE2 1AN
<b>Ward</b>	Ashington Central	<b>Parish</b>	Ashington
<b>Valid Date:</b>	23 February 2021	<b>Expiry Date:</b>	30 September 2021
<b>Case Officer Details:</b>	Name: Mr Gordon Halliday Job Title: Consultant Planner Tel No: 07785 727053 Email: gordon.halliday@northumberland.gov.uk		

**Recommendation:** That this application be GRANTED permission



## 1. Introduction

1.1 Under the provisions of the Council's current Scheme of Delegation, in cases where the local authority is the applicant in respect of a planning application, it is required to be determined by the Planning Committee.

## 2. Description of the Proposal

2.1 The Northumberland Line scheme seeks to re-introduce passenger services onto the existing freight line that runs between Newcastle Central Station and Ashington. The scheme includes the construction of six new railway stations and associated infrastructure. It is envisaged that there will be a half hourly service with an anticipated journey time between Newcastle and Ashington of 35 minutes.

2.2 The railway line was formerly known as the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Line. Passenger services on the line ceased in 1964 since when freight trains have continued to operate.

2.3 This application is for the construction and operation of a new railway station in Ashington town centre. The proposed location for the new station is adjacent to the original railway station in Ashington that closed in 1964. To the north of the site is Wansbeck Square shopping complex and Ashington Memorial Garden. The railway line is bounded to the east by residential and commercial uses on St. John's Street. The site is bound to the south by residential properties on Ashbourne Crescent and to the west by Kenilworth Road, beyond which is Ashington Cricket Club.

2.4 The site of the proposed development has an area of 1.89 hectares. It comprises 4 separate areas – the existing railway corridor, the existing car park with glass recycling containers at the southern end, a vacant site to the south that used to be a care home and amenity grassland between the car park and Kenilworth Road. There is a current outline planning application for a new care home on the vacant land as described in Section 3 below.

2.5 The development proposals include the following main elements:

- A single platform, approximately 100 metres long, with a range of facilities including vending machines, customer information screens, waiting shelters, CCTV, help points and lighting.
- A car park providing up to 270 spaces including 17 accessible spaces and 18 electric vehicle charging bays.
- Access and egress for vehicles would be from Kenilworth Road.

## 3. Planning History

**Reference Number:** 07/00537/FUL

**Description:** Maintenance and upgrading of existing car park. To include kerbing and block work around the boundary and a limited number of islands between bays and landscaping. Scheme includes provision of recycling and bicycle bays and full resurface.

**Status:** PER

**Reference Number:** 20/04423/OUT

**Description:** Outline application seeking approval for access for construction of two storey 58 bed care home and associated but physically separate single

storey 12 bedroom specialist unit with associated parking and hard and soft landscaping

**Status:** PCO

**Reference Number:** 19/02151/SCREEN

**Description:** Request for a Screening Opinion- Provision of six new train stations, associated upgrading and refurbishment of existing rail infrastructure and engineering works and the reintroduction of passenger train services.

**Status:** SCREEN

**Reference Number:** 20/02243/SCREEN

**Description:** Request for a Screening Opinion- Provision of six new train stations, associated upgrading and refurbishment of existing rail infrastructure and engineering works and the reintroduction of passenger train services.

**Status:** SCREEN

#### 4. Consultee Responses

Ashington Town Council	No response received.
Natural England	No objection
The Coal Authority	No comments.
Network Rail	No objection subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure Network Rail's normal operating and maintenance functions are not affected during construction.
Northumbria Police	Suggestions made for designing out crime in the proposed development.
British Transport Police	Suggestions made for designing out crime in the proposed development.
Fire & Rescue Service	No objection
Northumbria Ambulance Service	No response received
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)	No objection subject to the imposition of conditions in relation to SuDS features and surface water management.
County Highways	No objection subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives in relation to highway safety and car / cycle parking considerations.
County Ecologist	No objection subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions in relation to mitigation measures, lighting and biodiversity net gain.
County Archaeologist	No objection on archaeological grounds subject to the imposition of a planning condition for an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation.
Public Protection	No objection subject to the imposition of conditions in relation to station tannoy system, acoustic barrier, construction noise and vibration, enabling works, contaminated land and construction delivery and collection hours.
Strategic Estates	No response received
Waste Management - South East	There is a glass-recycling site located at the south end of the existing car park. It would be a sad loss for the residents of Ashington if this site

	were removed. (Note – provision made in amended proposals).
Tourism, Leisure & Culture	No response received
South SE Tree And Woodland Officer	No response received
Building Conservation	Supports the application subject to the imposition of a condition relating to the design and colour palette for station infrastructure to ensure continuity and quality in the appearance and design of the scheme.

## 5. Public Responses

### 5.1 Neighbour Notification

Number of Neighbours Notified	78
Number of Objections	2
Number of Support	1
Number of General Comments	0

5.2 Notices - general site notice were posted on 3 March 2021 and a press notice was published in the News Post Leader on 4 March 2021.

#### Summary of Responses:

5.3 The letter of support included no reasons for the respondent's views.

5.4 A letter of objection was submitted on behalf of Malhotra who own the southern part of the proposed car park and who have submitted an outline planning application for the development of a care home on the site. This objection is discussed at paragraphs 7.17 – 7.19 of this report.

5.5 The second letter of objection queries the number of car parking spaces proposed. This is discussed at paragraphs 7.11 – 7.16 of this report.

5.6 The above is a summary of the comments. The full written text is available on our website at: <http://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications//applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=QNWSO1QSLQD00>

## 6. Planning Policy

### Development Plan Policy

6.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development comprises the saved policies from the Wansbeck District Local Plan (WDLP) (2007).

6.2 The following saved policies in the WDLP are relevant to the consideration of the application.

GP1 Spatial Strategy
GP4 Accessibility
GP5 Landscape Character
GP6 Trees and Hedgerows
GP13 Biodiversity and Wildlife Networks
GP21 Archaeology
GP22 Flood Risk and Erosion
GP23 Pollution and Nuisance
GP25 Noise
GP29 Land Contamination
GP30 Visual Impact
GP31 Urban design
GP32 Landscaping and the Public realm
GP35 Crime Prevention
T1 Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Rail Line
T3 Provision for Cyclists
T4 Provision for Walking
T5 Access for People with Reduced Mobility
T6 Traffic Implications of New Development
T7 Parking Provision in New Development
REC2 Recreation and Open Space
REC11 Access to the Countryside and Coast

6.3 Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that weight can be given to policies contained in emerging plans dependent upon three criteria: the stage of preparation of the plan; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to policies within the plan; and the degree of consistency with the NPPF. The Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) (NLP) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 29 May 2019, and is currently going through the examination process.

