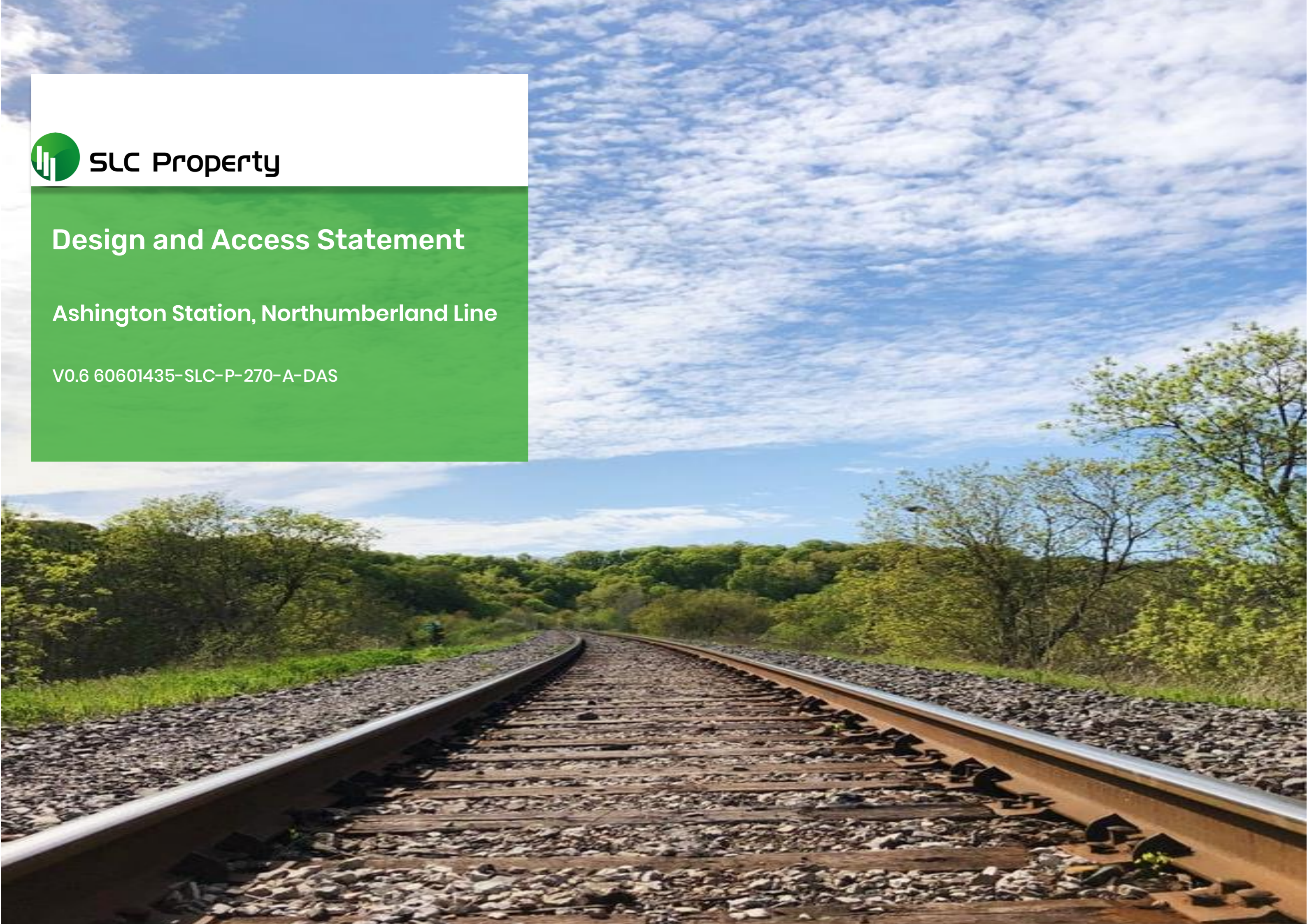




# Design and Access Statement

Ashington Station, Northumberland Line

V0.6 60601435-SLC-P-270-A-DAS



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# Document Control

## Version Control

Version No.	Date	Created/Modified by	Notes
V.06	22/02/21	AC	Final for submission

## Approvals

Version No.	Name of approver	Title & organisation	Date
V.05	ARC	Planning Director	29/01/2021
V.06	PG	Chartered Planner	22/02/2021

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of Statement

1.1.1 The purpose of this Design and Access Statement (DAS) is to set out the design rationale for the submitted scheme. The statement identifies the site constraints and other technical requirements that have informed the submitted scheme.

1.1.2 This DAS has been prepared to support an application for planning permission for a proposed new railway station and associated infrastructure at Ashington (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). The station is one of six new railway stations proposed to be delivered as part of a plans to re-introduce passenger services on the Northumberland Line.

1.1.3 This document is to be read in conjunction with the drawings and documents submitted in support of the planning application as listed in Table A.

## 1.2 Overview of the scheme

1.2.1 A new station is proposed at Ashington to serve passengers using new passenger rail services on the Northumberland Line, formerly known as the 'Ashington, Blyth & Tyne Line'. [the scheme]. The proposed scheme will assist in facilitating access to, and encouraging use of, a more sustainable transport mode than the private car for people in the Ashington locality.

1.2.2 The overarching objective of the Northumberland Line project is to stimulate economic growth and regeneration across South East Northumberland and the North East more widely. The scheme is designed to improve access and connectivity between the areas surrounding the railway by providing a reliable, rapid passenger rail service from the larger towns along the old Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Railway route into Newcastle City Centre.

1.2.3 It is anticipated the scheme will deliver improved access for local people to jobs and recreational activities across the North East. It is anticipated that improved accessibility will increase demand for housing locally, and act as a catalyst for inward investment to support the wider regeneration of Northumberland and the North East more widely.

1.2.4 The scheme will assist in improving access to areas not currently directly served by passenger rail services, encouraging a modal shift to rail travel; generating new rail passengers and diverting some existing rail passengers to the new stations – releasing capacity at existing park and ride sites to enable further growth. The proposed development will deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits to the local area and Northumberland more widely.

## 1.3 The Scheme

1.3.1 The Northumberland Line proposes to offer a direct passenger service between Newcastle Central to Ashington. It is anticipated that the proposed service will call at the existing Manors railway station and at six proposed new station sites at Northumberland Park, Seaton Delaval, Newsham, Bebside, Bedlington and Ashington. Figure 1.1 illustrates the locations of the six new railway stations.

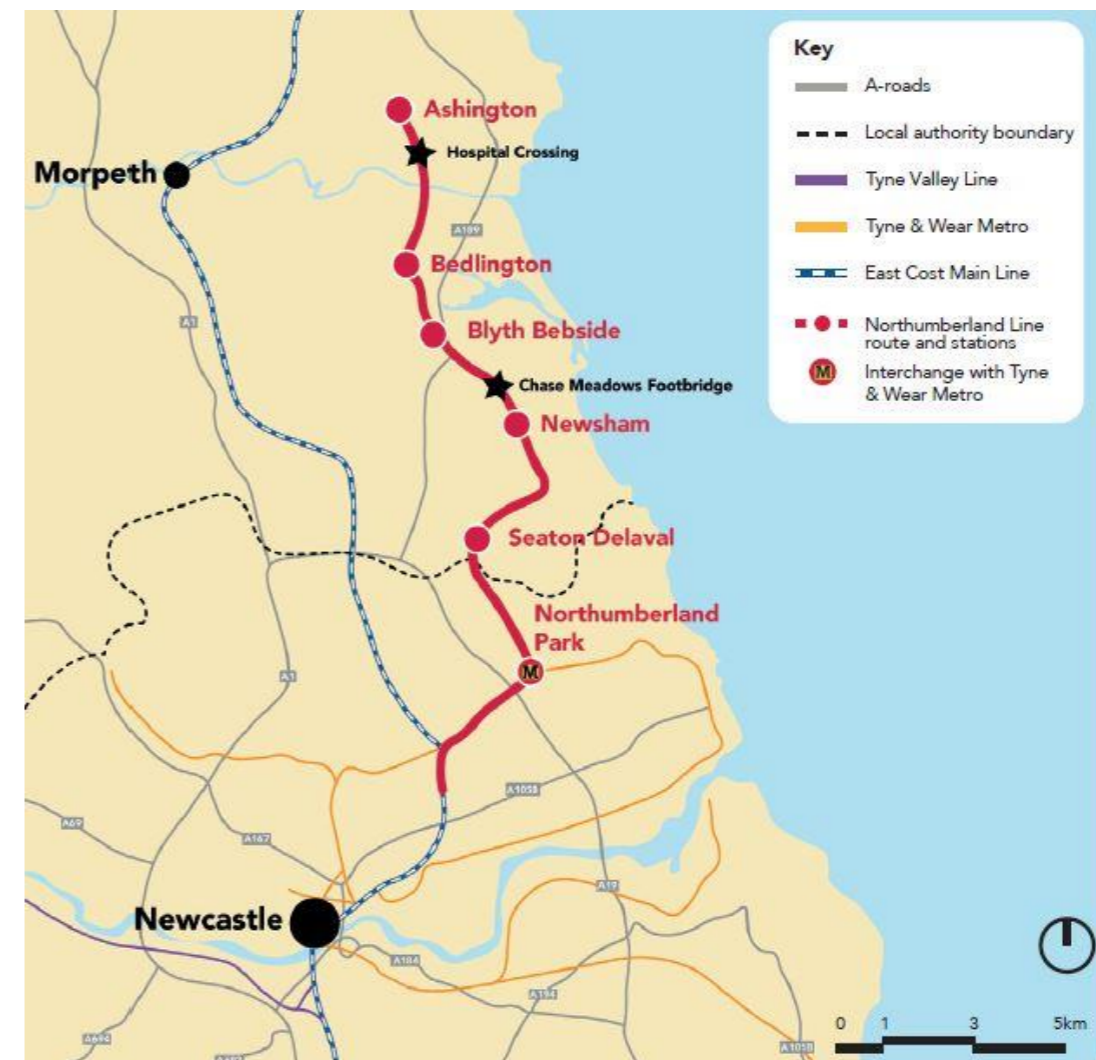


Figure 1.1 Northumberland Line

## 1.4 Planning Application

1.4.1 Northumberland County Council (NCC) seeks full planning approval for the construction of a new railway station, associated car parking and other associated works on land east of Kenilworth Road, Ashington, west of Ashington town centre and immediately south of Station Road (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').

1.4.2 This DAS has been submitted in support of an application which seeks planning permission for:

*'Construction, including engineering and other temporary and permanent works to provide for: a new railway station; pedestrian lift(s), new highway access; modifications to highways; car, cycle and other parking; a new platform; facilities ancillary to the station; lighting; soft and hard landscaping; surface and subsurface drainage; utility and other services; boundary treatment, and new pedestrian crossing and cycle access facilities'*

1.4.3 Extensive and ongoing discussions with local planning authority officers have shaped the submitted proposals and the supporting information.

## 1.5 Proposed Development

1.5.1 The scheme includes the construction of a single facing platform approximately 100m in length serving a new terminus bay platform line adjacent to the existing railway corridor.

### The station is proposed to be served by the following:

- New 275 space car park, including 6% electric vehicle charging spaces, and 6% accessible parking spaces
- Cycle storage facility for 29 bicycles
- Car/Taxi drop off point
- Lift access from the existing Wansbeck Square footbridge that links to John Street and the east of the railway.

The above requirements were agreed as part of the production of a scheme specification which has subsequently been approved by Northumberland County Council.



Figure 1.2 Extract from Site Location Plan 60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-LEP-000015

## 2 Supporting Documents

2.1.1 The Design and Access Statement is to be read in conjunction with the full suite of information submitted in support of the planning application. Table A presents a schedule which details those plans, surveys and assessment reports which have been submitted for consideration in the determination of the planning application.

**Table A Document plan and references**

Document/ Plan reference number	Name of Document/ Plan
60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-LEP-000015	Site Location Plan
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-PS	Planning Statement
60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000002	Existing General Arrangement
60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000003	Existing General Arrangement for Planning
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070003	Car Park Existing Public Utilities Layout
60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000003	Proposed General Arrangement
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-ECV-000002	General Arrangement Level Option
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EST-001301	Proposed Wansbeck Sq Lift Access General Arrangement
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EST-001302	Proposed Wansbeck Sq Lift Access Side Elevation
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EST-001303	Proposed Wansbeck Sq Lift Access Front Elevation
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070001	Highways General Arrangement
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070002	Highways typical cross sections, Existing and Proposed
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070004	Traffic sign and road marking layout
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070006	Highways Drainage Layout
60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070007	Vehicle Tracking
60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000006	Platform Drainage General Arrangement
60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000007	Existing and Proposed Sections
60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-EPT-000067	E&P Proposed Lighting Layout
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-LTVO	Ashington - Landscape, Townscape and Visual Overview

Document/ Plan reference number	Name of Document/ Plan
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-LTVO-FIGURES	Ashington - LTVA Figures
60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-EEN-000502	Ashington - Landscape Design
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-DAS	Design and Access Statement
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-ECIA & BNG	Ecological Impact Assessment (including net gain statement)
60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-REP-EEN-000032	Arboriculture Assessment
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-SCE	Statement of Community Engagement
TA_Northumberland Line - Ashington	Transport Assessment
Ashington_FRA_final	Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment
Ashington_Heritage_Statement	Heritage assessment (including archaeology assessment)
Ashington Railway Station NIA Report_2	Noise Impact Assessment
Ashington Station PSSR	Geo-technical Desk Based Assessment (including coal mining risk assessment)
Ashington Station_Air Quality Assessment Report_final	Air Quality Impact Assessment
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-HW	Health and Wellbeing Statement
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-PS	Economic Assessment (within the Planning Statement)
60601435-SLC-P-270-A-CEMP	Outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)
Ashington_Services and Utilities Statement_final	Services and utilities Statement

## 3 Application site

### 3.1 Site description and surroundings

3.1.1 The application site is located within the county of Northumberland in the centre of the town of Ashington.

3.1.2 Ashington is one of the three largest towns within Northumberland. The town is identified within the emerging Northumberland Local Plan as playing a strategic employment role for the county.

3.1.3 The site is currently used as a council operated hardstanding car park facility, with adjacent amenity grassland to the west and a brownfield area to the south.

3.1.4 Wansbeck Square shopping complex is located immediately to the north of the existing car park at the site. There is an existing pedestrian ramp which provides access from the car park into the shopping centre and to Station Road (the main shopping street in Ashington). Ashington Memorial Garden is located immediately north of the existing amenity grassland. The railway line is bound to the east by residential and commercial uses on John Street. The site is bound to the south by residential properties on Ashbourne Crescent. The site is bound to the west by Kenilworth Road. Ashington Cricket Ground is located to the west of Kenilworth Road.

