



PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL CAR PARKING AT MORPETH STATION

1. The Problem

The car parks at Morpeth station (both the Northern Rail and Northumberland County Council controlled car parks) are now regularly full by 09:00 am each day (Monday to Friday), if not earlier. This is causing significant problems to rail passengers wishing to park at the station but finding no space to do so. Some drivers are parking illegally and getting tickets; others are diverting to nearby residential streets and parking there, and some passengers are missing their train whilst they work out what to do or indeed giving up the idea of rail travel.

There is no adequate bus service to the station, the nearest stops being in Shields Road and access from some areas of Morpeth and its environs requires either a change of buses or a long walk up a very steep hill from the Mafeking Park roundabout.

The problem will be further compounded by the proposed loss of 14 spaces outside the station buildings to the business units created by the renovation of the derelict station buildings, being managed by the Greater Morpeth Development Trust (GMDT). In general, SENRUG supports the GMDT scheme but believes the loss of parking spaces for rail passengers must be off-set by the creation of new ones. Therefore the development provides the opportunity to carry out a wider review of the cope to increase parking provision at Morpeth Station.

2. The Solution

SENRUG has identified a total of 80 new parking spaces can be created (see attached plan), which after the loss of 14 to the GMDT scheme, gives a net gain of 66, of which it believes 6 should be designated for short stay parking. The gain of 60 regular spaces represents a 40% increase over existing long stay capacity (see table).

SENRUG does not propose any changes to the current provision of disabled parking spaces (currently 4) but believes the 2 disabled spaces in the Council controlled car park should be moved to the Northern Rail controlled car park, much nearer to the station facilities. SENRUG does not propose any change to the current provision of 2 spaces for electric vehicles in the Council controlled car park.

3. Funding

As the development of the derelict station buildings will create a loss of 14 spaces, SENRUG believes it is appropriate that the developer be asked to contribute approx 21% of the cost of creating the new 80 spaces to give the net gain of 66 (21% being calculated as 14 / 66).

The remainder of the funding should come from a mixture of local authority (County and Town Council) and train operators. Although Northern Rail is the Station Facility Operator, it is possible they might obtain a contribution towards the train operator's share from East Coast and CrossCountry, the inter-city operators, since the increase in parking at the station clearly correlates with improvements to inter-city services.

The proposals are put forward at the present time so that the opportunity to obtain a reasonable contribution from the developer can be progressed as part of the planning consent, and is not lost as will happen if there is a delay in progressing the scheme.

4. Detail of Where New Car Parking Spaces Can Be Found (please refer to sketch map below)

Map Ref	Location & Description	TOTAL NEW SPACES	REGULAR	SHORT STAY (Note 1)	DISABLED
A	Waste Ground to North East of Council Car Park Extend existing car park across waste ground adjacent to north east flank, as far as the railway line perimeter fence (Note: this area is tapered due to street furniture in Coopies Lane, and angle at which railway line intersects this waste ground.	15	15	0	0
B	Waste Ground to East of Northern Rail Car Park Move entrance to Northern Rail car park approx 20 yards to east, to a position just west of existing Network Rail gate (car park extension would not extend over Network Rail power and signalling cable runs)	6	6	0	0
C	Grass Verge to South East of Council Car Park Decrease width of grass verge back to tree line; add spaces in a longitudinal direction.	15	15	0	0
D	Bushes to North & South Perimeter in Centre of Northern Rail Car Park	4	4	0	0

	Remove bushes; tarmac and create more spaces (2 each side).				
E	Grass Area to South of Coopies Lane, Opposite Station Buildings (Council land) Provide access from Coopies Lane and create parking spaces here. Note: not as far as junction with Shields Road so parked cars will not obscure view of junction., and space is reserved should an earlier plan to remodel the Shields Road / Coopies Lane junction to a roundabout ever go ahead)	40	34	6	0
n/a	Council Car Park Convert 2 disabled spaces to general use, in exchange for converting 2 general use spaces at western end of Northern Rail car park (adjacent to station entrance and ticket office) to disabled use.	0	2	0	-2
n/a	Northern Rail Car Park Convert the 2 most western general use spaces to disabled use, in exchange for 2 disabled spaces in Council car park being converted to general use. Disable persons will then have a parking facility adjacent to the station rather than 100 yards walk away.	0	-2	0	2
n/a	Car Park Outside of Station Buildings (Northern Rail) Loss of these spaces to rail passengers, in connection with redevelopment of derelict station buildings; spaces re-allocated to newly created business units.	-14	-14	0	0
	Total New Spaces	66	60	6	0
	Existing Provision				
	Northern Rail Car Park	63	63	0	0
	Council Car Park (note 2)	77	75	0	2
	Outside Station Buildings	16	14	0	2
	Total Existing Provision (note 2)	156	152	0	4
	Total with New Spaces Added (note 2)	222	212	6	4
	Percentage Increase (Regular spaces only)		40%		

Note 1: Short Stay car parking is intended for drop-off and pick-up, and those wishing to visit the station during the day to purchase or collect tickets. Suggestion 40 minutes max

Note 2: Not including 2 spaces in the Council Car Park reserved for electric vehicles

5. Other Relevant Points

There would be merit in reversing the entrance and exit of the Northern Rail car park, so that the exit faces the entrance to the Council car park, making it easier to search for a space in both car parks sequentially. This would require re-alignment of the new entrance (current exit) and re-alignment of the marked parking bays. The work would not change the actual number of car parking spaces overall.