6.4 On 9 June 2021, the Council published for consultation, a Schedule of proposed Main Modifications to the draft Local Plan that the independent Inspectors examining the plan consider are necessary to make the plan 'sound'. As such the plan is at an advanced stage of preparation, and the policies in the NLP - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) (Jan 2019) as amended by proposed Main Modifications (June 2021), are considered to be consistent with the NPPF. The NLP is a material consideration in determining this application, with the amount of weight that can be given to specific policies (and parts thereof) being dependent upon whether Main

Modifications are proposed, and the extent and significance of unresolved objections.

6.5 The NLP will eventually replace the WDLP plan as the development plan for the application site. The following policies in the emerging NLP are relevant to the consideration of the application.

STP 1: Spatial Strategy
STP2: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
STP3: Principles of Sustainable Development
STP4: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
STP5: Health and Wellbeing
QOP1: Design Principles
QOP2: Good Design and Amenity
QOP4: Landscaping and Trees
QOP6: Delivering Well-designed Places
TRA1: Promoting Sustainable Connections
TRA2: The Effects of Development on the Transport Network
TRA4: Parking Provision in New Development
TRA5: Rail Transport and Safeguarding Facilities
ENV1: Approaches to assessing the impact of development on the natural, historic and built environment
ENV2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
ENV7: Historic Environment and Heritage Assets
WAT3: Flooding
WAT4: Sustainable Drainage Systems
POL1: Unstable and Contaminated Land
POL2: Pollution and Air, Soil and Water Quality
INF5 Open Space and Facilities for Sport and Recreation

#### National Planning Policy

6.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are material considerations in determining this application.

#### Other Documents

6.7 Ashington Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document (2010)  
 North East Local Economic Partnership. Strategic Economic Plan (2017)  
 Northumberland Economic Strategy 2019-2024. (2018)  
 Northumberland Line Economic Corridor Strategy, (February 2021)

## 7. Appraisal

7.1 The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are:

- Principle of the development
- Economic considerations
- Provision for car parking
- Impact on public amenity open space
- Highway considerations
- Impact on residential amenity
- Landscape and trees
- Impact on biodiversity
- Impact on heritage assets

### Principle of the Development

7.2 Saved policy T1 in the WDLP and policy TRA5 in the emerging NLP support the re-introduction of passenger rail services on the Northumberland Line. Saved Policy T1 of Wansbeck Local Plan states as follows. *'The re-introduction of passenger services on the rail line between Newcastle and Ashington will be supported and promoted. Land which may be required for associated facilities such as stations, bus stops and car parks will be safeguarded. Such sites will include Woodhorn Colliery; Ashington Town Centre; North Seaton Road, Ashington; and Bedlington Station'*.

7.3 The choice of site location for the proposed Ashington Station aligns well with saved policy T1, albeit that that Plan's proposals map only depicts the proposed station as an allocation within the track bed and adjacent railway corridor.

7.4 Policy TRA5 in the emerging NLP identifies Ashington as one of the locations for stations on the railway line. The emerging plan does not safeguard a specific site for the station, simply showing the station as a point in approximately the same location as the previous station.

7.5 The proposed railway station at Ashington is an integral component of the Northumberland Line scheme. It is concluded therefore the principle of the development is in accordance with saved policy T1 and emerging policy TRA5.

### Economic considerations

7.6 The County Council and various regional bodies consider that the re-opening of the Northumberland Line for passenger rail services will be a key to future economic development in South East Northumberland.

7.7 In the North East Local Economic Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, the introduction of passenger services to the line is cited as necessary to the achievement of the plan's connectivity goals. The Northumberland Economic Strategy recognises that increased connectivity will bring huge benefits, especially to the deprived communities of South East Northumberland. The Strategy identifies the reopening of the Northumberland Line to passengers as a key priority.

7.8 The Strategy for the Northumberland Line Economic Corridor seeks to capitalise upon the reintroduction of passenger rail services between Ashington and Newcastle as a catalyst for transformational change. It states: *'The Northumberland Line is expected to have a major impact on the local economy by facilitating economic activity and improving public transport accessibility, providing the*

*foundations for a new and ambitious clean growth economic corridor to be established'.*

7.9 The Ashington Town Centre SPD, adopted in 2010 was prepared to supplement and support policies in the Wansbeck Local Plan including Policy T1. It focuses on the regeneration of an area in the north east of the town centre and although the station is peripheral to the SPD area, the document acknowledges that the reintroduction of passenger services including a new station would make a substantial contribution to the town centre regeneration aims.

7.10 It is concluded that the economic considerations support the principle of the development and should be given substantial weight.

#### Provision for car parking

7.11 Policy T7 in the WDLP states that developers should make appropriate provision in their developments for the parking of motor vehicles and motorcycles. Policy TRA4 in the emerging NLP states that an appropriate amount of off-street vehicle parking sufficient to serve new development should be made available in safe, accessible and convenient locations prior to the development being brought into use. However, the emerging NLP does not identify any minimum or maximum parking standards for developments such as the Northumberland Line. The NPPF states that maximum parking standards should only be set where there is clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network or for optimising the density of development in town centres where the aim should be to improve the quality of parking alongside measures to promote accessibility by pedestrians and cyclists (paragraph 108).

7.12 The Transport Assessment submitted with the planning application includes information on forecasting the number of passengers that would use the proposed station and how they would travel to the station. Based on a worst case scenario the demand forecasting found that a maximum of 186 car parking spaces would be required for Ashington station. The existing car park has 113 spaces and is well used resulting in an overall requirement for 299 spaces. The application originally proposed that the new car park would include provision for 275 car parking spaces but this has been reduced to 270 following reconfiguration of the car park. It is stated that the shortfall of 29 spaces would be met by working with public transport providers to improve bus links to the station and the encouragement of the use of other sustainable forms of travel to the site (e.g. walking and cycling) as well as balancing the assumptions within the modelling.

7.13 The applicants have explained that government and industry guidance for Transport Assessments and Appraisals has informed the car parking provision for each of the proposed stations. A first principles approach to developing car parking provision has been used by the applicants utilising models used to develop the Outline Business Case for the Northumberland Line scheme. The modelling led to the identification of a range of provision with the number of spaces proposed being informed by professional judgement and various planning and transport criteria including accessibility and existing usage.