3.1.5 The site is approximately 100m south of Station Road and directly adjacent to Kenilworth Road to the west of the existing 'Ashington, Blyth & Tyne Line'.

3.1.6 The Site area is approximately 1.89 hectares.

3.1.7 The existing site is comprised of four separate areas:

1. Existing Car Park with 105 standard bays and 7 bays for disabled users
2. Brownfield site to the south
3. Amenity grassland on the west
4. Existing railway corridor

3.1.8 The boundaries of the site are formed by the following:

- To the north by Wilko shopping complex and the Ashington War Memorial Garden with Wansbeck Square and Station Road beyond.
- To the east by the partial fence/ hedgerow line to the existing railway corridor and parking along John Street beyond.
- To the south by a post & wire fence, hedge line and properties along Ashbourne Crescent and Oakland Terrace.
- To the west by Kenilworth Road and Ashington cricket club off and partially by the Ashington War Memorial Garden to the north east.

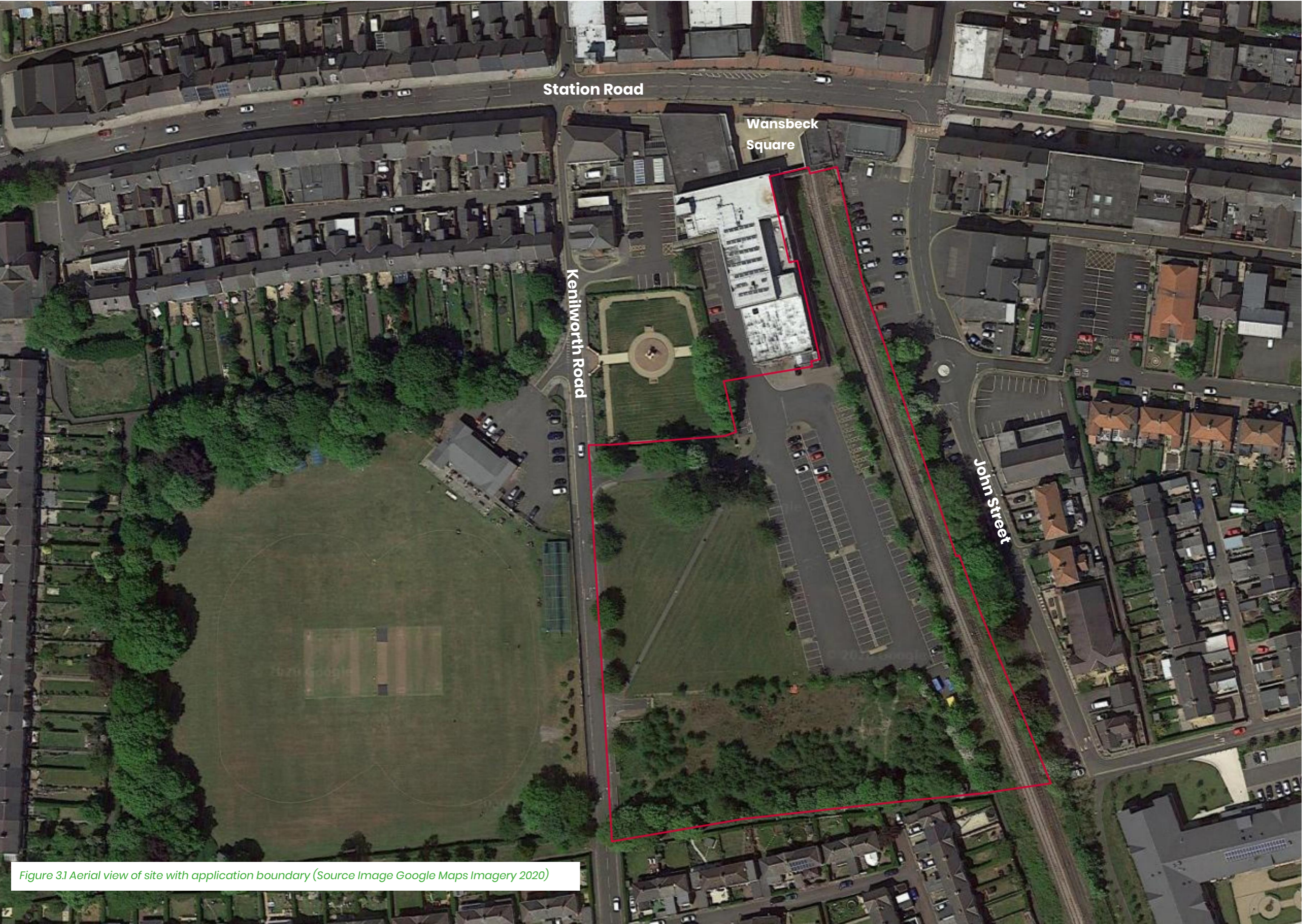
3.1.9 Within the site the land is relatively flat at 35m AOD with a slight slope to the south. Existing ramped access up is positioned from Wansbeck Square increasing in level to a footbridge leading to Station Road and stepped access down to John Street.

3.1.10 Outside of the site boundaries is a highpoint of 37m AOD at the intersection of Sheepwash Road and Bothal Bank.

3.1.11 The area immediately surrounding the site in all directions is dominated by the built form of Ashington. Within the town there are blocks of green space bound by residential and commercial properties. Further to the north, beyond Rotary Parkway, is the Ashington Community Woodland with agricultural land and Lynemouth Windfarm beyond. The east is dominated by townscape, as is the south with the River Wansbeck dividing Ashington and Stakeford townscapes. To the west is the townscape of Ashington with agricultural fields becoming a key feature approximately 2km from the site.

3.1.12 The vegetation within the local area is predominantly street trees, vegetation within small private gardens and small managed copses. At the townscape boundaries the vegetation develops into woodland to the north within Ashington Community Woodland and the tree buffers between fields; into wetlands, scrub land, and woodland to the south along the banks of the River Wansbeck and within the deans; into hedged field boundaries to the west.





Station Road

Wansbeck Square

Kenilworth Road

John Street

Figure 3.1 Aerial view of site with application boundary (Source Image Google Maps Imagery 2020)

### 3.2 Local Road Network

3.2.1 The Local Road network shown in Figure 3.2 consists of:

- Kenilworth Road;
- Green Lane;
- Station Road; and
- A196 North Seaton Road



Figure 3.2 Extract image from Transport Statement (Source: Google Maps, 2020) showing the local road network.

### 3.3 Public Rights of Way and other Routes

3.3.1 There are no Public Rights of Way within the site.

3.3.2 Figure 3.3 shows the Public Right of Way at the Hospital Crossing approximately 180m south of the site. A permissive path runs south west to north east through the amenity grassland.

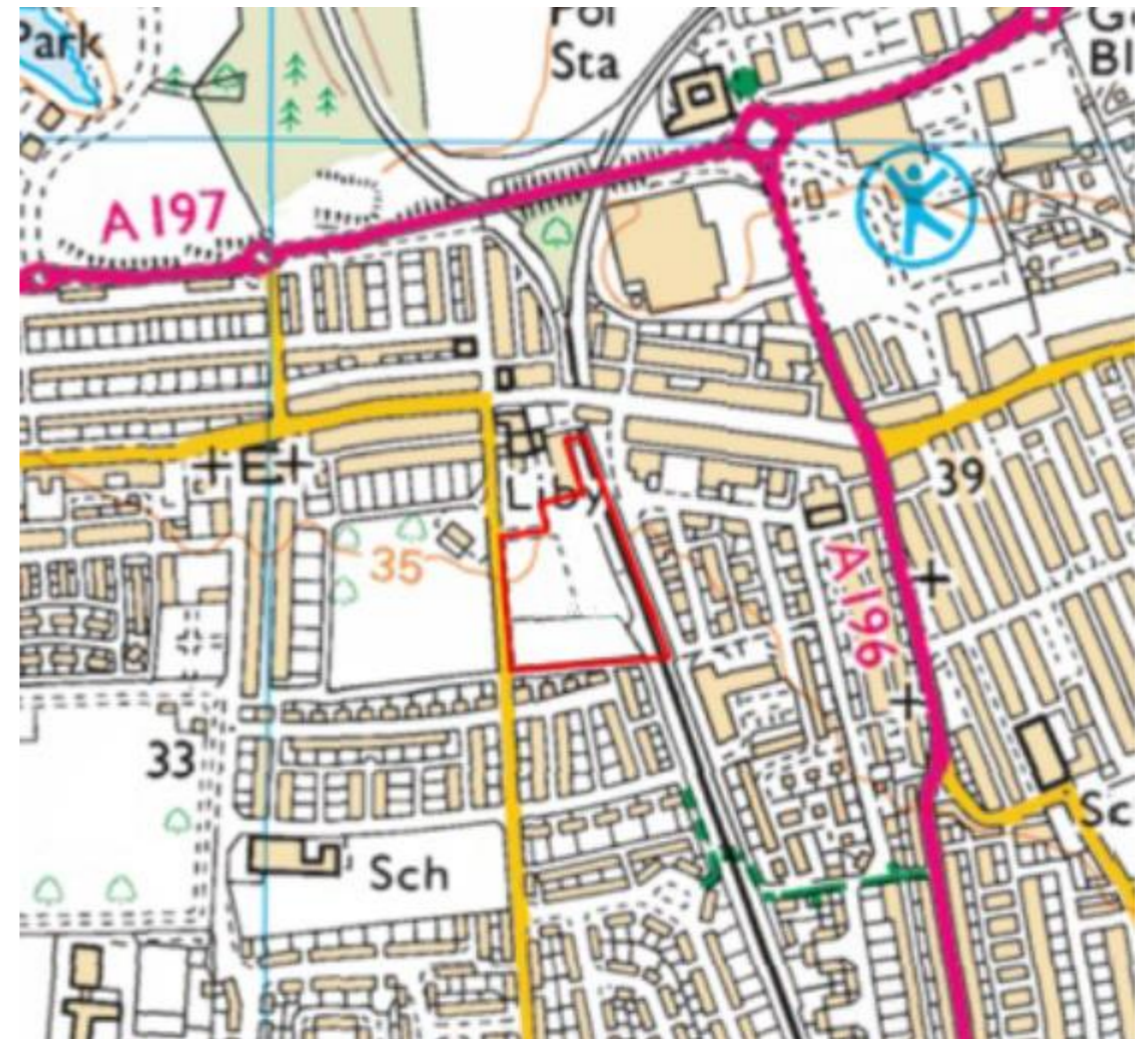


Figure 3.3 Ashington red line boundary on OS Map showing Public Rights of Way

### 3.4 Existing access to highway

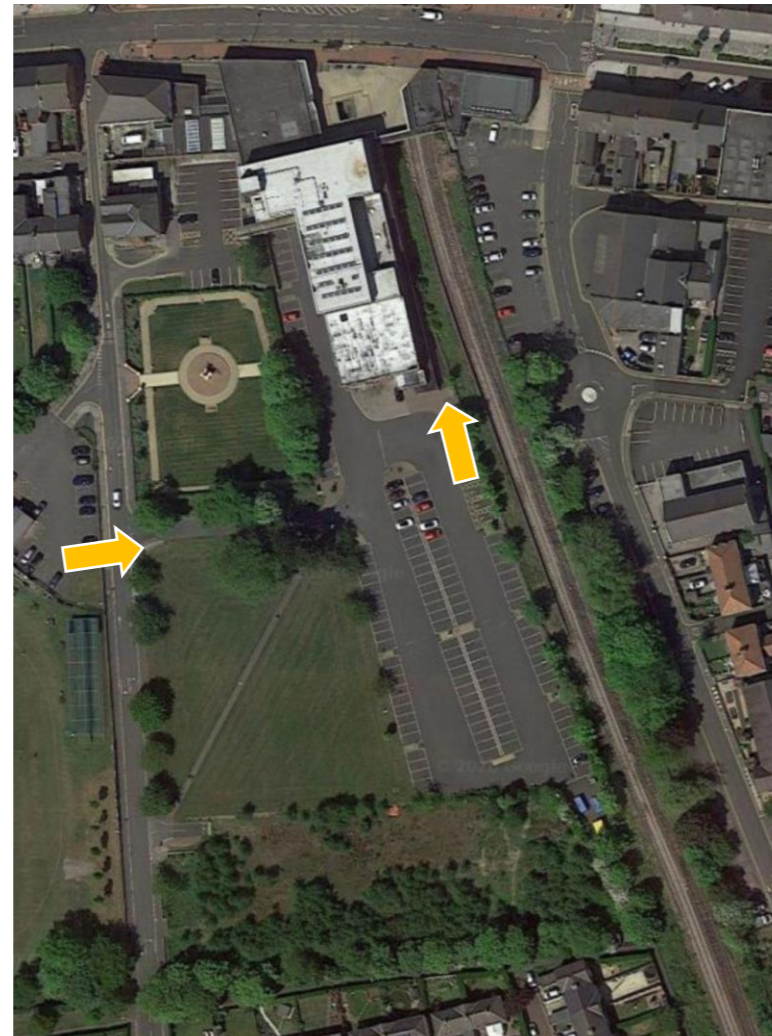
- 3.4.1 The site is currently partially occupied by the Local Authority Station Yard car park. Vehicular access is provided to Station Yard car park site from the west off Kenilworth road, via a priority T-junction. From the north, access to Kenilworth road is from Station Road. From the south, access is from Green Lane.
- 3.4.2 Kenilworth Road is subject to 20mph speed limit and runs in a north-south direction between Station Road and Green Lane. To the north, the carriageway operates a one-way system for approximately 75m running south from Station Road, beyond which it becomes a two-way carriageway. The carriageway is subject to traffic calming measures including road humps and chicanes consisting of road narrowing, with northbound traffic giving way to southbound traffic.
- 3.4.3 A pedestrian link is provided across the open greenfield space to the west of the car park, connecting to the footway provided to the east of the carriageway.
- 3.4.4 No footways are provided along the duration of the access road into the car park. Existing pedestrian access is provided via footpaths adjacent to the referenced road network in addition to an existing ramp from Wansbeck Square.



Figure 3.4 Existing vehicular and pedestrian access points. (Source: <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>) (Right)

Figure 3.5 Existing pedestrian access to the site from Wansbeck square ramp (Top Right)

Figure 3.6 Existing vehicular from Kenilworth road (Source: <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>) (Bottom right)



## 4 Site Photographs



Figure 4.1 View facing south from pedestrian foot bridge.



