

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**NORTHUMBERLAND LINE**

**ENGINEERING AND DESIGN**

**CORRIGENDUM TO JULIAN SINDALL'S PROOF OF EVIDENCE**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Erratum makes minor corrections to the calculated numbers shown in relation to the estimated costs and number of car parking spaces for the car parking arrangements at Ashington station.
- 1.2 There are two changes to be made that flow into the dependent calculations. Neither has any material effect on the final numbers or the argument made and therefore these changes are introduced for the purposes of clarity and consistency only.
- 1.3 The changes are described below in summary narrative form. The amended figures are updated as highlighted in Appendix A of this document which should replace Appendix A of my Proof, and are set out in tabular format in Appendix B of this document.

## 2. ASHINGTON STATION CAR PARK

### Number of existing spaces

- 2.1 The first change concerns the number of existing car park spaces. This is reported as 113 in paragraph 6.5 of my Proof of Evidence, and in paragraph 3 of Appendix A. This was correct prior to 2018 but I was recently informed by colleagues that after 2018 the car park was reconfigured to provide 122 spaces.
- 2.2 This change and the dependent calculations were included in document 2001-430—31 'The engineering justification for using the Malhotra land' which was included in Appendix 5 of the Proof of Mr Emms and Appendix 2 of Mr Farr's Statement of Evidence.
- 2.3 When this correction is made, with the remaining space and Covid impact assumptions remaining the same, the calculated spaces for 2028 demand falls from a deficit of 6 spaces to a deficit of 10 spaces i.e. it is estimated that demand will exceed capacity after four years of operation not by 6 spaces but by 10.

### Unit rate assumptions

- 2.4 The second change reflects a point of detail in the consistency of assumptions in the cost calculations. In order to present the most beneficial case for the objector and hence the least beneficial to the promoter, I had used the high end unit rates to calculate the costs of the At Grade solution using the Malhotra land, and intended to use the low end unit rates to calculate the costs of a decked car park without the Malhotra land.
- 2.5 Although I had used the low end rates for the decking, I had used the average rates for the remaining surface land in the scenario of the decked car park without the Malhotra land.
- 2.6 When this correction is made, to ensure the low end unit rates are used for both the decked section and the at grade section, the changes to the presented costs are as follows:
  - 2.6.1 At Grade including the Malhotra land: No change at £2.1m
  - 2.6.2 Decked car park without Malhotra land: Reduction from £5.4m to £5.3m
  - 2.6.3 Cost differential: Reduction from £3.3m to £3.2m
- 2.7 The argument therefore remains that even when assuming that the option avoiding using the Malhotra land is delivered at the lower end of the costs scale, and the option

using the Malhotra land is delivered at the higher end of the costs scale, there is still a substantial cost differential of over £3m as originally stated.

### **Further analysis**

- 2.8 In setting out the numerical changes in tabular detail in Appendix B of this document, I have presented a series of 'what-if scenarios' changing one set of assumed variables at a time, and moving cumulatively from a position most favourable to the Malhotra's argument to one most favourable to the promoter.
- 2.9 In the most favourable scenario to the promoter, with full Covid recovery and the smaller, 130-space solution at grade but without using the Malhotra land, demand would be expected to exceed capacity by 91 spaces after 4 years.
- 2.10 Similarly, using the low cost rates for the promoter's scheme using the Malhotra land at grade, and the high cost rates for the decked car park without the Malhotra land, the cost differential becomes £5.0m for the scenario most favourable to the promoter.
- 2.11 Since the argument may be made amply even with the scenario most favourable to the objector, I have not sought to present the other scenarios as anything other than a point of reference and to suggest that the reality is likely to be somewhere between these two extremes i.e. a car park only on the existing land will have a demand greater than capacity within four years, and the cost differential between the two car park options is likely to be between £3.2m and £5.0m.

## APPENDIX A ASHINGTON STATION CAR PARK OPTIONS REVIEW (AMENDED)

1. When assessing the likely demand for spaces as a result of the Northumberland Line, the project team has determined that the highest demand case is for 186 spaces in 2039, fifteen years from the proposed opening date. The basis for this was the rail demand forecasts that informed the Outline Business Case (OBC) [APP-40], determined using a multi-modal choice model developed in line with standard DfT Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG), and then the application of appropriate factors to translate this into a demand for car parking spaces. This process is described further in the statement of Mr Coates contained in Appendix B.
2. Information from the OBC was utilised in developing the Ashington station car park layout. Since the OBC was submitted, the Scheme design has progressed alongside the development of a Full Business Case (FBC) and the demand for car park spaces has been reduced in the interim to 99 spaces in 2028 in accordance with DfT guidance for impacts from the Covid pandemic on rail demand.
3. There are ~~113~~ **122** car parking spaces within the existing Station Yard South car park, which occupies the land used by the proposed Ashington station car park. The most recent pre pandemic Ashington parking study, commissioned by NCC in 2016, showed that maximum occupancy reached 100%.
4. If a hypothetical and extremely pessimistic case is taken that 50% of these spaces are no longer used due to Covid impact, that would mean only ~~57~~ **61** of the existing spaces were needed for town centre use in the long term.
5. If the project were constrained to only using the available at grade land at Ashington identified in the Order documents, but without the Malhotra land, the design team has provided a preliminary optimistic assessment that circa 150 spaces would be available within the remaining site area (though a more realistic assessment is closer to ~~125~~ **130** spaces).
6. This assessment of spaces is based on a station car park design that would meet robust Network Rail standards and guidance for accessibility; and provide wider facilities associated with a rail station car park such as provision for cycling, accessible storage to be designed in accordance with parking and cycle standards, public and taxi drop off areas, and Network Rail maintenance access facilities. Extracts of relevant standards follow:
  - a. Appendix D: Parking Standards for the Northumberland Local Plan<sup>1</sup>
    - i. Parking design (D.3-D.5)
    - ii. Parking space minimum dimensions (D.6)
  - b. Network Rail standard NR/L3/CIV/160 Issue 1 published 6<sup>th</sup> June 2009
    - i. Section 3, bullet 4: The car park shall be integrated with all other travel modes that use the station, for example public transport, walking and cycling.
    - ii. Section 3, bullet 5: The car park shall provide appropriate access for all potential users such as the emergency services, maintenance teams from Network Rail, the Station Facility Owner (SFO) and the Train Operating Company (TOC), and other train operating staff.
    - iii. Section 3, bullet 7: The car park shall comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, the Accessible Train and Station Design for Disabled People: A Code of Practice, and BS 8300: Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people.