7.14 The level of car parking proposed must balance the anticipated demand suggested by the modelling with the impacts associated with both providing too much car parking as well as too little car parking. Excessive levels of car parking can

encourage the use of cars over multi-modal sustainable transport trips to the station, such as walk-train or cycle-train, or leave areas of the car park underused with impacts upon amenity. An under provision of car parking can lead to parking problems in surrounding residential areas that will have impacts upon residential amenity and highway safety. It is the opinion of County Highways that the level of car parking proposed, provides an appropriate balance to these matters with a slight reduction on the worst case scenario shown in the modelling being appropriate in the situation where both station and town centre car parking will occur within the car park. In addition, providing appropriate levels of car parking will encourage the use of the train services over longer distance car trips only. The modal shift from single mode car journeys for travel to destinations on the Northumberland Line, to multi-modal trips is a more sustainable form of transport as the private car is only part of any journey or for some trips (e.g. cycle or walk – train) is not used at all.

7.15 The applicants acknowledge that the original modelling was based on pre-pandemic 2019 data, but recent traffic flow data demonstrates that traffic flows have largely recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Furthermore it is too early to assess if travel behaviours will return to pre-Covid patterns or have changed permanently as a consequence of the pandemic. However, it is only reasonable to anticipate some rubber-band return to pre-Covid patterns as car ownership levels continue to be high across Northumberland, based on registrations in December 2020. The applicants point out that there are many variables influencing parking demand with traffic levels being only one of such variables. They consider that it is not unreasonable to use pre-pandemic information on travel behaviour to inform parking provision and designs for the Northumberland Line scheme. County Highways agree with this, as there is nothing to support significant changes to population numbers and car ownership levels

7.16 An objection has been received suggesting that the number of car parking places could be reduced at all the proposed stations, although Ashington is not mentioned specifically. The objector lives adjacent to the proposed car park at the proposed Seaton Delaval station and a number of local residents have submitted objections to that application, including expressing concern with the assumptions that the applicants' consultants have used in their modelling of predicted car parking requirements. However, as previously stated, County Highways are broadly content with the modelling exercise. Some representations on the various station proposals have referred to the changing pattern of office / home based working and the increase in on-line shopping brought about by the pandemic that might reduce the number of passengers who might use the new services, in particular for travel to Newcastle upon Tyne. Such trends cannot be fully evidenced for existing train usage as travel patterns are still to settle following the pandemic and therefore any change to assumptions for a service that is not operational would be no less certain than those made in the Outline Business Case modelling that has informed the assessment. Nevertheless, it is important to look beyond the short-term in planning major infrastructure projects such as the Northumberland Line. Whilst recognising these various concerns it is considered that the proposed level of car parking provision at Ashington Station is justifiable, particularly as the new car park will also cater for car-borne visitors to the town centre.

7.17 The Malhotra Group, that owns the southernmost portion of the application site, has objected to the proposed development. Some 69 car parking spaces are proposed to be located on the land owned by the Group. This land was occupied by the former Essendene Care Home, until it was demolished in around 2008. The site

has subsequently lain vacant, but the Group has submitted an outline planning application for the development of a new care home on the site. The LPA has not yet determined this application.

7.18 The Malhotra objection, whilst welcoming the new Ashington station, expresses serious concerns at the loss of their development site. The objection acknowledges that land ownership is not a planning matter but, in pointing out that the proposed car parking provision is dependent upon utilisation of its land, it states that planning permission for the Ashington station application should not be granted until such time as the Council has agreed to acquire the Malhotra land.

7.19 A 'Grampian' condition is included in the recommended conditions requiring the Malhotra land to be acquired before development of the car park is commenced. Such a condition is considered appropriate because the applicant has high expectations that the land can be acquired in a timely manner either by a process of negotiation or by compulsory acquisition through the Transport and Works Act Order. Furthermore it is considered that the proposed development of the new Ashington Station and associated infrastructure including the car parking is desirable in the public interest.

7.20 It is concluded that the proposed car parking is in accordance with Policy T7 in the WDLP, the NPPF and policy TRA4 in the emerging NLP.

#### Impact on Public Amenity Open Space

7.21 Part of the land proposed for car parking is currently public amenity open space. This area forms part of the protected open space, shown as 'OS112' on the Policies Map of Wansbeck Local Plan and designated under Wansbeck Local Plan Policy REC 1. The protection of this open area is taken forward in the Northumberland Local Plan under emerging Policy INF 5. The proposal involves a reconfiguration of the existing public car park and its expansion across the public amenity open space– the southern part of OS112 - as well as the non-designated vacant land to the south.

7.22 Policy GP1 (Part B) in the Wansbeck Local Plan states:

*Development on greenfield sites within settlement limits will only be permitted if:*  
*a) the site is allocated for development; or*  
*b) it can be demonstrated that the development will meet an identified and justified need and no suitable alternative previously-developed site is available.*

7.23 This policy no longer fully aligns with the NPPF, which, while giving preference to previously developed land, does not impose a sequential approach. However, the principle of promoting development on brownfield land in order to preserve green 'breathing spaces' within a heavily built-up urban area continues to be valid. Notwithstanding this overall aim it is not possible to accommodate the station and the associated car parking fully within the existing areas of previously developed land within the vicinity of the station site.

7.24 Policy REC1 makes clear that the open space forms part of "a network of strategically important parks and open spaces". The Policy goes on to say that permission for built development on such areas should only be given if the "predominantly open character" is maintained. In context, the area of open space

that would be lost comprises around 14 per cent of the wider protected open area – i.e. counting the northern part of OS112 and OS14 to the west. This, plus the fact that buildings would not be part of the proposal on this land, means that the predominantly open character would be largely preserved.

7.25 Clearly the role and function of the open space also needs to be considered in terms of whether its loss can be accepted. Wansbeck Local Plan Policy REC1 also makes clear that these strategic open spaces are so designated due to their importance as recreational or amenity open spaces and the loss of these functions should not be accepted. The Planning Statement accompanying the application seeks to argue that there is a surplus of open space in the area. However, the carrying forward of the open spaces into the emerging plan reflects updated technical appraisal of the Northumberland PPG17 open space, sport and recreation assessment carried out in 2011 as part of the evidence base work for the emerging NLP. This Assessment identified the public open space as an area of open space to be retained albeit with scope for improvement.

7.26 The corresponding emerging NLP Policy INF 5 suggests an approach that would require the carrying out of an independent assessment to show the open space to be surplus to requirements. If this cannot be demonstrated, the approach would look for replacement by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.