Figure 4.2 View of the topography to the north of Site, showing the Wilko premises between the Site and Station Road. (Source AECOM Heritage Statement)



Figure 4.3 View of the site facing north-east from Kenilworth Road.



Figure 4.4 View of the site facing south-west from the pedestrian ramp at the north-east corner of the site.



Figure 4.5 View facing south-west towards the site from the pedestrian foot bridge east of the railway corridor.



Figure 4.6 Detail of services in Kenilworth Road to the west of Library Gardens and associated slightly raised area within the Site, looking south-east. (Source AECOM Heritage Statement)



Figure 4.7 General view across Library Gardens open space within the Site, looking south-west. (Source AECOM Heritage Statement)

## 5 Historical context

- 5.1.1 For further details about the history of the application site please refer to the Heritage Statement prepared by AECOM and submitted in support of this planning application.
- 5.1.2 Ashington is situated north of Blyth and Bedlington in Northumberland, North East of England. Traditionally the town was a mining community around the former Ashington Colliery.
- 5.1.3 The proposed location for Ashington station is on the site of the former railway station of the same name (closed in 1965), on the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Railway approximately 70m south of the Station Road overbridge which crosses the railway. The proposed location of the car park is on land formerly occupied by railway sidings and a goods shed.
- 5.1.4 The former station opened in 1878 by the Blyth & Tyne Railway Company before its closure in 1965 when passenger services ceased on the line.
- 5.1.5 There are no designated heritage assets within or directly adjacent the Site.
- 5.1.6 The initial 500m study area around the Site contained one listed building, designated at Grade II: Ashington Co-Operative Society premises [1041396]. The Proposed Development does not have the capacity to impact on this asset, and the study area for setting assessment was reduced subsequently to 250m.
- 5.1.7 There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Protected Wrecks within the study area.

## 5.2 Site History

- 5.2.1 The First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1866 shows Ashington Colliery, c. 1.5km to the west of the Site. Before this date, Ashington was represented by a single farmstead located to the south of the present settlement. By 1866, the colliery had been established with a single engine house, smithy and railway line which connected to the East Coast Mainline to the west. The colliery was isolated within the landscape with terraced housing to the east; Cross Row and Long Row.

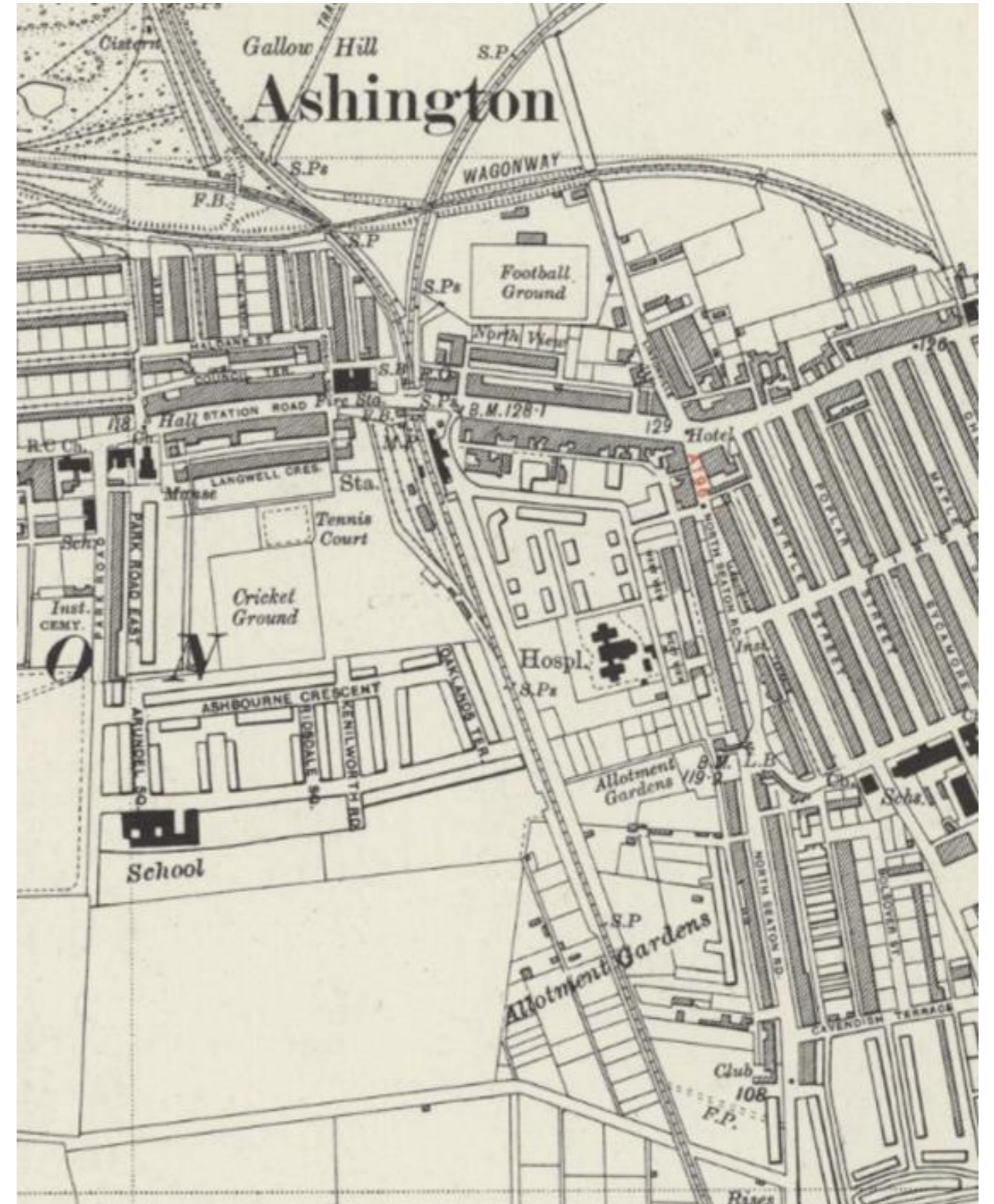


Figure 5.1 Site Location Plan, Ordnance Survey Map 1938 (Source: <https://maps.nls.uk/index.html>)

- 5.2.2 By 1923 Ashington had significantly expanded. Although more terraces had been established around Ashington, it was New Hirst which had undergone a more extensive expansion by this date with terraces appearing to the south and west. Both settlements had expanded along Station Road. In the eastern block of terraces, a mines rescue station was opened in 1913, which had been known as the National Union of Miners Hall. The station was one of a number established by the consortium of Durham and Northumberland coal companies.
- 5.2.3 Referring to the 1924 OS Map the Heritage Statement identifies that Ashington Station appeared to have expanded accordingly with a number of structures appearing on the main station side (east). Within the Site, by 1924 additional railway sidings had been constructed and oil tanks and other structures laid down, west of the railway line.
- 5.2.4 By c. 1950 the building to the north of the Site is labelled as the library, and east of this, additional station lines with associated platforms had been constructed within the Site, west of the existing line. To the south of the library and covering a large portion of the Site, the area functioned as a large library garden. To the south of this, at the very southern end of the Site, a large structure was constructed in c. 1960, Essendene Care Home, which has since been removed. According to LiDAR data, this particular area has been heavily disturbed, and possibly infilled.
- 5.2.5 The line was closed to passengers as part of Beeching's reforms of the 1960s and only the platforms survive. The railway itself remains in use as a goods line, although the signal box, north of Station Road Overbridge, was decommissioned in 2010 and subsequently demolished to ground level.
- 5.2.6 By the late 20th century and into the early 21st century Ashington Colliery became an open cast coal mine, which spanned an area c. 1.25km by 940m, but has now been re-landscaped.



*Figure 5.2 – Ashington station c1911 looking north (Source: Photograph by John Mann, <http://www.disused-stations.org.uk>)*

## 6 Assessment of Local Context

### 6.1 Physical Context

- 6.1.1 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) NZ 27301 87634.
- 6.1.2 The site is bounded to the north by a war memorial garden and the existing Wilko store, with Wansbeck Square and Station Road further to the north, to the west by Ashington cricket club off Kenilworth road, to the south by properties along Ashbourne Crescent and Oakland Terrace, and to the east by the existing railway line. The site is currently a combination of existing NCC parking, open green space, and 3rd party land to the southern boundary.
- 6.1.3 The site is currently used as a carpark for local shops, an area of public open space, an unmaintained field, and a section of the railway corridor. At the eastern edge of the site, the carparking area and railway corridor are divided by a post and wire fencing with small trees, scrub, and grasses growing within the corridor. The public open space is a flat rectangular grassed area crossed via a footpath from the south-west corner to the north-east. Along Kenilworth Road is a footpath lined with five trees; the north-east corner of the space contains a copse of medium to large trees in good health which creates a green entrance to the area; while the eastern boundary of the open space is lined with trees which are in poor condition. A number of medium to large trees within the public open space and the trees along Kenilworth Road are two notable and positive landscape features within the site.
- 6.1.4 To the north of Station Road is a mix of residential and retail space. Ashington high street is to the north east along Station Road which has a number of retail and hospitality units. In all directions, the immediate site vicinity is surrounded by residential areas with localised areas of green space within.
- 6.1.5 The town of Morpeth is approximately 7.4km to the west and the village of Newbiggin-by-the-sea is approximately 3.6km to the east.
- 6.1.6 The station location was selected following a feasibility and option selection process. The proposal will make the area more accessible generating opportunities for growth and regeneration within Ashington and the surrounding areas. The twice hourly service will also provide improved connectivity to the economic centres of Northumberland as well as Newcastle city region and onward travel opportunities including connectivity with Nexus Metro services from both Northumberland Park and Newcastle Central stations.

### 6.2 Economic Context

- 6.2.1 Northumberland County Council is promoting the delivery of six new railway stations as part of the re-introduction of passenger rail services to the Northumberland Line. The scheme will improve transport connectivity within, and beyond, South East Northumberland.
- 6.2.2 Ashington is an industrial town in South East Northumberland that is struggling to overcome social deprivation following the decline and closure of the mining industry in the 1980s and 1990s. There are redevelopment opportunities within the town, with sites proposed to be allocated for development through the emerging Local Plan and at Portland Park, that will deliver strategic economic benefits. However, for residents and visitors without access to a car or van, they are currently reliant on the bus network for mobility. Journey times to key destinations by bus are often at least twice as long as the car, which is hindering the economic growth of the town.
- 6.2.3 Connecting Ashington to the heavy rail network will bring substantial benefits for both residents and people visiting the town. Rail will provide quicker journey times to key destinations, which are faster than the bus and are comparable to the car. This will not only improve accessibility to employment, education and leisure opportunities, it will also encourage modal shift from existing car users and have environmental benefits through a reduction in traffic congestion and car emissions.
- 6.2.4 Forecasting work undertaken predicts that users will use the rail line to travel to/from Ashington and other communities along the Northumberland Line, with other users traveling to Newcastle or beyond. Notably, 25% of rail trips will be made by people who would not have made the trip had the passenger service not been introduced.
- 6.2.5 The Northumberland Line presents Ashington with a great opportunity to help address deprivation, bring economic growth to the town, and connect residents to the wider North East region. This will help to reverse the socio-economic problems that currently exist in Ashington and result in a much more prosperous future for residents of the town.
- 6.2.6 The Northumberland Line, and proposed railway stations will act as a much-needed catalyst for economic development and growth in the south east Northumberland area. The area has faced, and will continue to face, economic challenges, which have been inherent in the region since the early 1990s with the decline of the mining and manufacturing industries. This has resulted in high levels of unemployment and social deprivation across the area.

### **6.3 Social Context**

- 6.3.1 The new railway station at Ashington has been designed to improve accessibility and connectivity between the locality and the North East more widely. The scheme will assist in improving access for residents to employment opportunities, and by virtue of the improved access to the area will assist in encouraging businesses to locate in the local area, providing improved employment and training opportunities for local people and improving the range of services available for local people.
- 6.3.2 The scheme will encourage a modal shift from the private car to rail travel, reducing the reliance on the private car. The scheme will provide local businesses with an opportunity to attract labour from a wider catchment area and will allow local people to access wider networks.
- 6.3.3 The proposed station has been designed to ensure the station is inclusive and accessible for all users. Appropriate measures are included to ensure that access and facilities are available to support and encourage pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and disabled users to use the new rail services.

### **6.4 Planning Policy**

- 6.4.1 Extensive and ongoing discussions with the local planning authority have assisted in shaping the submitted scheme. The scheme has been designed based on an understanding of the relevant national and local planning policies, and other material considerations.
- 6.4.2 Details of the relevant planning policy context and case for development can be found within the submitted Planning Statement.



## 7 Involvement

### 7.1 Public Consultation

7.1.1 Extensive and ongoing discussions with local authority officers and other key stakeholders has assisted in shaping the submitted proposals. Formal pre-application enquiries have highlighted those principal considerations of the local planning authority, which the submitted scheme is considered to suitably address. Precise details of the planning consultations undertaken are set out in the submitted Planning Statement.

7.1.2 In Autumn 2020, proposals for the Northumberland Line had been sufficiently developed by Northumberland County Council to enable an informed public consultation on plans for the six new stations, new footbridges and a potential underpass, changes to level crossings and the land required to build the railway line infrastructure.

7.1.3 The public consultation took a holistic approach, comprising information about the Northumberland Line proposals as a whole rather than on a per feature or consenting route basis.

7.1.4 For the purpose of the public consultation, the railway line been divided into six geographical sections, with each section comprising a station alongside the various other elements of the Northumberland Line within the geographical boundary (e.g., footbridges and level crossing works). Moving north to south, the sections were:

- Ashington to North Seaton Viaduct, including Ashington station;
- North Seaton Viaduct to Bedlington Viaduct, including Bedlington station;
- Bedlington Viaduct to Blyth Bebside, including Blyth Bebside station;
- Chase Meadows, Newsham and New Hartley Curve, including Newsham station;
- New Hartley Curve to Holywell, including Seaton Delaval station; and
- Holywell to Benton North Junction, including Northumberland Park station.

7.1.5 The public consultation was designed to clearly distinguish between the different consenting routes and features, both in the information provided and in the feedback mechanisms. It was also made clear what feedback was being invited on, and how feedback would be considered.

