

From: Dennis Fancett
Sent: 17 April 2015 11:46
To: [Northern Rail Stakeholder Relationship Manager - Name Removed]
Subject: Parking Charges at Morpeth & Cramlington

Hi [Name Removed]

Thank you for your call earlier in the week advising that Northern Rail will be introducing charges for car parking at Morpeth and Cramlington (and other stations).

I appreciate the courtesy of the call and finding out from you in this way rather than indirectly from other sources.

But we are bitterly disappointed as we feel this is a very retrograde step that will undo a lot of SENRUG's work over the last few years promoting rail travel from these stations. We'd be interested to see the business case specific for these stations showing revenue gain from parking charges vis revenue lost from passengers who choose or are otherwise obliged to stop using Northern's rail services as a result.

If it is the case we are facing an inevitability, then we would like to make a few practical comments and suggestions as to the implementation:

- You mentioned a charge in the region of £2 per day. We are most concerned about the impact on daily commuters using the train for work. With a daily return to Newcastle being £4.60, a further £2 for car parking making £6.60 represents a 30% increase. This is in an area where many people are only earning the Minimum Wage. Can a way be found of significantly reducing the impact for regular local commuters, perhaps giving a free parking "add on" or other discount for Northern Rail monthly or longer season ticket holders, even if it means occasional users pay a higher charge to compensate. Even this would not cover every scenario eg part time workers who can't benefit from season tickets, but it would go a long way to keeping the cost of travel to work manageable rather than alienating Northern Rail's regular customers.
- At Morpeth, can you please ensure the charging mechanism and ticket machine are programmed to allow parking for more than the current day. Eg pay for 24 hours or 36 hours rather than just till midnight. So passenger travelling to London one day but returning the next can legitimately purchase a ticket to cover their length of stay in the car park.
- At Cramlington, is it possible to wait until the promised CIS is installed before introducing the charges, so hapless Cramlington commuters can at least see some investment at the station which has been neglected for decades and has no facilities whatsoever, in return for the extra charges.

- Also at Cramlington, what was the result of the BTP action promised by Northern Rail to stop non rail users parking at the station (ie Royal Mail workers employed at the sorting office next door)

Finally, if Northern Rail is charging for parking, SENRUG and the wider community will expect Northern to make some investment in the parking facilities. In this respect, what is Northern Rail's response to the SENRUG proposals for implementing more spaces at Morpeth, which I emailed you on 23rd February?

Is the information embargoed by the way? I have told our committee, but some of them seemed to know already.

Kindest regards

Dennis Fancett

Chair, SENRUG: The South East Northumberland Rail User Group

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Re-open the Ashington Blyth & Tyne Line:

Hirst Park Middle School in Ashington won SENRUG's Schools' competition to create a 7-10 minute DVD setting out their reasons for re-opening the line. See their winning DVD here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FThHXmIO6S0&list=UUhvolzTGcXIU-o62euglwSg>