7.27 The Planning Statement submitted with the current application has sought to address whether the loss of green open space can be compensated, for example through enhancements to the public realm on the remainder of OS112 or adjacent areas and identifying how the public benefit accruing from the proposed development would outweigh this loss. In the Planning Statement the applicant offers to provide some form of compensation for the loss.

7.28 Following the submission of the planning application discussions have taken place with the applicant and within the Council to ascertain whether there is any local parkland or other public amenity land that would benefit from a scheme of enhancement. This has resulted in the identification of Peoples Park and Ashington Woods, which are both located close to Ashington town centre, as suitable receptor sites. It is proposed that 100 trees are planted at the northern end of Peoples Park to augment the existing mature trees along the northern boundary of the park. This is a scheme that has previously been the subject of an application under the Government's Urban Tree Challenge scheme that was unsuccessful. The proposal at Ashington Woods is to carry out some overdue and much needed thinning on parts of the 130 hectares of woodland. It is considered that both these schemes would provide appropriate compensation for the loss of the public amenity open space at Kenilworth Road. This is the subject of a planning condition should the Committee resolve to grant planning permission for the proposed development.

#### Highway Considerations

7.29 Policy T6 in the WDLP requires the volume and character of traffic likely to be generated and attracted by the development to be considered in the determination of planning applications and sets out a number of criteria that need to be complied with. A Transport Assessment is required for proposals that have significant transport implications. Policy TRA1 in the emerging NLP requires the transport implications of development to be addressed as part of any planning application and sets out various planning criteria that the development will be required to address. The NPPF

requires applications for developments requiring significant amounts of movement to be supported by a transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed (paragraph 113).

7.30 A Transport Assessment (TA) has been submitted to support the proposed development. The TA notes that the Covid-19 pandemic has prevented the collection of up-to-date traffic data on the local highway network that is considered representative of 'normal' operating conditions. 'Baseline' traffic information is therefore based on surveys carried out in 2019. The TA also concluded that the application site is well connected to the local pedestrian and cycling network and local bus services.

7.31 The existing access from Kenilworth Road to the car park will be realigned to provide access and egress for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians. A new egress to Kenilworth Road will be created at the southern end of the proposed car park. A lift is proposed from the platform to provide pedestrian access to Wansbeck Square.

7.32 County Highways raised a number of concerns that could impact upon highway safety and the operation of the proposed development and the highway network, on the plans that were originally submitted with the application. This resulted in additional information and revised plans being submitted to address these concerns. An initial Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been carried and further RSAs are the subject of an informative should the Committee decide to grant planning permission. The revised information has been assessed by County Highways and the proposals are now considered to be appropriate and acceptable. Therefore County Highways are raising no highway objections to the development proposals subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives, particularly in respect of the proposed car parking.

7.33 It is concluded therefore that the proposals are in accordance with Policy T6 in the WDLP, the NPPF and policy TRA1 in the emerging NLP.

#### Impact on residential amenity

7.34 Policy GP23 in the WDLP states that '*planning permission will not be granted for development likely to cause significant harm to either: a) human health and safety; b) the amenity of local residents and other land users; c) the quality and enjoyment of all aspects of the environment*'.

7.35 Policy STP5 in the emerging NLP (as proposed for modification) states that '*Development proposals will be required to demonstrate where relevant and in a proportionate way, that they ...(f) prevent negative impacts on amenity; (g) protect, and alleviate risk to people and the environment, and do not have a negative impact on...vibration, air and noise pollution*'.

7.36 The main impacts on residential amenity are noise, vibration, air quality, artificial lighting and visual impact.

#### Noise

7.37 The main residential receptors for noise from the proposed development are along John Street to the east of the station, parts of Ashbourne Crescent, parts of

Crawford Terrace, parts of Darnley Road, parts of Hatchmeadows and parts of Featherwood Drive. These dwellings are already receptors to noise from the current freight rail traffic and from vehicles using the existing car park.

7.38 Currently most freight services on the railway line do not travel through Ashington, as they comprise freight traffic to and from Lynemouth Power Station and Battleship Wharf. It is understood that current freight traffic on the line are up to 30 train movements per week with some of these being early morning. Whilst noise from trains is transitory, the proposed half hour frequency for passenger services represents a significant increase on current levels. However, the noise from railcars at the station is predicted to be 49 to 55 dBLAaq (with mitigation) which at the John Street receptors is the same as the daytime ambient noise level. The proposal is to use diesel railcars, therefore most train engines will be located under the chassis of the railcar and a certain amount of noise attenuation will be provided at the station from the platform acting as a barrier.

7.39 A new source of noise from the proposed development would be the tannoy system. However, noise from the tannoy system at the receptors on John Street is predicted to be significantly below the existing ambient levels during the day. Public Protection have identified a potential sleep disturbance issue between 06.00 and 07.00 when night-time noise levels apply and have recommended a planning condition requiring details of how noise from the tannoy will operate and be managed and controlled during the night period.

7.40 The noise levels at the car park are predicted to be below the measured daytime background levels at the nearest noise receptors on John Street. However, the cumulative daytime noise impact is predicted to be higher than the existing ambient noise levels. To reduce noise levels mitigation is proposed in the form of a 2.8 metre high acoustic barrier between the railway and the dwellings on John Street and the use of a noise absorbent lining on the face of the platform to prevent noise reflection. Details of the acoustic barrier are the subject of a proposed planning condition should the Committee decide to grant planning permission.

7.41 The recommended conditions require the submission of a construction noise and vibration management plan for the approval of the Local Planning Authority. That plan would be required to provide details of the construction work and methodologies, measures for the control and reduction of noise emissions associated with construction works, liaison with local residents and arrangements for noise monitoring. A main contractor for the Northumberland Line scheme has only recently been appointed, such information is not yet available. However, the applicants have stated that working at night-time and weekends would be necessary, as the line would remain open during construction for the operation of freight services. The expectation would be that the activities that might generate most noise, such as demolition, platform construction, groundworks and tarmacking the car park, would be carried out during normal working hours as far as practicable and this could be controlled through the approval of the planning condition or by a COPA Section 61 'prior approval' or a combination of both. Public Protection also point out that there are noise limits under British Standards 5228 (Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites) that they would expect the applicants to adhere to. The applicants estimate that the construction period would be between eleven and thirteen months depending on land and track access availability.

7.42 Subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions, Public Protection have raised no objections based on noise, either during the operational phase or during construction.

#### *Vibration*

7.43 Vibration levels from the proposed railcars are likely to be minimal, especially when compared to the longer and heavier freight trains already using the line and would be significantly below levels that would be noticeable at nearby dwellings. Vibration from plant and machinery during the construction phase will depend on the schedule of works and plant to be used. A contractor has only recently been appointed and as the detailed works and plant are not yet known, this is the subject of a planning condition.