### 7.2 Aims and objectives of consultation

7.2.1 The aims of the public consultation on the Northumberland Line proposals are set out below:

- To inform local elected representatives and other key stakeholders about the scope, proposals and approximate timescales involved with the delivery of the Northumberland Line and capture their feedback on the proposals presented.
- To inform local residents, businesses, community groups, interested parties, line side neighbours about the scope, proposals and approximate timescales involved with the delivery of the Northumberland Line and capture their feedback on the proposals presented.
- To provide an opportunity for a two-way dialogue through which residents, businesses and community groups could speak directly with Northumberland County Council to clarify proposals and give feedback.
- To identify any further groups or individuals whose local knowledge of the area would be beneficial in the detailed design process.
- To consider feedback in relation to the pre-application proposals to identify potential areas for improvement in terms of design, access, and other material considerations and make any amendments as appropriate.
- To enable the evaluation of responses specific to the planning application for Ashington Station.

### 7.3 2020 Public Consultation

7.3.1 The Statement of Community Engagement (SCE) submitted in support of this application demonstrates that the project has engaged stakeholders and the local community at the plan-making stage of the proposals when information on the designs was of sufficient level for informed and meaningful engagement. It further demonstrates that the project team has listened and considered the feedback which will feed into the development of the station at Ashington.

7.3.2 During the public consultation, 474 comments were received regarding Ashington Station. 251 (53%) of these comments were positive, 139 (29%) were either neutral, questions or suggestions, and 84 (18%) were negative.

7.3.3 Comments were coded across fifteen themes. Positive responses commonly focussed on the following benefits of the development: economy, interchange and connectivity and the positive impact on the immediate environ and potential for future expansion. Neutral feedback focussed on detail of the design, size of car park and connectivity via wayfinding/signage within the local area. Negative feedback focussed on the parking and impact on availability for shoppers, design with concerns raised about the single platform and its inhibiting future service expansion and location.

7.3.4 The comments are discussed in detail in the submitted Statement of Community Engagement (SCE).

7.3.5 The issues raised by stakeholders, interested parties and the public have been considered by the design team and the design and planning response can be referred to in Table 8 of the Statement of Community Involvement.

### 7.4 Summary

7.4.1 Ongoing consultation with local planning authority officers and other key stakeholders has informed the nature, extent and scope of the information submitted in support of this application.

7.4.2 The design submitted in support of this application has been informed by the feedback received during the public consultation and engagement with key stakeholders. Further details can be found in the submitted Statement of Community Engagement.

7.4.3 The detailed technical and engineering design of Ashington station is ongoing. The applicant is seeking to agree with the local planning authority that any planning permission will be conditional on the submission and approval of further details of the design of the station.

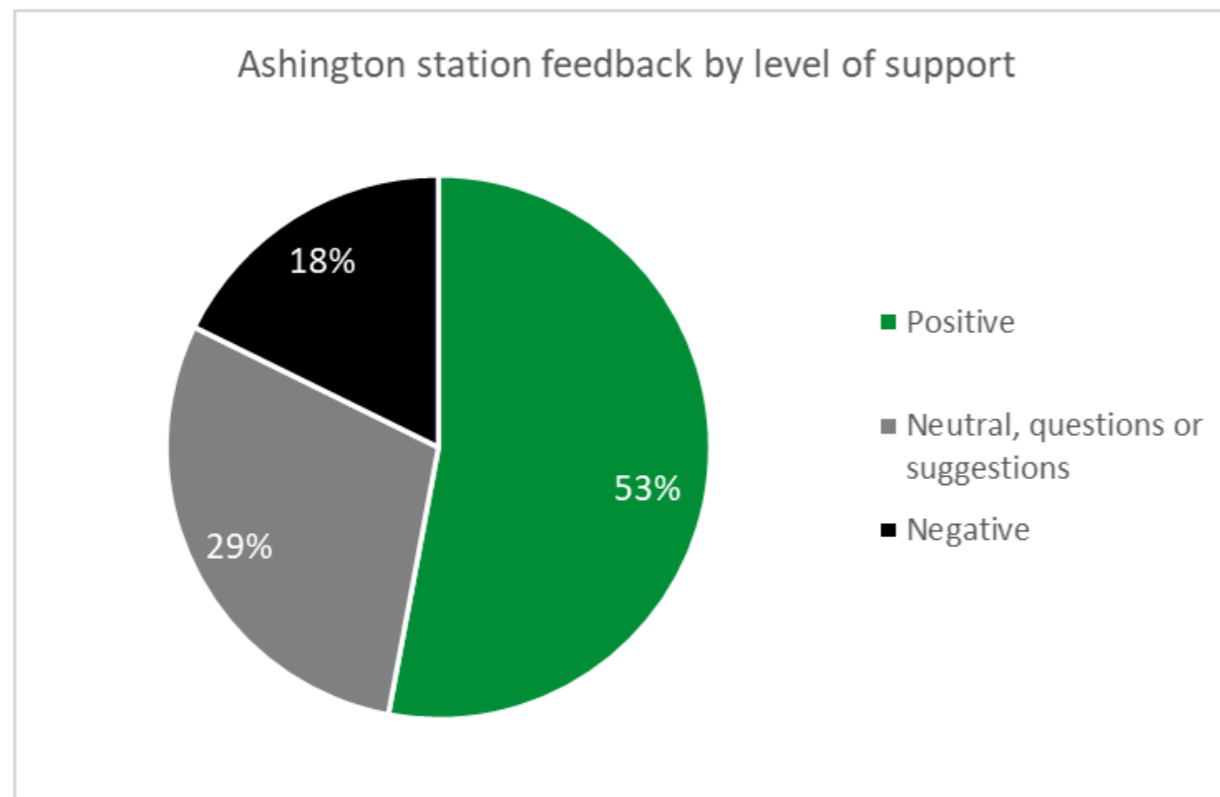


Figure 7.1 Ashington Station support for the proposals

## 8 Site Analysis

### 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 As part of design development works, a review was undertaken to establish those opportunities the scheme presents for the wider regeneration of Ashington and the surrounding areas. In addition, site specific opportunities and constraints were identified for the chosen site which have then been used to shape the proposals for the new station, culminating in the submitted scheme.

8.1.2 The identified opportunities and constraints (relating to engineering, operation and land) are presented below:

### 8.2 Key Physical and Technical Opportunities

#### 8.2.1 Railway Engineering Opportunities

- Existing rail infrastructure (1)

#### 8.2.2 Wider Transportation Network Opportunities

- Long term opportunities for growth in the Ashington area
- Access to the Newcastle jobs market for local people
- Reduce pressure on local road networks
- Improving access to the national rail network
- Encouraging a shift towards more sustainable transport modes
- Delivery of sustainable travel and reduction of emissions
- Pedestrian links providing good accessibility to local residential areas and local amenities
- Provision of sustainable transport connection
- Attracting employers to the area




#### 8.2.3 Land Opportunities

- Access to strategic road network (2)
- Scheme compliments urban setting
- Provision of compliant step free access from Wansbeck Square to the station car park (3)
- Bring back into use redundant bus stops adjacent to Wansbeck Square (4)
- Improvement/upgrading of an existing car park area (5)
- Passive provision for the trains north of Ashington in the future



Figure 8.1 Image highlighting key physical and technical opportunities (Base image source <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>)

**KEY:**

-  Existing rail infrastructure
-  Existing link to road network
-  Existing pedestrian link to Wansbeck

## 8.3 Key Physical and Technical Constraints

### 8.3.1 Railway Engineering Constraints

- Specific constraints and limits on where the station can be positioned on the existing railway line
- Positioning of station platform dictated by the location of the existing rail infrastructure and the supporting demand modelling
- Station platform position relative to the existing car park restricted by requirement to provide passive provision for future expansion of the route northwards.
- Sizing requirements of platform
- Treatment of surfaces of concourses, passageways and platforms.

### 8.3.2 Wider Transportation Network Constraints

- Freight trains from Lynemouth require a clear railway for passage past passenger services waiting at Ashington to turn back towards Newcastle
- Existing road network dictates vehicular access to the site. (Kenilworth Road is the only road local to the proposed station.) (6)
- Need for defined number of car parking spaces
- Need for car park to be safe/accessible for car/ pedestrians and cyclists.
- Delivery of cycle parking and supporting infrastructure
- Capacity and future proofing
- Consideration of noise impact
- Lighting impact on any ecological receptors
- Statutory emergency requirements

### 8.3.3 Land Constraints

- Availability of land / sufficient size to accommodate scheme
- Achievable rail access
- Existing utilities
- Existing trees and vegetation. Loss of existing designated public open space and need for replacement /relocation (7)
- Adverse impact on town centre/local businesses from the temporary loss of the existing car park on the site. Approximately 4-6 months
- Non-compliance of existing ramp from Wansbeck Square to the car park (Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations (DfT)).
- No direct access to site from the eastern residential properties.
- Protection of the war memorial and garden (8)
- Impact and visibility on residential properties on Ashbourne Crescent and Oakland Terrace. (9)



Figure 8.2 Image highlighting key physical and technical constraints (Base image source <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>)

## 9 Design Evaluation

### 9.1 Design options/ site appraisal

9.1.1 An optioneering exercise has been completed which determined that there are no other suitable or available sites which would be capable of providing the necessary footprint for a railway station and the associated infrastructure local to Ashington. The selected site was also the historical site of the original Ashington Station.

9.1.2 A station in the selected location will allow for ease of movement and access to Ashington town centre. To allow for this benefit to be maximised the site is required to be in close proximity to the town centre.

9.1.3 Options for a site to accommodate a railway station within Ashington are constrained by existing built development located adjacent to the railway line. Locating the station to the south of the preferred site was discounted as this would not have provided the same benefits, in terms of ease of movement and access, when compared to the application site which is located immediately adjacent to Wansbeck Square Shopping Centre and the high street.

9.1.4 Furthermore, the site of the proposed station is located to the south of a railway junction. Where the railway line splits, an existing freight line heads north east towards Woodhorn and Lynemouth Power Station. The disused 'Butterwell' railway line heads north towards the site of Linton Colliery. A site located to the north of the preferred station site may have precluded future re-use of the railway lines.

9.1.5 The proposed site of the railway station supports the potential ambitions for future services to the north of Ashington.

9.1.6 Overall, the site of the proposed station is considered to be the most appropriate and the most beneficial when compared against alternatives.

9.1.7 Informal dialogue with local authority officers and members was undertaken prior to the submission of a formal pre-application to Northumberland County Council as the local planning authority on the 9th August 2019. A formal response to the pre-application enquiry was received from the local planning authority on 1st October 2019.

9.1.8 The formal pre-application response did not raise any specific concerns relating to the location of the proposed new railway station at Ashington.

9.1.9 Since receipt of the pre-application response, extensive discussions have been held with Northumberland County Council local officers including those from departments for highways, environmental health, ecology, flooding and drainage.

9.1.10 Subsequent to the submission of the pre-application enquiry and receipt of the formal pre-application response from Northumberland County Council (application ref: 19/00680/PREAPP) on the

1st October 2019, several changes have been made to the proposed development at Ashington station, including:

1. Transport demand modelling confirmed the need to construct a larger car park.
2. The extent of the 'slewing' of the track to provide for the platform and the relationship with the car park has been confirmed to be adjacent to the existing car park.
3. Pedestrian connections to John Street and Station Road to be provided via a lift adjacent to the existing Wansbeck Square footbridge.



*Figure 9.1 View along the access ramp to the east side of the Wilko building linking the Site to Station Road. (Source: AECOM heritage Statement)*

## 10 Scheme evolution

### 10.1 Opportunities and Constraints

- 10.1.1 The scheme has evolved based on an understanding of the opportunities and constraints as well as characteristics. The proposed development will reinstate passenger services on the railway and reintroduce a railway station and platform into the site's setting.
- 10.1.2 Design and access arrangements for all users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists has been informed by the location of the site and to ensure that safe and convenient arrangements are provided for all users. The design and access arrangements have also given due regard to the residential properties on nearby Ashbourne Crescent and Oakland Terrace including pedestrian connections to existing alleyways behind these properties and connectivity with Station Road and the wider Ashington high street.
- 10.1.3 The site area is split into 2 distinct sections, the area for the development of the station and car park itself and the railway corridor required for the installation of the additional terminus line and lift access from Wansbeck Square.
- 10.1.4 The platform is proposed to be constructed to the west of the railway corridor. The car park is proposed to be constructed on the site of the existing car park, brownfield site and amenity grassland. Access to the car park is proposed from Kenilworth Road.

### 10.2 Car park

- 10.2.1 The position of the station car park layout is constrained by the existing site boundaries. The location of the existing war memorial and Wilko store to the north, the residential properties to the south, and the railway to the east drove the decision to position the footprint of the car park in the chosen location.
- 10.2.2 The number of parking spaces provided has been agreed with Northumberland County Council based on the findings of demand modelling undertaken by AECOM. Further details can be found within the submitted Transport Assessment prepared by AECOM.

### 10.3 Proposed Highway Access

- 10.3.1 The station proposals include a revised priority junction on Kenilworth Road designed in line with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) standards, Manual for Streets 2 and Northumberland County Council design standards.
- 10.3.2 Pedestrian connections are to be provided to both sides of the access road, connecting with the existing pedestrian network along Kenilworth Road, the car park and platforms.

- 10.3.3 Access to the station car park will be provided via a new 2.0m wide unobstructed walking route adjacent to the platform.
- 10.3.4 The station proposals include upgrades to the existing site vehicle access as well as a new exit from the car park to the south onto Kenilworth road, pedestrian links will also run alongside these accesses and exits.
- 10.3.5 A new pedestrian link from Oakland terrace is also proposed from the south which also provides a link from the surrounding network of alleyways and paths.
- 10.3.6 From the north, a new lift and access pathway is proposed from Wansbeck square to provide a step free access to the new station from Station road which is compliant with the Department for Transport's Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations.

### 10.4 Platform and Station services

- 10.4.1 The platform geometry has been set in accordance with Railway Group Standard RIS-7016-INS which ensures that they are the correct length, width, and height for passenger access to and from trains and throughout the platform.
- 10.4.2 The position of the station platform is proposed taking into consideration the need to install a new short section of line to the west of the existing lines to create a bay line for passenger services allowing the existing freight timetable to be maintained. The bay track alignment has been designed as not to prohibit future through alignment to the north. Consideration for tying into the station car park and a new lift access to Wansbeck square were also key factors.
- 10.4.3 Design options were considered to accommodate a footbridge to the immediate south east of the railway. This option was discounted. The favoured option is to accommodate a lift shaft near to the Station Road overbridge.
- 10.4.4 The proposals include an accessible lift, located adjacent to the existing footbridge structure which would be a minimum Type 2 in accordance BS EN 81-70: 2018 meeting the requirements set out in Commission Regulation (EU) No. 1300/2014. A section of the existing footbridge parapet will be removed to accommodate pedestrian access to the lift directly from Wansbeck Square to the station platform.