SENUG recognises that the more facilities are improved at Morpeth Station the more popular rail travel will become, adding yet more pressure on parking spaces. Whilst SENUG strongly supports increasing car parking capacity, SENUG also recognises this needs to be augmented with other measures for creating non car access to the station. SENUG strongly campaigns for local bus services to serve the station turning circle as well. SENUG's proposals for bus services to the station can be seen in our letter to Arriva Buses of 20 Aug 2012 available at:

<http://www.senrug.co.uk/downloads/DocumentsIssued/120820ArrivaBusNorthumberlandReIntegratedTransport.pdf>. For this reason, SENUG is opposed to creating any parking spaces (regular, short stay or disabled) within the bus turning circle which should be kept clear for future public bus operations.

SENUG is opposed to the introduction of charges for parking at the station as this would be a strong deterrent to rail travel, and would hit regular commuters particularly hard, representing potentially a 50% increase on commuting costs.

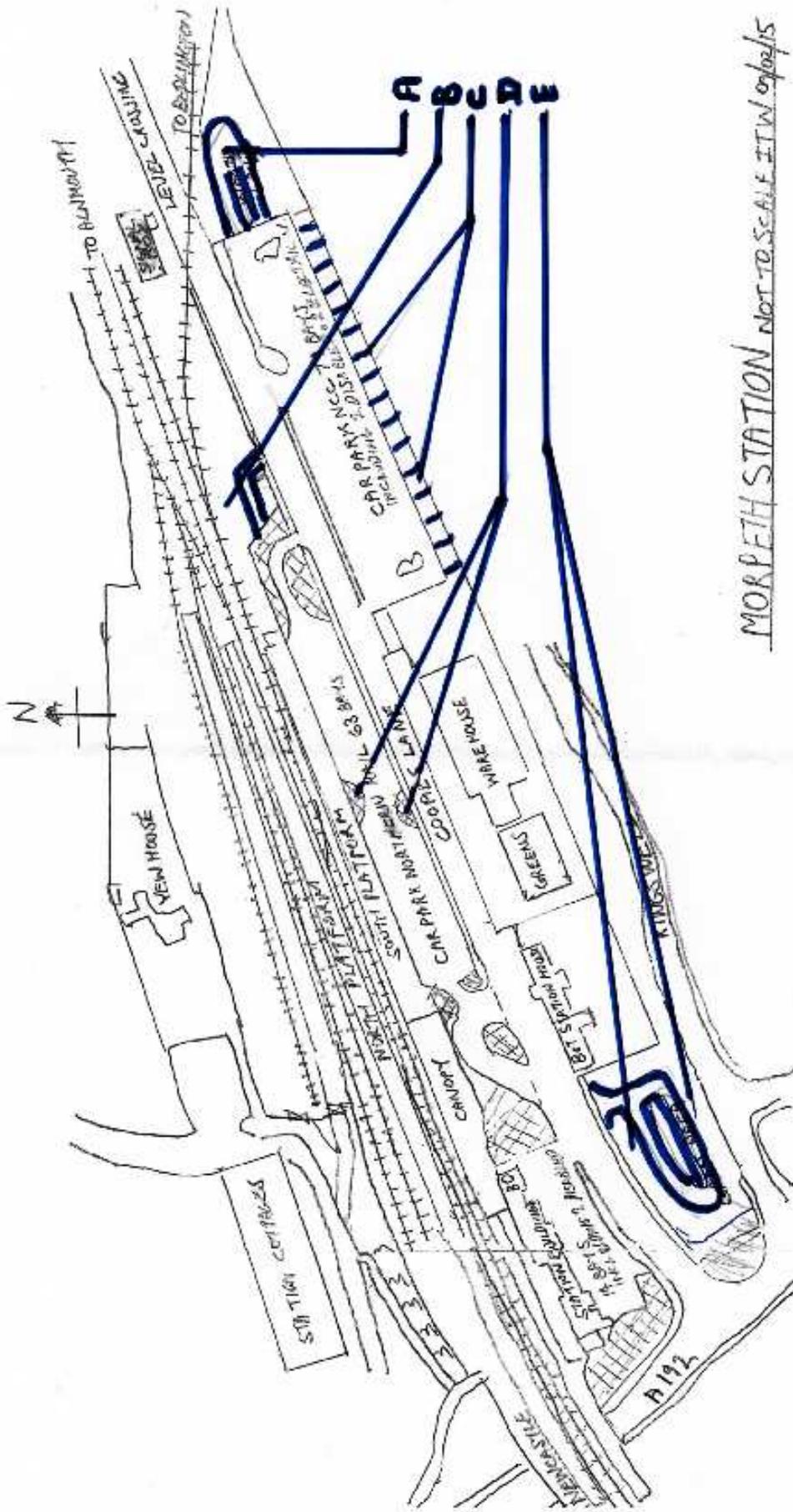
SENUG does not support the de-yellow lining of Coopies Lane, but does believe funding should be found to create the additional parking spaces, as set out in this paper.

6. Recommended Actions

1. Working party set up between Northern Rail and Northumberland County Council to urgently confirm number of spaces that can be created, identify and overcome legal issues and establish costs. SENUG to have observer status in the group.
2. Northumberland County Council's Transport Team to work closely with planning department to ensure that an appropriate contribution from the developer is obtained.

End

(Map follows)



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