#### *Air Quality*

7.44 The railcars will be diesel and there is currently no plan to electrify the line, although the design of the scheme (e.g. the height of bridges) does allow for electrification at some future date. The railcar engines would be similar to those used to drive a large heavy goods vehicle. It is anticipated that the air quality impact from the proposed development would be minimal. Similarly it is considered that the air quality impact from cars travelling to and from the station would be within acceptable levels. A dust management plan for the construction phase has been submitted and Public Protection considers that it is acceptable.

#### *Artificial Lighting*

7.45 The external lighting on the platform and car park would be some 40 metres from the nearest property receptors and should not result in any nuisance or annoyance. A condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a lighting scheme that shows how and where external lighting will be installed to demonstrate clearly that areas to be lit will not unduly affect residential amenity.

#### *Visual Impact*

7.46 The application site currently comprises the railway line, car park, vacant brownfield land to the south and public amenity open space to the west. It is considered that the scale and massing of the various station features would not result in unacceptable visual impacts on nearby properties. The reconfiguration and extension of the existing car park provides an opportunity to improve its appearance, notwithstanding the fact that the new car park would be significantly larger than the existing car park. In general it is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant adverse impact on the character and general appearance of the local area or on the amenity of nearby residential properties.

7.47 In conclusion therefore it is considered that the proposed development complies with Policy GP23 in the WDLP and Policy STP5 in the emerging NLP.

#### Landscape and Trees

7.48 Policy GP6 in the WDLP seeks to protect trees and to encourage new planting. It states that *'development which would result in the loss of healthy trees which make an important contribution to the quality of the environment will not be permitted unless there are overriding social or economic benefits to the community and compensatory off-site provision of landscape infrastructure is made'*.

7.49 Policy GP32 in the WDLP requires developers to incorporate a high standard of landscape treatment in their developments.

7.50 Policy QOP4 in the NLP (as proposed for modification) states that: *'Where relevant, new development will be expected to incorporate well-designed landscaping and respond appropriately to any existing landscape features'*. It also sets out a number of criteria that development proposals should ensure that they comply with, including the retention wherever possible of existing features which contribute to the character of the area or amenity; and that there is no loss of existing trees which are valuable in terms of amenity, biodiversity or amenity, except where they are unavoidable and considerations in favour of the development would outweigh any harm resulting from the loss of trees and the loss can be satisfactorily mitigated through measures such as replacement planning where possible.

7.51 The NPPF as amended in 2021 includes new provisions related to trees, noting their important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and their role in helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Applicants and LPAS are encouraged to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places (paragraph 131).

7.52 A Landscape, Townscape and Visual Overview and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment were submitted with the application. The latter states that 33 tree features would be removed to facilitate the proposed development, although only one of these is considered to be of high quality and a further two individual trees and one group of moderate quality. The tree of high quality to be removed was the most significant tree surveyed on the site because of its prominence in the local landscape and, although not protected, its removal is regrettable. However, its central location within the proposed car park means that retention is not considered practicable. It is proposed that new planting mitigates tree loss and in addition there is the off-site planting proposed as referred to in paragraph 7.27 above.

7.53 In conclusion therefore it is considered that the proposed development complies with Policy GP6 and Policy GP32 in the WDLP, Policy QOP4 in the emerging NLP and the NPPF.

#### Impact on biodiversity

7.54 An Ecological Impact Assessment was submitted with the planning application. It notes that development at the site will lead to a net loss of biodiversity. The provision of net gains for biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF and Policy ENV1 in the emerging NLP is the subject of a recommended planning condition. The County Ecologist has raised no objections to the proposed development subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions, including the submission of a scheme of biodiversity net gain. The net gain may be in relation to the application site or the Northumberland Line as a whole. Other recommended conditions relate to mitigation measures and a lighting scheme to maintain the biodiversity value of the site and avoid harm to protected species.

## Impact on Heritage Assets

7.55 A Heritage Statement was submitted with the planning application. It notes that the existing disused platform structure for the former Ashington railway station would be demolished to accommodate the new platform and station. Other historic structures and buildings in the vicinity of the site include the former post office and library on Kenilworth Road and Memorial Gardens which contains war memorials commemorating the First and Second world Wars. The Building Conservation has considered the impact of the proposed development on the setting of these buildings and gardens and is satisfied that any impacts are not sufficient to warrant refusing the application. To ensure continuity and quality in the appearance and design of the proposed development, a condition is recommended requiring details relating to the design and colour palette for station infrastructure to be submitted.

7.56 The existing car park was formerly the railway sidings and goods shed. The Heritage Statement identifies a potential for the remains of historic rail infrastructure to survive below the existing car park. Also the proposed extension to the car park could potentially disturb any below-ground remains of previously demolished rail infrastructure, such as the former goods yard. There is also potential for potential for disturbance to un-recorded pre-modern archaeological remains that might exist beneath the existing public open space.

7.57 The County Archaeologist recommends that every effort be made to retain any surviving historic fabric associated with former uses of the site. A condition requiring a programme of archaeological work is included in the recommended planning conditions.

7.58 Subject therefore to the imposition of appropriate conditions, the impact of the proposed development on the heritage assets of the area is considered to be acceptable.

## Other Matters

7.59 A Flood Risk Assessment was submitted with the planning application. This has been reviewed by the Local Lead Flood Authority who have raised no objection to the proposed development subject to the imposition of planning conditions in relation to SuDS features and surface water management. One of the planning conditions relates to an assessment looking at the landscaped areas in between some of the parking bays and whether these could be turned into bioretention SuDS features to assist with surface water drainage on the car park.

7.60 A Phase 1 desk top study for the site has been submitted recommending that various intrusive investigations are carried to determine such aspects as the depth of made ground, the composition and strength of strata underground strata, the potential for unrecorded mine workings and other residual contamination associated with historical uses of the site. These are the subjects of recommended planning conditions should the Committee decide to grant planning permission.

## Equality Duty

7.61 The County Council has a duty to have regard to the impact of any proposal on those people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act. Officers have had due regard to Sec 149(1) (a) and (b) of the Equality Act 2010 and considered the information provided by the applicant, together with the responses from consultees and other parties, and determined that the proposal would have no material impact on individuals or identifiable groups with protected characteristics. A Diversity Impact Statement informed the various design options and these were shared with diversity groups. Level access is proposed with access points designed to cater for non-able users. The proposed lift would provide step free access from Wansback Square to the platform. Accessible parking is proposed close to the station entrance. Accordingly, no changes to the proposal were required to make the proposed development acceptable in this regard.