## 10.5 Flood Risk

- 10.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires site specific Flood Risk Assessments to accompany planning applications to assess the risk of all sources of flooding to and from the development and to demonstrate how these flood risks will be managed so that the development remains safe throughout its lifetime, taking climate change into account.
- 10.5.2 The submitted Level 2 Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) prepared by AECOM assesses the level of flood risk posed to and from the proposed scheme during its operational phase. Appropriate mitigation measures to offset flood risk are outlined where necessary. Online Environment Agency (EA) resources, LiDAR Digital Terrain Model and Flood Mapping for Planning were reviewed as part of the Flood Risk Assessment.
- 10.5.3 The Proposed Development lies within land classified as being within Flood Zone 1 ('low probability of flooding'). Please see Figure 10.1. A review of the NPPF and local planning policies suggests the Proposed Development is considered as 'Essential Infrastructure'. In accordance with Table 3 of the Planning Practice Guidance, 'Essential Infrastructure' is permitted in Flood Zones 1 and 2.
- 10.5.4 The FRA has been used to consider the flood risk to and from the Proposed Development. As well as fluvial and tidal flooding, it is also necessary to consider flood risk from all other sources, including surface water, groundwater, ordinary watercourses, artificial drainage systems and infrastructure failures. The risk to the Proposed Development from main rivers, surface water, groundwater, canal, reservoirs, flood risk management infrastructure and land drainage infrastructure are considered low.
- 10.5.5 The risk to the Proposed Development from water supply and sewer infrastructure has been considered as residual accounting for the remaining flood risk after the implementation of mitigation measures.
- 10.5.6 The Proposed Development will involve construction of a new car park and station platform which will slightly increase the volume of impermeable surfaces at the site. As such, the Proposed Development will include a surface water drainage system which will be capable of attenuating all runoff from the Proposed Development up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change event. In addition, in accordance with in the North East LLFA Sustainable Drainage Local Standards, the proposed drainage strategy will limit discharge to the QBAR (1 in 2 year) runoff rate. As such, the drainage strategy is compliant with local and national standards.
- 10.5.7 The FRA recommends a series of precautionary mitigation measures which are to be incorporated at detailed design stage.
- 10.5.8 The FRA demonstrates that it will be possible to manage flood risks to and from the Proposed Development in compliance with the NPPF and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance.

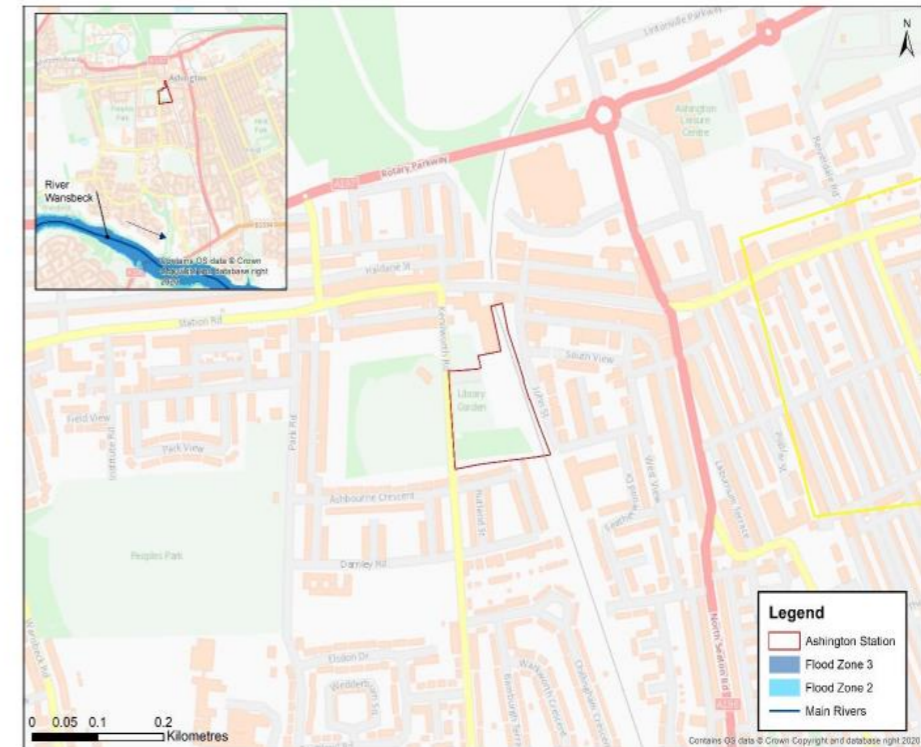


Figure 10.1 Extract from AECOM, Level 2 Flood Risk Assessment, Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning with site location shown.



Figure 10.2 Extract from AECOM, Level 2 Flood Risk Assessment, showing site topography.

## 10.6 Rights of Way

10.6.1 No Public Rights of Way will be closed or altered due to the proposals.

## 10.7 Current trip patterns

10.7.1 South East Northumberland is the most densely populated area of Northumberland. The most densely populated settlements of Ashington and Blyth are not served by a passenger rail service.

10.7.2 At present, bus journey times are uncompetitive in comparison with car journey times from Newcastle to Ashington. The average journey time by bus between Newcastle and Ashington is more than 60 minutes.

10.7.3 The lack of viable and efficient modal choice has resulted in significant dependence on the private car by residents and visitors to this part of Northumberland. The 2011 Census identified a new outflow of commuters from Northumberland of over 23,000 people (37% of the population). This is expected to have increased in the last decade. Of those commuters, 65% of trips originating in Northumberland are made by car, which is higher than the national and regional average.

10.7.4 It is anticipated the Northumberland Line scheme will provide a half hourly service with an anticipated journey time between Newcastle and Ashington of approximately 35 minutes.

## 10.8 Station safety and security

10.8.1 Initial consultation has been carried out with British Transport Police to understand any specific safety / security concerns for the proposed route inclusive of station locations.

10.8.2 This engagement will continue through the detailed design process with input from the chosen Train Operating Company to reflect their station management practices. In addition, any concerns raised by local residents through the consultation process will be considered.

10.8.3 Both the station platform and the car park design have been developed to include suitable lighting / CCTV / Public Address / Passenger Help Point coverage to create an environment which makes vulnerable users feel safe and secure when using the station and its facilities.

10.8.4 The Rail Industry Suicide Stakeholder Group good practice guide has also been used in the development of station design proposals.

## 10.9 Construction and Operational Noise

10.9.1 AECOM have undertaken a Noise and vibration impact assessment to identify nearby noise (and vibration) sensitive receptors. This assessment is submitted as part of the planning application.

10.9.2 The scope of the noise and vibration impact assessment was to identify nearby noise (and vibration) sensitive receptors (NSRs) and to assess the potential construction and operational noise and vibration impacts.

10.9.3 Existing NSRs are identified as part of the assessment. All nearby NSRs are existing residential properties. The exact location of the properties are identified within the Noise Impact Assessment. The represented properties are on Darnley Road, Oakland Terrace, Ashbourne Crescent, Featherwood Drive, Hatchmeadow and John Street.

10.9.4 The noise impact due to the operation of the development has been assessed by predicting the likely daytime ambient sound levels at nearby sensitive receptors. Without mitigation, worst-case impacts of medium and high magnitude are expected. The predicted external ambient sound levels are also anticipated to exceed the adopted criterion at some receptors, by up to 8 dB at ground floor and up to 9 dB at first floor.

10.9.5 The assessment methodology combined the predicted sound from all sources likely to be emitted during operation of the railway station (i.e., trains, car parking and PA system) for comparison with the current ambient sound levels established from a baseline survey.

10.9.6 During the construction of the proposed development, noise and vibration emissions from the works have the potential to disturb the nearby residents.

10.9.7 To mitigate the noise emissions from construction works, use of site or activity boundary acoustic barriers to screen neighbouring receptors is likely to be required. The use of site boundary or activity boundary temporary noise barriers can reduce construction noise levels by around 10 dB if line-of-sight from the plant to the receptor is blocked.

10.9.8 When planning the works, it will be necessary to consider the number and type of plant required to complete the work and the timing, duration and phasing of the works.

10.9.9 During operation the stationary trains are anticipated to be the dominant sound source in the future ambient sound levels.

10.9.10 The PA system will be operated in accordance with accepted best practice and this is proposed to be secured by planning condition.

10.9.11 Potential environmental effects have been or will be avoided, prevented, reduced or off-set through the integration of measures into the design and / or management of the proposed development. These are outlined below for the construction and operational phases and will be taken into account as part of the assessment of the likely significant effects.

10.9.12 The outline CEMP submitted with this planning application requires that the final CEMP will include a detailed construction noise and vibration assessment, including predictions of construction noise and vibration levels at nearby NSRs for comparison with suitable noise level limits. This management plan will be used to identify the mitigation measures which should be incorporated. The CEMP will also





# 11 Design Approach

## 11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 This section of the Design and Access Statement explains the principles that have shaped the proposed scheme, the subject of this planning application. It provides the necessary information to help evaluate the proposal in terms of design evolution approach. The key design drivers, proposed use, site context, constraints, and opportunities generate the form of the proposals.

## 11.2 Use

11.2.1 The proposed development is a railway station and associated infrastructure including platforms, car parking, and a new step free access from Wansbeck Square. The station will be unmanned.

11.2.2 The site is currently used as a hard standing car park, railway corridor, amenity grassland to the west and brownfield site to the south. The current carpark spacing is not regulated and lacks soft landscaping. The trees that have been planted within the car park have not thrived and some recent tree planting has not been successful. There are currently no footpaths or markings for pedestrian travel through the car park, creating an unsafe environment.

11.2.3 The proposals will allow for the site to be developed into a carpark and station which is fit for purpose. The soft and hard landscaping will be high quality, durable and well maintained. The lighting together with the use of high-quality materials, and the creation of proposed views within and outside of the site will create a car park and station that is safe by design.

## 11.3 Proposed Development details

11.3.1 Ashington Station will be the northern terminus for the Northumberland Line. It will have a single platform located to the west of the existing railway line within the footprint of the existing carpark.

11.3.2 The proposals are for the reinstatement of a modern station near the site of a former railway station comprising of the following:

- New single faced platform on the new terminus line
- New 275 space car park, including 6% electric vehicle charging spaces, and 6% accessible parking spaces)
- Cycle storage facility for 29 bicycles
- Car/Taxi drop off point
- Upgraded highway access off Kenilworth Road plus a new exit from the car park further south along Kenilworth Road.



Figure 11.1 – Proposed upgraded access and new exit from the car park

- Pedestrian access link from Oakland Terrace and the surrounding alleyways
- Compliant step-free access to the site from Wansbeck Square in the form of a lift and walkway

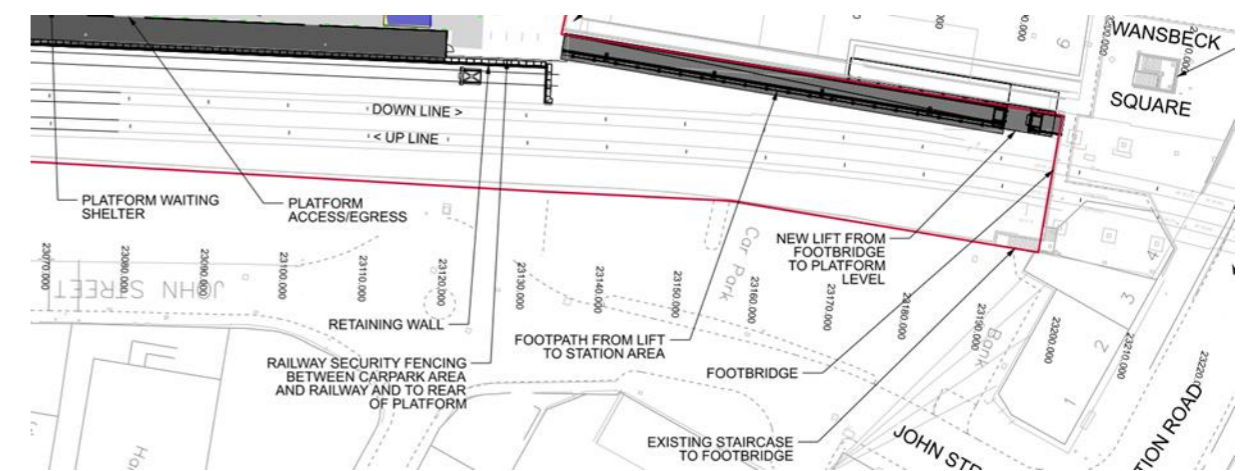


Figure 11.2 Compliant step free access from Wansbeck Square

- Potential reopening of two bus stops adjacent to Wansbeck Square (subject to bus company agreement) to allow for improved intermodal connectivity with the proposed station.
- Integrated lighting, CCTV and Public Address design
- Positive drainage system including attenuation tying into the existing drainage network.



## 11.4 Amount & Layout

11.4.1 The proposed design includes the zones:

- **Station Platform**

The platform is 100 metres long and 3.5 metres wide and is designed to safely accommodate up to 4 carriage trains and the predicted station demand.

- **Wansbeck Square Step Free Access**

A 16-person lift will be installed adjacent to the existing Wansbeck Square with a 2m wide and approximately 60m long walkway to the station forecourt.

- **Cycle Storage**

Cycle storage for a minimum of 29 bicycles based on predicted demand and subsequently agreed with Northumberland County Council

- **Station Forecourt**

Provision of a wide concourse area (approximately 0.22 hectares) to provide a spacious transition from station car park to the platform. This area will also provide ticket vending facilities for passengers.