<sup>1</sup> Northumberland Local Plan Appendix D may be found at <https://northumberland-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/planning/localplan/reg19?pointId=s15409149085671#section-s15409149085671> (sourced 04 Oct 2021)

- iv. Section 12.1.1: Station access to provide for taxi set-down and pick-up; public kiss-and-ride; rail replacement buses; general bus services; emergency vehicles.
    - v. Section 12.1.2: Parking to include short and long stay, mobility impaired parking; motorcycle and cycle parking; station maintenance / management /contractor parking; lineside maintenance vehicles
    - vi. Section 14: Access and parking provision for disabled people
  - c. Further specifications agreed with Northumberland County Council officers
    - i. Disabled spaces to be 6% of the total
    - ii. Min 3m width parking bays for Electric Vehicle charging vehicles
    - iii. 5m carriageway widths between two kerbs
    - iv. 6.4m-7.3m width for two-way links and accesses
    - v. Bus stops to be provided within reasonable walking distance of station platforms circa 400m, relocating bus stops where appropriate
- 7. If ~~57~~ **61** of these 150 spaces are retained for town centre use, that leaves ~~93~~ **89** spaces remaining for Northumberland Line use. Since the Covid-adjusted interim demand for the Northumberland Line is forecast to be 99 spaces in 2028, this indicates that the demand would exceed capacity by ~~six~~ **ten** spaces only four years after operations begin.
- 8. It would be unacceptable for Northumberland County Council to invest in a public scheme intended to boost the local economy, only to find that demand exceeded capacity within four years, even when taking an extremely pessimistic view of the effects of Covid, and an optimistic view of the number of spaces deliverable within the land space. A more realistic view would simply mean demand exceeded capacity even earlier.
- 9. It is necessary, therefore, to provide for the additional spaces expected, either by building up in the same space on the existing land, or by building out sideways onto the Malhotra land.
- 10. The option of building up has been assessed by developing a preliminary station car park design including a decked structure of 80m x 32m surface area plus surface level parking for disabled spaces, circulation and drop-off etc.. This would provide approximately 246 spaces and would be sufficient for the 2039 Northumberland Line high forecast demand, provided town centre parking were still constrained to no more than ~~53%~~ **49%** of pre-covid levels eighteen years from now. The total car park scheme cost is estimated to cost approximately ~~£5.4m~~ **£5.3m**, based on cost rates using the latest industry standard SPONS data.
- 11. A fully at grade car park extending onto the Malhotra land could provide approximately 270 spaces, providing for either 100% of 2039 highest Northumberland Line demand and 75% of pre-Covid high street demand, or 100% of pre-Covid high street demand and 84% of the 2039 highest Northumberland Line demand. The cost of building sideways out onto the Malhotra land is estimated using the same SPONS source data and comes to £1.6m plus the cost of the Malhotra land. The Malhotra land, has been estimated to be between £300k and £450k for use as a nursing home by a specialist professional surveyor. At the upper end of this estimate, the total cost of building sideways out onto the Malhotra land becomes £2.1m.
- 12. The cost differential to avoid using the Malhotra land is significant at more than £3m. The cost would be higher if it became necessary to retrofit a second deck to a popular car park no more than four years after the Northumberland Line is operational, because the additional logistics involved would make the installation even more expensive.
- 13. Although it would be theoretically possible to only use part of the Malhotra land, there would come a tipping point where the remaining space were uneconomical for the proposed nursing home. We cannot assess what this tipping point would be for the Malhotra group.
- 14. However, the Northumberland Line project would not wish to be unduly constrained by a partial land take and retain the risk of still having to provide a raised deck level earlier than otherwise necessary. Neither would it wish to accept suppressed demand if the scheme proves as popular as anticipated, or the Covid impact long term were less than anticipated.

15. In summary, the need for the Malhotra land derives from the fact that, even when taking an extremely pessimistic view of the Covid impact, demand will outstrip capacity within four years of the Northumberland Line being operational.
16. The most cost-effective use of tax-payer's money to provide the additional capacity is to use the Malhotra land, which would be expected to provide suitable capacity for at least the first fifteen years of operations.

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## **APPENDIX B ASHINGTON STATION CAR PARK SCENARIOS**

Please see the following pages.