#### Crime and Disorder Act Implications

7.62 Policy GP35 of the WDLP states that development proposals will be expected to have regard to planning out crime objectives. The Planning Statement submitted with the application states that the design of the proposals has been informed by guidance received from Northumbria Police and British Transport Police. The 'Designing Out Crime' units of both organisations have been consulted on the planning application and have provided recommendations for various measures to assist in reducing the fear of crime and disorder for passengers using the railway and rail staff, including measures related to CCTV, lighting and access. These matters are the subjects of planning conditions. It is concluded that the policy requirements have been met.

#### Human Rights Act Implications

7.63 The Human Rights Act requires the County Council to take into account the rights of the public under the European Convention on Human Rights and prevents the Council from acting in a manner that is incompatible with those rights. Article 8 of the Convention provides that there shall be respect for an individual's private life and home save for that interference which is in accordance with the law and necessary in a democratic society in the interests of (inter alia) public safety and the economic wellbeing of the country. Article 1 of protocol 1 provides that an individual's peaceful enjoyment of their property shall not be interfered with save as is necessary in the public interest.

7.64 For an interference with these rights to be justifiable the interference (and the means employed) needs to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised. The main body of this report identifies the extent to which there is any identifiable interference with these rights. The Planning Considerations identified are also relevant in deciding whether any interference is proportionate. Case law has been decided which indicates that certain development does interfere with an individual's rights under Human Rights legislation. This application has been considered in the light of statute and case law and the interference is not considered to be disproportionate.

7.65 Officers are also aware of Article 6, the focus of which (for the purpose of this decision) is the determination of an individual's civil rights and obligations. Article 6 provides that in the determination of these rights, an individual is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal. Article 6 has been subject to a great deal of case law. It has been decided that for

planning matters the decision making process as a whole, which includes the right of review by the High Court, complied with Article 6.

## **8. Conclusion**

8.1 The reintroduction of passenger rail services on the Northumberland Line would bring considerable benefits to communities in southeast Northumberland, including in the Ashington area. The proposed station at Ashington forms an important part of the overall scheme and is in accordance with Development Plan policy.

8.2 The proposed new station would be located adjacent to the location of the former station. This is a sustainable location in Ashington town centre. The proposals for the station are considered to be acceptable subject to the imposition of conditions including mitigation measures to protect the amenity of local residents.

8.3 The extensions to the existing car park involve the loss of the public amenity open space that currently occupies part of the site. Compensatory improvements are proposed at Peoples Park and Ashington Woods and these are considered to be acceptable. Furthermore existing brownfield land owned by the Malhotra Group will also be required to provide the required car parking provision. A 'Grampian' condition is included in the recommended conditions requiring the Malhotra land to be acquired before development of the car park is commenced should the Committee decide to grant planning permission.

8.4 It is concluded that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan and the NPPF and that the overall planning balance weighs strongly in favour of granting planning permission subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

## **9. Recommendation**

That this application be GRANTED permission subject to the following conditions.

### General

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the following plans and documents.

60604435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-LEP-000015 (Rev PO1.1) Site Location Plan

60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000002 (Rev PO1) Existing General Arrangement

60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000003 (Rev PO1) Proposed General Arrangement

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EST-001301 (Rev PO1.1) Proposed Wansbeck Square Lift Access General Arrangement

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EST-001302 (Rev PO1.1) Proposed Wansbeck Square Lift Access Side Elevation

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EST-001303 (Rev PO1.1) Proposed Wansbeck Square Lift Access Front Elevation

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070001 (Rev PO5) Highways General Arrangement

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070002 (Rev PO4) Highways Typical Cross Sections

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070004 (PO3) Traffic Sign and Road Marking Layout

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070006 (Rev PO2) Highways Drainage Layout

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070007 (Rev PO3) Vehicle Tracking

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070003 (Rev PO2) Existing Public Utilities Layout

60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000006 (Rev PO1) Platform Drainage General Arrangement

60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000007 (Rev PO2) Typical Section and Platform Details

60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-EPT-000067 (Rev PO2.1) E&P Proposed Lighting Layout

60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-EEN-000502 (Rev PO2.2) Station Landscape Design Ashington

60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG\_EHW-070054 (Rev PO1) NCC Adopted Highways Location

Reason: To ensure that the approved development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

#### Environmental Matters

3. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Management Plan shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period. The Management Plan shall provide for:

a. An assessment of construction noise and vibration including detailing measures for the control and reduction of noise and vibration emissions associated with demolition, earthworks and construction.

b. Details of the disposal of surface water from the development through the construction phase.

c. Equipment cleaning and washing facilities.

d. Excavation plant machinery to be fitted with fuel spill kits.

e. The provision of welfare facilities that shall be maintained by a licenced Waste Carrier.

f. Details of behavioural policies for all site staff to minimise noise, vibration and air quality impacts from vehicles, plant and equipment.

g. The engines / generators of all construction vehicles, plant and equipment shall be turned off when not in use. Hybrid generators shall be used wherever practicable to reduce noise and fuel consumption.

h. Details of the measures to be taken to protect existing trees that will not be removed as part of the development

Reason: To prevent nuisance in the interests of residential amenity in accordance with the NPPF, to ensure that the risk of flooding does not increase during the construction phase, to limit the siltation of any site surface water features, to ensure the welfare of site operatives and to ensure trees are protected from construction works.

4. Details of the proposed boundary treatment to the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include plans showing the location of existing, retained and proposed new boundary treatments and scaled drawings indicating the positions, height, design, materials, type and colour of the proposed new boundary treatments. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the station is brought into operational use and shall be retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the area.

5. Notwithstanding the details submitted, prior to the commencement of development samples of all materials, colours and finishes to be used on all external surfaces shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity of the area and to ensure that the proposed development does not have an adverse effect upon the appearance of the area in accordance with Policy GP31 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

6. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until schemes for environmental improvements at Peoples Park, Ashington, and Ashington Woods, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved environmental improvements shall be commenced no later than the first planting season after the proposed development is brought into use.

Reason: To provide compensation for the loss of public open space in accordance with Policy REC1 of the Wansbeck Local Plan.

#### Contaminated Land

7. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a full programme of works has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The programme shall allow the identification of 'enabling works', separate from the main demolition and construction works, including major groundworks (i.e. soil stripping).

Reason: To provide an identifiable separation of works that will allow the imposition of conditions aimed only at the main demolition and construction works.