- **Car Parking**

Provision for 240 standard parking bays, 17 accessible bays and 18 electric vehicle charging bays totalling 275 parking spaces. Overall number of parking spaces is based on predicted demand and has been agreed with Northumberland County Council. An agreed 6% provision for accessible and electric vehicle bays has also been agreed. Standard bays to be 5m x 2.5m, accessible to be 5m x 2.5m with additional 1.2m separation between adjacent bays and from footway to rear of bay and 3m x 3m for electric vehicle bays

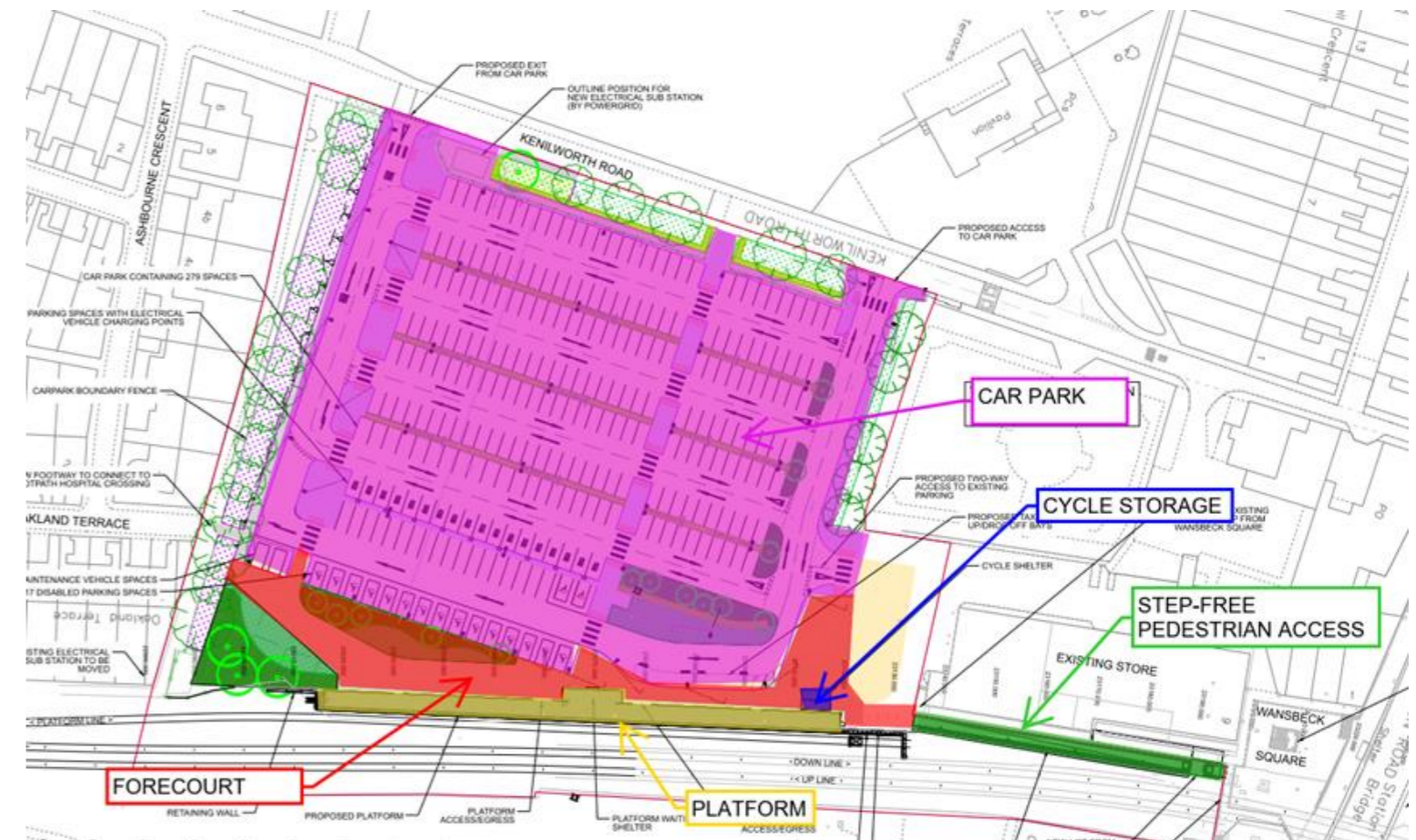


Figure 11.4 Station layout detailing principle zones

11.4.2 The scheme is based on an understanding of how the passengers will arrive to site and move in the surrounding area. This includes the movement from designated car parking spaces to all accessible entrances, access routes externally to principle and secondary (maintenance) entrances, and external movement around the facilities.

11.4.3 The station size and layout has been designed to meet passenger numbers and to relate to the existing routes, features and buildings around the station. The layout is simplified to take account of the site constraints, by encouraging pedestrian connections from the south and north by creating a connection to the existing footpath to the south and introducing a lift to the north to connect with Station Road.

11.4.4 The design also responds to constraints by placing the car park west of the railway tracks where passengers are guided into the car park or cycle storage before approaching the platform and creating a footpath adjacent existing trees which preserving the tree roots.

11.4.5 The layout is dictated by four key fundamental site constraints:

- Existing railway line
- Existing Kenilworth road alignment
- Existing Ashbourne crescent and Oakland terrace residential properties
- Existing Wansbeck Square, access ramp, retail store, and war memorial

11.4.6 The new single face platform serves the railway line in both directions. The platform geometry has been set in accordance with Railway Group Standard RIS-7016-INS which ensures the platform is the correct length, width, and height for passengers to safely access / egress from trains and traverse the platform. The platform has 4 access points which are level with the station forecourt area which also act as emergency egress from the platform.

11.4.7 The layout is optimised around the site constraints and is designed to guide station users to the car park or cycle storage before approaching the platform. Within the vicinity of the platform there are the following facilities:

- Automated ticket machine
- Information and timetable boards
- Electronic passenger information
- CCTV security

## 11.5 Scale and Massing

11.5.1 The proposal relates to the surrounding area as it will maintain an existing use within the site. It will allow for the utilisation of the existing railway corridor while increasing site interconnectivity with Ashington and the wider North East.

11.5.2 The local area is dominated by residential areas, with retail to the north, and a cricket field to the west. Careful consideration has been given to ensure the scale and mass of the proposed railway station and associated infrastructure do not appear out of character of incongruous within the locality. Due regard has been given to minimise the impacts of the proposal upon the key ecological and environmental interests of the site.

11.5.3 The scale and massing of the: platform, station car parks, lift shafts is in response to and dictated by the railway engineering and operating requirements as well as the integration of multi-modal connectivity.

11.5.4 The proposed scale, height and other design elements of the railway station are based on a detailed appraisal of the site, the existing railway and highway infrastructure and the proximity to adjacent land uses.

11.5.5 Indicative levels are submitted as part of the planning application, it is anticipated that final levels will be subject to a planning condition.

11.5.6 The scale of the carpark has been dictated by the functional requirements of the various carparking types, such as accessible spaces, electric vehicle charging points, providing a taxi pick up/drop off area, and areas of planting.

11.5.7 The car park dimensions are driven by space requirements for standard, accessible and electric vehicle charging points, proposed highway access, vehicular movement and to allow safe routes for pedestrians. The number of car parking spaces has been determined by demand modelling.

11.5.8 The car park dimensions are dictated by space requirements for vehicular movement and to allow safe routes for pedestrians. Please see Highway Typical Cross Sections for further details.

11.5.9 The platform geometry has been set in accordance with Railway Group Standard RIS-7016-INS which ensures the platforms are the correct length, width, and height for passengers to safely access / egress from trains and traverse the platform. Lighting columns are typically 5m in height.

11.5.10 A 1500m high balustrade fence will run along the back of the platform to the east of the car park with entrance /exit gates leading to the platform.

11.5.11 The Wansbeck Square lift shaft is approximately 10.4m tall with a 250mm upstand. The access lift motor room is to be positioned under the existing ramp. The walking route to the station car park and platform from the lift will be bound by a 1.8m palisade fence. A cantilevered link span provides the lift access from the existing footbridge level.

## 11.6 Car park

- 11.6.1 The vehicular entrance and egress to the car park is from Kenilworth Road, located at the existing site entrance to the north-west of the proposed carpark. A proposed egress only connection will be located in the south-west corner of the site.
- 11.6.2 Following the design development, the station and car park layout accommodates 275 spaces, including 17 accessible spaces (6%) and 18 EV charging bays (6%). The car park will operate a one-way circulatory system within the drop-off and accessible parking areas with two-way access to the other parking bays. Pedestrian footways are proposed within the car park including uncontrolled pedestrian crossings consisting of lowered kerbs to provide a safe pedestrian route towards the station. Cycle parking will be provided.
- 11.6.3 The car parking spaces are organised to minimise travel distance for disabled users – these being concentrated near the station platform entrance area. Other users are incentivised by distance with standard car parking spaces distributed away from the main station entrance.
- 11.6.4 Six percent of the parking provision will be accessible spaces at the nearest practicable position within the car park. Designated disabled persons' parking spaces BS 8300:4.2.3 must be 2400 mm x 4800 mm with a zone 1200 mm wide between designated parking spaces and between the designated spaces and a roadway.
- 11.6.5 The following facilities are provided;
- Car/Taxi drop off area
  - Secure cycle storage facilities tied into the proposed cycle routing
  - Accessible bays
  - Electric Vehicle parking spaces
  - Landscaping
- 11.6.6 Unobstructed access routes around the site were a key design consideration throughout development. This includes:
- The movement from designated car parking spaces to all accessible entrances
  - Access routes externally to principal and secondary (maintenance) entrances
  - External movement around the facilities
- 11.6.7 Please refer to the Vehicle Tracking Layout 60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070007 shows the swept path analysis within the proposed car park demonstrating the vehicular movements to the existing delivery area to the north, into car parking bays and into the drop off area. Adequate signage will be provided for pedestrians and cyclists movements as well as vehicular traffic please refer to 60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070004, Traffic Sign and Road Marking Layout.

## 11.7 Street linkages

- 11.7.1 An entrance/egress from the site is located at the north-west corner of the site. This is a vehicular and pedestrian access from Kenilworth Road. There is an additional pedestrian access from the footpath along Kenilworth Road between the north entrance and the south egress, located at the south-west corner of the site. As there is an existing entrance and egress from the site the layout works to the existing road infrastructure.

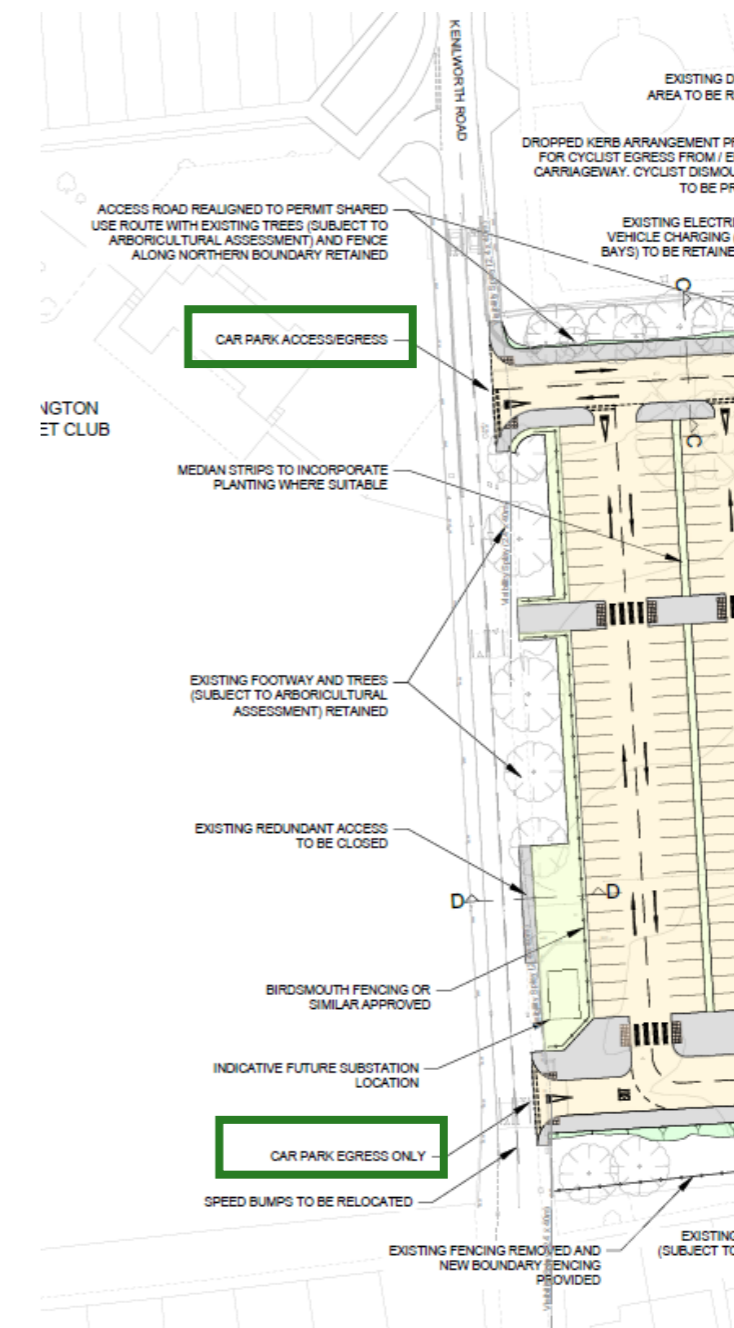


Figure 11.5 Extract from 60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070001 Highways General Arrangement showing entrance/egress points.

- 11.7.2 The station proposals include a revised priority junction on Kenilworth road designed in line with DMRB standards, Manual for Streets 2 and NCC design standards.

- 11.7.3 Pedestrian connections will be provided to both sides of the access road, connecting with the existing pedestrian network along Kenilworth Road, the car park and platforms.
- 11.7.4 Access to the station car park will be provided via a new 2.0m wide unobstructed walking route adjacent to the platform.

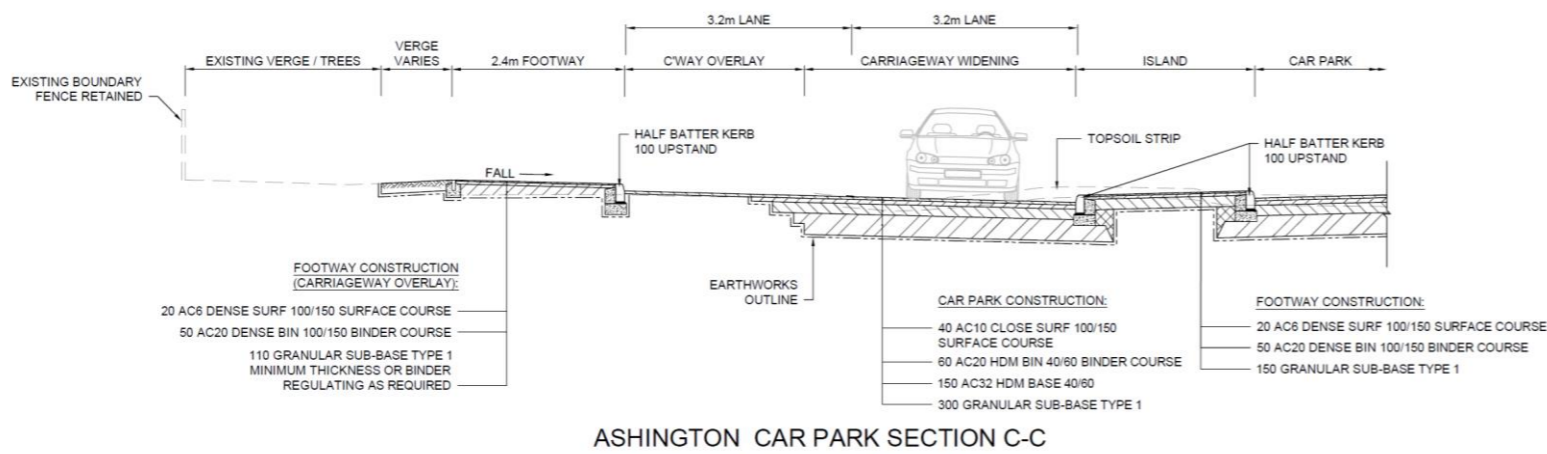


Figure 11.6 Extract from 60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070002 Highways Typical Cross Sections,

## 11.8 Platform

- 11.8.1 For details of the proposed platform please refer to 60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000007 Existing and Proposed Platform Sections and 60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000003 Proposed General Arrangement.
- 11.8.2 The platform design has been developed considering accessibility and inclusivity for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM), whether disabled, elderly or otherwise, through application of the Department for Transport's 'Design Standards for Accessible Stations' and the Persons with Reduced Mobility Technical Specifications for Interoperability.
- 11.8.3 The works will comprise construction of a single face 100m platform adjacent to the proposed terminus Northumberland Line track alignment, designed to safely accommodate trains using up to 4 carriages. The new single face platform serves the railway line to the south. The platform geometry has been set in accordance with Railway Group Standard RIS-7016-INS which ensures that they are the correct length, width, and height for passenger access to and from trains and throughout the platform. The platform has 4 access points which also work as emergency exits and are level with the station forecourt area.