8. No development shall take place beyond the 'enabling works' identified under condition 7, until an appropriate scheme of assessments, investigations and remediation has been carried out as detailed below, unless those assessments and

investigations demonstrate that remediation is not required, and the Local Planning authority dispenses with any such requirement in writing.

a) Further site investigations are recommended in the Phase 1: Desk Study (The Northumberland Line – Preliminary Sources Study Report – Ashington Station. AECOM Ltd. December 2020 (version 1.0) and shall be carried out to fully and effectively characterise the nature and extent of any land contamination and / or pollution of controlled wastes. These shall specifically include a risk assessment that adopts the Source-Pathway-Receptor principle, in order that any potential risks are adequately assessed, taking into account the site's existing status and proposed new use. The site investigation and findings shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority without delay upon completion.

b) Thereafter, a written Method Statement (or Remediation Strategy) detailing the remediation requirements for the land contamination and / or pollution of controlled waters affecting the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. All requirements shall be implemented and completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. No deviation shall be made to the approved scheme without express written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land are minimised and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to future users in accordance with Policy GP29 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

9. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use or continue in use until a full closure (Verification Report) report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall provide verification that the required works regarding contamination have been carried out in accordance with the approved Method Statement(s). Post remediation sampling and monitoring results shall be included in the closure report to demonstrate that the required remediation has been fully met.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land are minimised and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to future users in accordance with Policy GP29 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

10. If during the development, contamination not previously considered is identified, then an additional Method Statement regarding this material shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be brought into use until a Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the measures proposed to deal with the contamination have been carried out. Should no contamination be found during development then the developer shall submit a signed statement indicating this to discharge this condition.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land are minimised and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to future users in accordance with Policy GP29 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

Biodiversity

11. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced unless and until a scheme ("the offsetting scheme") for the offsetting of biodiversity impacts at the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The offsetting scheme shall include:

- a. A methodology for the identification of receptor site(s).
- b. The identification of receptor site(s).
- c. Details of the offset requirements of the development (in accordance with the recognised offsetting metrics standard outlined in the Defra Metrics Guidance dated March 2012).
- d. The provision of arrangements to secure the delivery of the offsetting measures (including a timetable for their delivery).
- e. A management and monitoring plan (to include for the provision and maintenance of the offsetting measures in perpetuity).

The written approval of the LPA shall not be issued before the arrangements Necessary to secure the delivery of the offsetting measures have been executed. The offsetting scheme shall be implemented in full accordance with the requirements of the approved scheme.

Reason: To provide net gains for biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF.

12. No development shall take place unless in accordance with the mitigation measures detailed in the report *Ecological Impact Assessment Ashington station. Econorth. January 2021*, including:

- Priority within the planting scheme to be given to native species, ideally of local provenance.
- Retention where appropriate of the mature trees on the site.
- Retained and created habitats to be subject to a suitable management plan.
- Cotoneaster and Japanese rose checking survey to map current extent 1 month prior to the start of works. Removal and control to be undertaken by an appropriately licensed contractor.
- Any arboricultural works to follow a method statement.
- Installation of at least 5 bat boxes and 5 new nest boxes within the retained trees.
- Site clearance works shall not be undertaken during the nesting period (1 March – 30 September) unless a checking survey by a suitably qualified ecologist has confirmed no active nests have been present within the 5 days before the survey was undertaken.

Reason: To maintain the biodiversity value of the site and avoid harm to protected species that may be present in accordance with Policy GP13 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

#### Highways and Car Parking

13. The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a Transport and Construction Method Statement, together with a supporting plan, has been

submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Method Statement and plan shall provide for:

- a. Details of temporary traffic management measures, temporary access, routes and vehicles.
- b. Vehicle cleaning facilities.
- c. The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors.
- d. The loading and unloading of plant and materials
- e. Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development.
- f. Mitigation measures in respect to the loss of public car parking during the construction phase and access to retained car parking and serving areas to the north of the application site.
- g. Measures to maintain access to the recycling facilities should a temporary location be provided during the construction period.

Reason: To prevent nuisance in the interests of residential amenity and highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

14. Deliveries to and collections from the demolition and / or construction phases of the development shall only be permitted between the hours 08.00 – 18.00 Monday to Friday and 08.00 – 13.00 on Saturdays, with no deliveries or collections on Sundays or Bank Holidays, unless agreed in writing by the Local planning Authority.

Reason: To protect residential amenity and provide a commensurate level of protection against noise.

15. Development of the car park shall not be commenced until the land owned by the Malhotra Group in the southern part of the application site, between the existing car park and Ashbourne Crescent, is acquired for the proposed development. The station shall not become functional for passenger rail services until the development of the car park has been fully completed.

Reason: The land is required to enable the proposed number of car parking spaces to be provided.

16. The approved car parking shall not be made available for public use until the car parking area indicated on the approved plans, including any disabled and EV car parking spaces contained therein, has been hard surfaced, sealed and marked out in parking bays in accordance with the approved plans. Thereafter the car parking area shall be retained in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy T7 of the Wansbeck Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

17. Prior to the car parking area being made available for public use, a car parking management strategy detailing the number of car parking spaces, including

disabled, EV and other spaces for non-public use, and details on how these spaces will be made available shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the car parking area is made available for public use.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and sustainable development, in accordance with Policy T7 of the Wansbeck Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

18. Prior to the car parking area being marked out in parking bays, details of a system of internal pedestrian routing within the car park aisles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans before the car parking area is made available for public use.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety, in accordance with Policy T6 of the Wansbeck Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

19. Prior to the car parking area being made available for public use, details of the proposed highways works shown indicatively on the approved plans shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The highway works shall include the provision of:

- a. Widened and improved access to Kenilworth Drive (northern access), including cycling provision.
- b. New access junction to Kenilworth Drive (southern access).
- c. Reinstatement of former access point from Kenilworth Drive.
- d. Improved pedestrian connectivity between the southern access and the pedestrian routes to the north of Ashbourne Crescent.
- e. Pedestrian connectivity to Oakland Terrace.
- f. All other associated works.

The car parking area shall not be made available for public use until the highways works have been completed in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Policy T6 of the Wansbeck Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

20. Prior to the commencement of passenger rail services at the station, details of the proposed advanced directional signage for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, including Town Centre Fingerpost signage, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No passenger rail services at the station shall commence until the details have been implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and sustainable development, in accordance with Policy T6 of the Wansbeck Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

21. Prior to the car parking area being made available for public use, an Operation, Management and Maintenance Strategy for the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Operation, Management and Maintenance Strategy shall detail how the areas of the development including the car parking area, access roads, drainage, landscaping, CCTV and lighting will be operated, managed and maintained upon completion of the development and the boundaries between any multiple parties in this respect. Following the car parking area being made available for public use, the development shall be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity, in accordance with Policy T7 of the Wansbeck Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

22. Prior to any change in charging strategy for the car parking area, details of the changes and any associated mitigation associated with that change, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details and associated mitigation shall be implemented prior to the change in charging strategy being implemented.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

23. Prior to the car parking area being made available for public use, a Delivery and Servicing strategy for any business within Wansbeck Square that requires the development car park for vehicle movements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include timings of delivery / servicing vehicles, 'engine off' / quiet delivery strategy, details of the vehicles used in the deliveries and servicing and the routes taken. The approved strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the car parking area is made available for public use.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and local amenity, in accordance with Policy T6 of the Wansbeck Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

24. Prior to the commencement of passenger rail services at the station, the cycle parking shown on the approved plans shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans. Thereafter the cycle parking shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and shall be kept available for the parking of cycles at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and sustainable development, in accordance with Policy T3 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

## CCTV

25. A scheme for the provision of a network of closed circuit television cameras (CCTV), including the proposed location cameras, mounting columns, proposals for the use and management of the system and proposals for its installation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CCTV

system shall be installed in accordance with the approved details before the station is brought into operational use and shall be retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: In the interests of the safety and security of users of the station and car park in accordance with Policy GP35 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

#### Noise and Vibration

26. Prior to any amplified voice or tannoy system becoming operational, full details of the system shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority to show how the system will be operated and managed to minimise noise impacts to local noise sensitive receptors. The proposed system shall be installed, operated and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect residential amenity and provide a commensurate level of protection against noise in accordance with Policy GP25 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

27. Prior to the development hereby permitted being brought into use or continuing in use, full details of the acoustic barriers as outlined in the noise assessment (Ashington Railway Station Noise Impact Assessment. AECOM Ltd. January 2021), including location, specification, design and performance, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full and retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To protect residential amenity and provide a commensurate level of protection against noise and vibration, in accordance with Policy GP25 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

28. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a construction noise and vibration management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall detail the construction work and methodologies, measures for the control and reduction of noise emissions associated with construction works, liaison with local residents and arrangements for noise monitoring.

Reason: To protect residential amenity and provide a commensurate level of protection against noise in accordance with Policy GP25 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

#### Drainage

29. Prior to first use of the car park, a scheme detailing the type, adoption and maintenance of all SuDS features shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Maintenance of the SuDS features shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure that the satisfactory disposal of surface water from the site.

30. Prior to the installation of any drainage within the car park, an assessment looking at the landscaped area between some of the parking bays and whether

these could be turned into bioretention SuDS features that would assist with surface water drainage on site, shall be undertaken and submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority. The approved drainage shall be constructed in accordance with the approved plans and drawings.

Reason: To provide extra treatment of surface water quality within the development.

### Lighting

31. Prior to first use a lighting scheme for all areas of the site including, but not restricted to, the car park and footpaths, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall show how and where external lighting shall be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not unduly affect residential amenity or prevent bats using their territory (e.g. for foraging or commuting) or having access to their breeding sites and resting places. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved scheme and no external lighting shall otherwise be installed without prior approval in writing from the Local Planning Authority and shall be retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To protect residential amenity in accordance with Policy GD23 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan and maintain connectivity along commuting and feeding corridors for protected animal species in accordance with Policy GP13 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan.

### Archaeology

32. A programme of archaeological work is required in accordance with Northumberland County Council Conservation Team (NCCCT) Standards for archaeological Mitigation and Site-specific Requirements document (17 March 2021). The archaeological scheme shall comprise three stages of work as set out below. Each stage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

a) No development or archaeological mitigation shall commence on site until a written scheme of investigation based on NCCCT Standards and Site-specific Requirements document has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

b) The archaeological recording scheme required by NCCCT Standards and Site-specific Requirements document must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

c) The programme of analysis, reporting, publication and archiving if required by NCCCT Standards and Site-specific Requirements document must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

Reason: The site is of archaeological interest and to comply with Policy GP21 of the Wansbeck District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### Informatives

1. The prevention of nuisance is the responsibility of the developer and their professional advisors. Developers should, therefore, fully appreciate the importance of professional advice. Failure to address issues of noise, dust and light at the development stage does not preclude action by the Council under Section 79 of the Environment Protection Act 1990 in respect to statutory nuisance.
2. British Standards 5228 (Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites) sets out noise limits that the developers will be expected to adhere to, particularly in relation to working outside 'normal working hours'.
3. There shall be no burning of any material associated with the construction phase of the development.
4. It is recommended that the lighting scheme approved under condition 31 is designed in consultation with the project ecologist and follow guidance set out in Institution of Lighting Professionals Advice Note 08/18 (2018).
5. Offsite highway works required in connection with the proposed development are controlled by the Council's Technical services Division. These works should be carried out before the car parking area is made available for public use. The Council will undertake such works at the applicant's expense. Highways Development Management ([highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk)) should be contacted to progress this matter.
6. A highway condition survey should be carried out before the commencement of demolition and construction vehicle movements from the site. Highways Development Management ([highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk)) should be contacted to arrange a survey.
7. The Council's Traffic Management Section at [highwaysprogramme@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysprogramme@northumberland.gov.uk) should be contacted before and during the construction period in respect of any impacts to current and proposed Traffic Regulation Orders.
8. Building material or equipment shall not be stored on the highway unless otherwise agreed. The Streetworks Team on 0345 600 6400 should be contacted for Skips and Containers licences.
9. The Council's Lighting Section at [highwaysstreetlighting@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysstreetlighting@northumberland.gov.uk) should be contacted before and during the construction period with respect of street lighting to ensure sufficient illumination levels of the public highway.
10. In accordance with the Highways Act 1980, no mud, debris or rubbish shall be deposited on the highway.
11. Road safety audits are required to be undertaken. The Council offers this service and can be contacted at [highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:highwaysplanning@northumberland.gov.uk) or 01670 622979.
12. The demand for EV car parking spaces is likely to increase in the future to reflect the inevitable increased take up of electric vehicles.

13. Works that do not constitute 'development' or are permitted by virtue of the provisions of the General Permitted Development Order will not require formal discharge to be obtained prior to such works being undertaken.

**Date of Report:** 20 August 2021

**Background Papers:** Planning application file 21/00387/CCD