- 11.8.4 The platform will have a minimum clear width of 3m from the platform edge to the face of proposed platform furniture. This allows for train access ramps to be mounted onto the train at any door location along the length of the platform while maintaining a compliant turning area for PRM users.

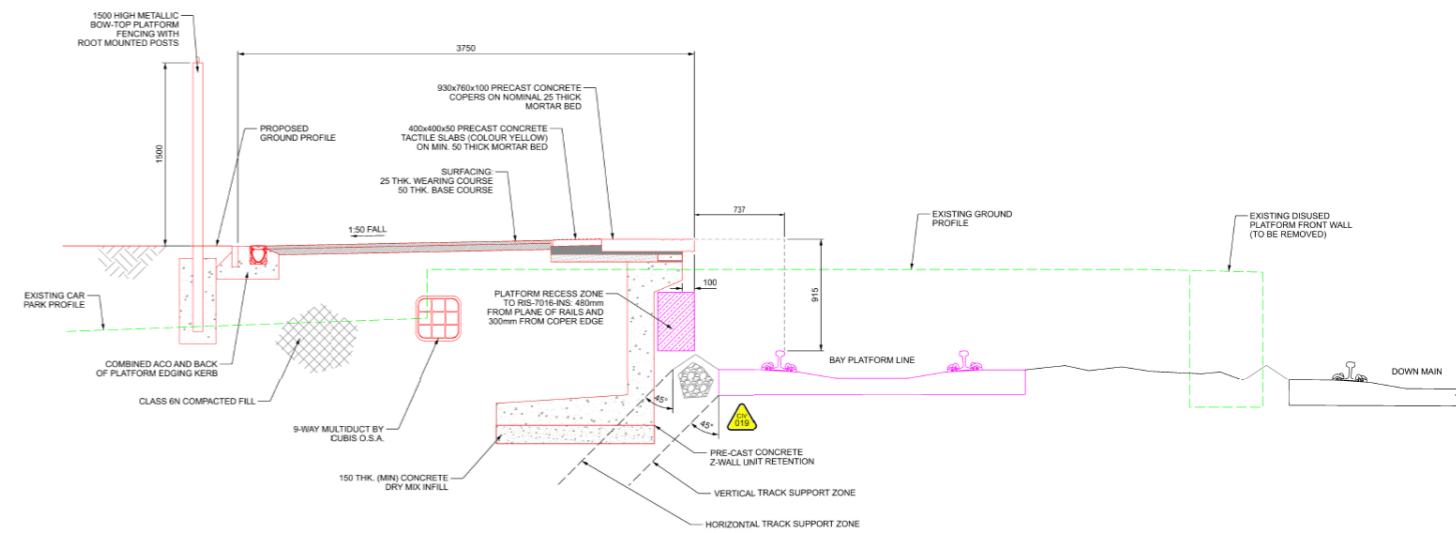


Figure 11.7 Extract from 60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000007 Existing and Proposed Platform Sections

- 11.8.5 The platform will be of precast concrete front wall and mass infill construction. Copers will be formed of precast concrete and set level with no fall towards or away from the tracks. Tactile paving will be installed between the copers and bituminous platform surfacing to provide a warning to visually impaired passengers who are nearing the edge of the platform. In addition, the tactile paving will be coloured yellow to provide a clear contrast with the platform surfacing. The tactile paving and bituminous surfacing will fall away from the edge of the platform at a nominal gradient of 1:50.
- 11.8.6 A 6-bay waiting shelter will be provided at both platforms along with up-to-date timetables, in-built lighting, CIS and induction loop technology to provide waiting passenger's protection from inclement weather. Signage will be provided to amenities within the station such as lifts. A number of platform benches will be provided.
- 11.8.7 A Customer Interface Screen (CIS) is positioned centrally on the platform to provide real time information to passengers.
- 11.8.8 Cross sections of critical chainages in so far as necessary are included as part of the planning application submission. Where changes are being made to the railway line within the red line boundary relevant cross sections will be provided.

## 11.9 Station Entrance

11.9.1 Access to the station will be regulated via two gated entrances from the carpark.

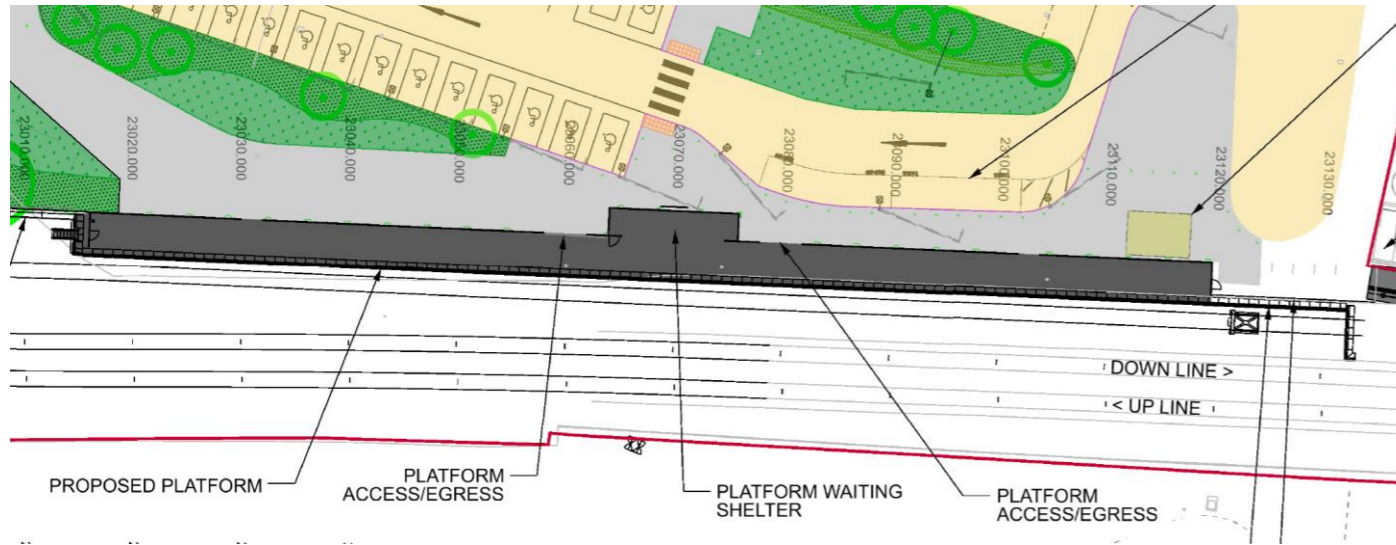


Figure 11.8 Extract from 60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000002, Planning Drawing General Arrangement showing location of gated entrance points to platform.

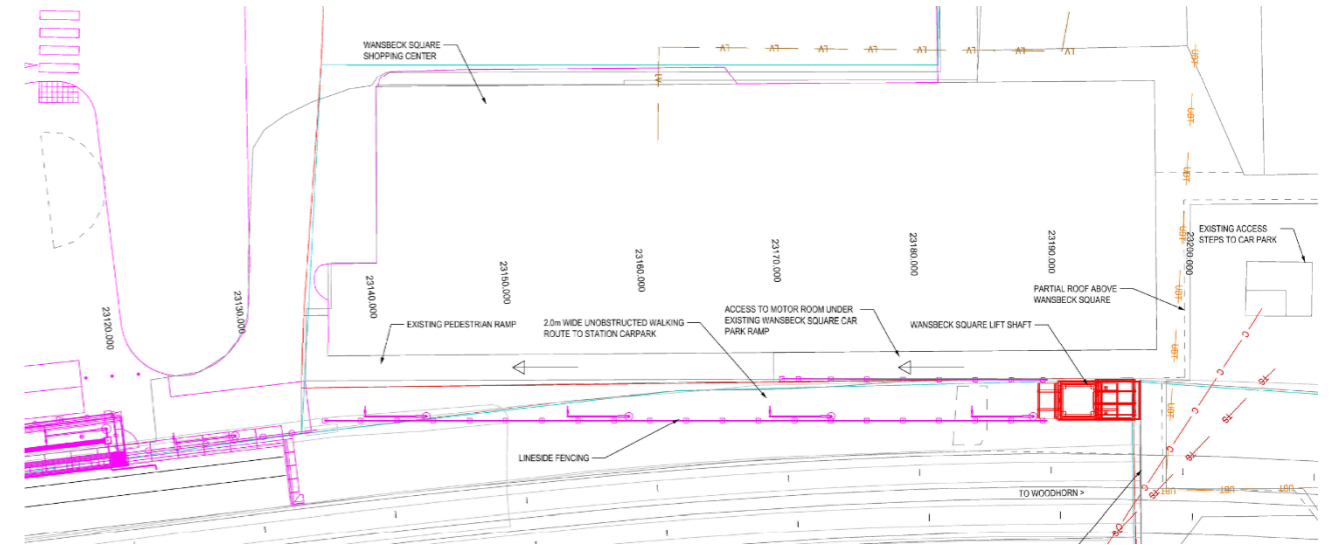


Figure 11.9 Extract from 60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000002, Planning Drawing General Arrangement showing location of gated entrance points to platform)

11.9.2 A Ticket Vending Machine will be installed within the railway boundary fence line to allow passengers to purchase tickets for their onward journey.

11.9.3 The platform access / egress points will be provided with necessary illumination and CCTV coverage.

11.9.4 Beyond the platform and the station concourse the approach to accessibility and inclusivity of the station car park has been developed to comply with all current legislation. Where relevant, all measures have been taken into consideration to provide suitable facilities in line with the Equality Act requirements. The proposed site access strategy will create an inclusive environment.

11.9.5 From the rear of the platform there are 4 No. access / egress points meeting the requirements of both the anticipated station demand and emergency egress requirements. The level at the back of the platform will tie into the station forecourt installed at a compliant gradient to tie into the proposed car park levels.

11.9.6 The access points will tie into the railway boundary fence line adjacent to which Ticket Vending Machines will be installed to allow passengers to purchase tickets for their onward journey.

11.9.7 Adequate signage will be provided for pedestrians and cyclists movements as well as vehicular traffic.

11.9.8 The detailed design of the lift will be subject to further technical assessments and details can be provided to the local planning authority to discharge a condition attached to any planning permission.

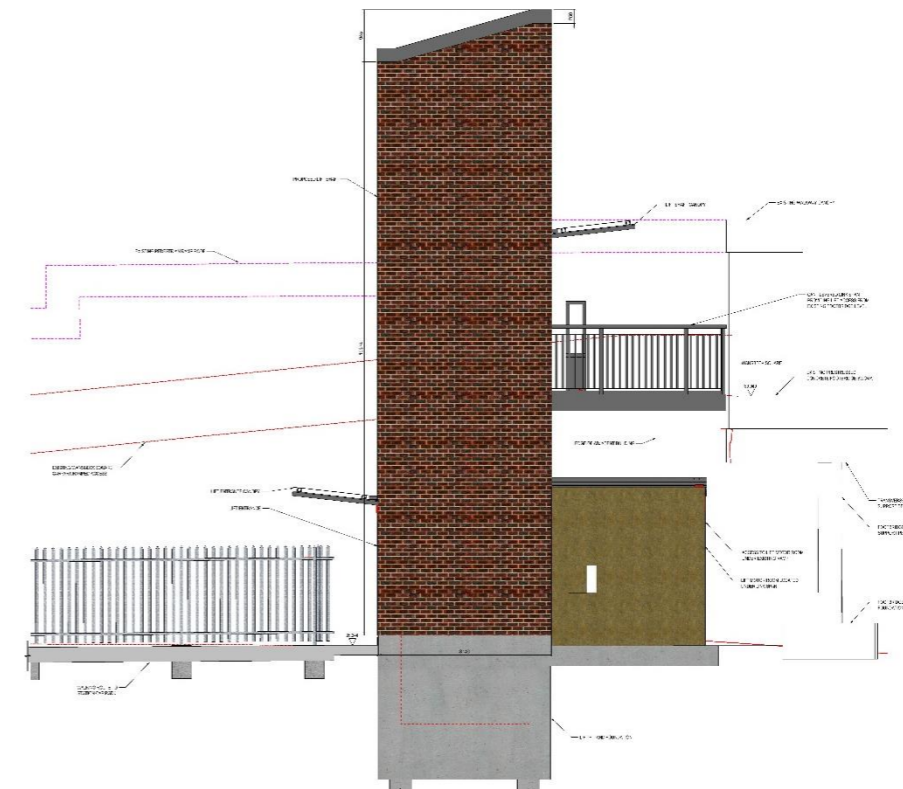


Figure 11.10 Extract from 60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EST-001302 Proposed Wansbeck Square Lift Access Side Elevation



11.9.9 Part of the strategy requires step free access from Station Road / Wansbeck Square. The existing ramp linking Wansbeck Square to the site is considered too narrow to provide for station accessibility requirements. Following an option selection process, a lift from Wansbeck Square with a new access walkway is provided to connect Wansbeck Square and the High Street beyond to the station car park. This section of walkway will also be provided with the necessary illumination and CCTV coverage. John Street to the east is accessible from Wansbeck Square.

## 11.10 Drainage

11.10.1 The Proposed Scheme will involve construction of a new car park and station platform which will slightly increase the volume of impermeable surfaces at the site. As such, the Proposed Scheme will include a surface water drainage system which will be capable of attenuating all runoff from the Proposed Development up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change event.

11.10.2 Considering the proposed site layout, which needs to provide a set number of car parking spaces, together with the site's expected ground conditions, SuDS techniques were considered and selected or discounted. Attenuation Storage Tanks are proposed as the most viable way of achieving attenuation as permeable paving is discounted by NCC and spatial constraints restrict other SuDS options.

11.10.3 The overarching drainage strategy is to drain each section of car park to a network of conventional road gullies which are connected to an underground piped drainage network. This overriding strategy is utilised throughout the car park, with the exception of a small area to the north east of the car park which drains to a linear drainage channel which also connects to the same below ground network. Attenuation is provided by a below ground geo-cellular tank situated to the west of the car park. The volume of attenuation provided ensures that for all events simulated, there is no flooding at surface level within the car park.

11.10.4 In addition, in accordance with in the North East LLFA Sustainable Drainage Local Standards, the proposed drainage strategy will limit discharge to the QBAR (1 in 2 year) runoff rate. Please refer to submitted drawings 60601435-ACM-07-PL-DRG-ECV-000006 Platform Drainage General Arrangement & 60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070006, Highway Drainage Layout for details.

11.10.5 The platform cross fall will allow collection of surface water which will be directed toward a back of platform ACO drain. The ACO drain incorporates sumps at regular intervals which will tie into a carrier drain to the rear of the platform. The carrier drain is then proposed to tie into the proposed station car park drainage system which outfalls to a sub-surface storage tank before connecting into an existing drainage outfall at greenfield runoff rate.

11.10.6 As a precautionary measure, the following mitigation will be included:

- Below ground drainage network will be designed in such a way as to prevent water ingress and withstand hydrostatic pressure associated with elevated groundwater levels.
- Vulnerable infrastructure (including those which contain electrical equipment or those which could cause a pollution risk if flooded) will be raised above ground level.

## 11.11 Lighting and CCTV Columns

11.11.1 External lighting will provide a safe and secure environment for staff and other users after dark. It is recognised that it has the potential to intrude into night-time views and may adversely affect ecological receptors such as bats, and therefore measures will be taken to ensure the lighting is appropriate to its context and that effects are minimised.

11.11.2 An assessment of the existing conditions in the area has revealed the extent of existing light sources and this information has been used in the preparation of a Lighting Strategy that mitigates adverse lighting effects as far as possible.

11.11.3 Lighting columns (typically 5m in height) will be provided to achieve the necessary illumination to the platforms. These columns will also accommodate the Public Address speakers providing automated voice announcements. The Public Address system will include an ambient noise sensor to allow volume to be changed remotely to minimise impact on local residents.

11.11.4 CCTV cameras will also be installed on raise / lower columns providing full platform coverage along with the provision of Passenger Help Points to ensure passengers feel safe and secure while using the station facilities.

11.11.5 The Lighting Strategy is founded on the following principles:

- Lighting will be directional and downward focussed.
- Over-lighting will be avoided: illumination levels will be kept as low as is consistent with safety requirements.
- Extra measures will be incorporated where necessary to minimise adverse effects on any green infrastructure, especially where bats and other light sensitive fauna might otherwise be affected.
- All forms of light pollution will be minimised and, in many instances, prevented altogether.

## 12 Appearance

### 12.1 Station and Car Park

- 12.1.1 The detailed engineering and other technical aspects of the scheme are continuing to evolve. It is anticipated that planning permission will be granted subject to a condition requiring the approval of the final appearance of materials and external finishes. Full details of material specifications and external finishes will be determined through the discharge of conditions.
- 12.1.2 Train operators will be responsible for providing certain details including signage, colour and branding. It is anticipated that such details will be agreed with the local planning authority through the discharge of conditions on a planning permission.
- 12.1.3 The station will be constructed from appropriate materials with considered detailing to form a strong and integrated built addition to the locality in which it sits. The materials and form have been selected in the design drive to meet both aesthetic and practical considerations including the limitations presented by the location. The design principles are community and operationally focused, aesthetically relevant, and sympathetic to the local area.
- 12.1.4 A limited material palette is proposed, with those materials at low level designed to be robust and hard wearing. Robust materials will be used in the construction of the street linkages, as appropriate for their use, ensuring that the links with Kenilworth Road will be feasible to maintain.
- To the south the existing fence is to be removed and new boundary fencing provided. Existing trees are to remain, subject to the Arboricultural Assessment.
  - To the east balustrade fence is to run along the back of the platform.
  - To the west of the car park new boundary fencing is proposed with existing and proposed trees, subject to the Arboricultural Assessment.
  - To the north the access road into the car park is aligned to permit shared use route with existing trees, subject to the Arboricultural Assessment with the existing fence line retained.
- 12.1.5 The car park and station forecourt areas consists of line marked tarmac, tactile paving and raised kerb pavement / forecourt areas, lighting columns, bollards and landscaping. Please see Figure 12.1.
- 12.1.6 The platform will be of precast concrete front wall and mass infill construction with tactile paving and bituminous surfacing. Copers will be formed of precast concrete. Tactile paving will be coloured yellow to provide a clear contrast with the platform surfacing.
- 12.1.7 Back of platform fencing is proposed as a 1.5m high bow top steel fencing, the colour of which will be specified to best integrate with the surrounding landscape. Platform furniture will be coloured to align with Train Operating Company branding requirements.

- 12.1.8 The Wansbeck Square lift shaft is proposed to be brick with roof panelling (specification to be agreed) with a lift entrance canopies. The walking route to the station car park and platform from the lift will be bound by a palisade fence. A cantilevered link span and canopy provides the lift access from the existing footbridge level.

### 13.3 Landscape Design General Principles

- 12.1.9 The proposed development seeks to introduce appropriate landscaping to the car park and associated land, having regard to the entrance to the car park from Kenilworth Road. Pedestrian access will be provided from; Kenilworth Road to the west, an existing footpath from the south, and the existing access from the north. As the site is located within an urban environment, this characteristic has been upheld by the proposals. Areas of shrub and specimen tree planting will soften the urban form and while hedgerows between the car park rows will create visual breaks.

### 12.2 Retained vegetation

- 12.2.1 The site currently consists of a car park and open green space. Between the car park and railway corridor is a hedgerow, unmaintained grasses, and trees. Within the open green space there are two rows of trees and a copse of trees. The vegetation to be retained will include the row of trees along Kenilworth Road and the trees along the north boundary adjacent the memorial park.

### 12.3 Planting within the Car park

- 12.3.1 Planting within the car park area will consist of specimen trees, hedges, shrubs not exceeding 0.5m in height together with taller shrubs where these can be placed as to not obstruct visibility. Plant species have been selected based on a low level of maintenance and the environmental factors created within a carpark, such as exposure, formality, and the creation of a heat island by hardscaping. Proposed planting will provide structure, form, shelter and an intricate matrix of complementary colours, textures whilst providing seasonal interest throughout the year.
- 12.3.2 The proposed planting will soften views of the car park from the surrounding area and within the site. This will mitigate the loss of trees within the existing open space while creating an attractive arrival for visitors to the area.



Figure 12.1 Extract from Proposed Landscape Design, 60601435-ACM-XX-ZZ-DRG-EEN-000502

## 13 Access

### 13.1 Access to Ashington Station

- 13.1.1 The proposed railway station is located in an area which is accessible on foot, by cycle and by public and private transport and where satisfactory access can be achieved. The scheme includes measures to encourage walking and cycling to and from the railway station, though provision is made for vehicular access to ensure the station can be accessed by all users, including elderly and mobility impaired users that may be unable to walk to the station.
- 13.1.2 The station proposals include a revised priority junction on Kenilworth road designed in line with DMRB standards. An additional vehicle exit from the car park is provided onto Kenilworth road approximately 90m to the south. The proposed station car park also provides drop off / pick up facilities for private vehicles and taxis.
- 13.1.3 Kenilworth road runs north to south from Station road to Green lane providing good vehicular access to the proposed site from the surrounding areas. Kenilworth road becomes a narrow one-way road to the north beyond the existing access road to the car park.
- 13.1.4 The submitted existing and proposed highways general arrangements show changes to the highway network. Further details are provided within the submitted Transport Assessment prepared by AECOM.
- 13.1.5 A Traffic sign and road marking layout is submitted as part of the application. Please refer to submitted drawing 60601435-ACM-07-ZZ-DRG-EHW-070004.

### 13.2 Policy

- 13.2.1 The submitted Transport Assessment which accompanies the planning application confirms that the accessibility of the scheme is compliant with relevant local plan policies. The TA confirms that the scheme complies with the core planning principles of the NPPF (National Planning policy Framework) in providing an inclusive, accessible, well connected and sustainable development.

### 13.3 Pedestrian Links

- 13.3.1 Improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities will be integrated into the proposed vehicular site access and egress of the site.
- 13.3.2 The proposed development includes the construction of new footways which will connect the footways within the car park the those along Kenilworth Road, the lift to Station Road and the existing footpath to the south. This will provide direct pedestrian links to the station from these residential and commercial areas.
- 13.3.3 The area surrounding the proposed station has reasonable pedestrian links which are well lit, providing accessibility to local residential areas and local amenities. Existing access from the site to Station Road
- 13.3.4 and east to Ashington centre can be made either via Kenilworth Road, or an existing pedestrian ramp leading to Wansbeck Square.
- 13.3.5 However, the footways on Kenilworth Road are narrow on approach to Station Road (less than 1.8m); and the ramped access to Wansbeck square does not meet current accessible design standards with regards to gradient and landing requirements. As a result, proposed accessibility improvements are included within the proposed design of the scheme in the form of a link span and lift from Wansbeck Square adjacent to the existing ramp. A walkway is proposed from the lower level to the station forecourt.
- 13.3.6 A controlled pedestrian crossing can be found 140m north of the existing access at Kenilworth Road / Station Road junction, this provides a safe crossing towards residential and retail areas within walking distance of the proposed station. There is a good provision of uncontrolled pedestrian crossings throughout the duration of Kenilworth Road and nearby residential roads.
- 13.3.7 A new pedestrian link from Oakland terrace is also proposed from the south which also provides a link from the surrounding network of alleyways and paths.

- 13.3.8 The proposed station is within an acceptable walking distance of a wide variety of local amenities located along Station Road which is approximately 3-minute walk (210m) from the centre of the site.
- 13.3.9 Figure 13.1 shows the 2km walking and 5km cycling isochrones, demonstrating that the site is well within the maximum walking distance to the town centre and retail units located along Station Road and the A196 North Seaton Road.

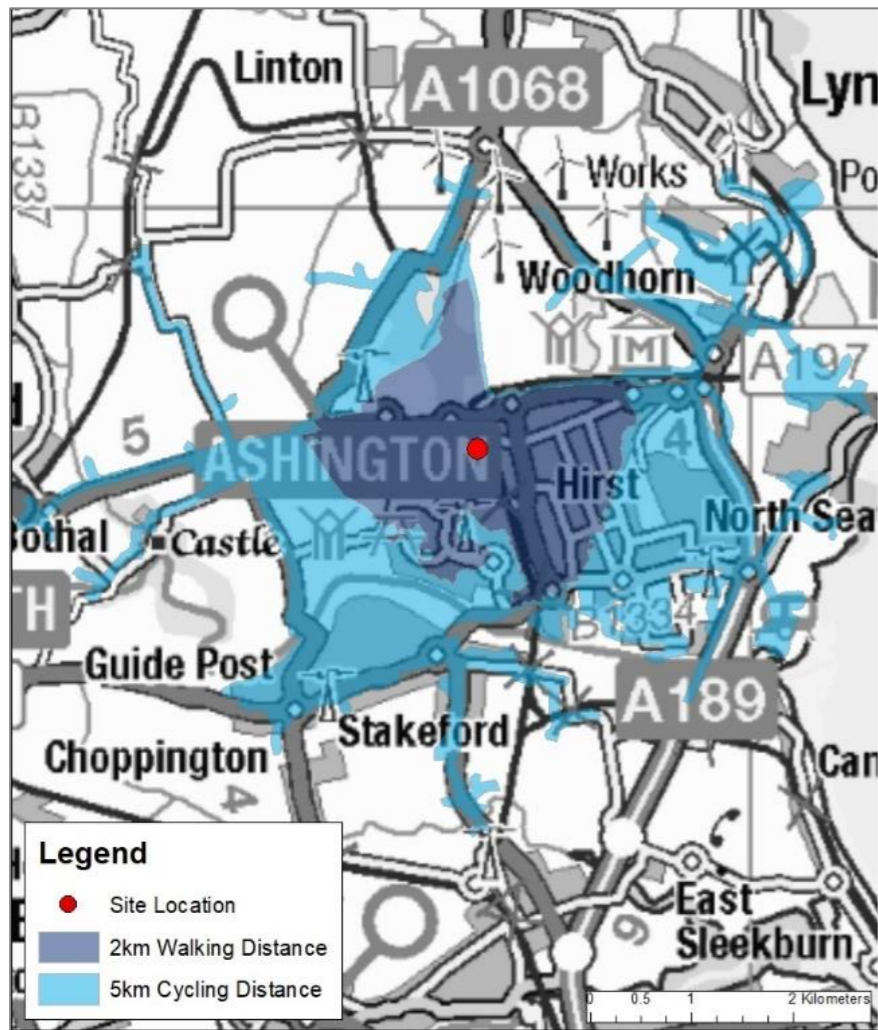


Figure 13.1 Extract image from Transport Statement showing Walking and Cycling Isochrones

### 13.4 Local Cycle Network

- 13.4.1 Cycle use is considered a feasible means of transport over short to medium distances. As previously shown in Figure 13.1, the majority of the residential areas within Ashington are within 5km cycling distance. Cycling networks within close proximity of the site are shown in Figure 13.2.
- 13.4.2 A cycle route is provided to the north of the A197, known as Route 155 of the National Cycle Network between Morpeth and Newbiggin by the Sea. The route is a combination of on-road and traffic-free provision and links in with a number of traffic-free local routes. Route 155 provides an opportunity to reach the station via cycling from residential areas of Ashington.
- 13.4.3 A number of surrounding local roads have been identified as suitable for more confident and experienced cyclists to reach Route 155 as well as residential and retail areas as shown in Figure 14.2. The local roads identified as suitable for commuting purposes are subject to 20mph speed limit and speed calming measures therefore, encouraging low speeds and cycling.

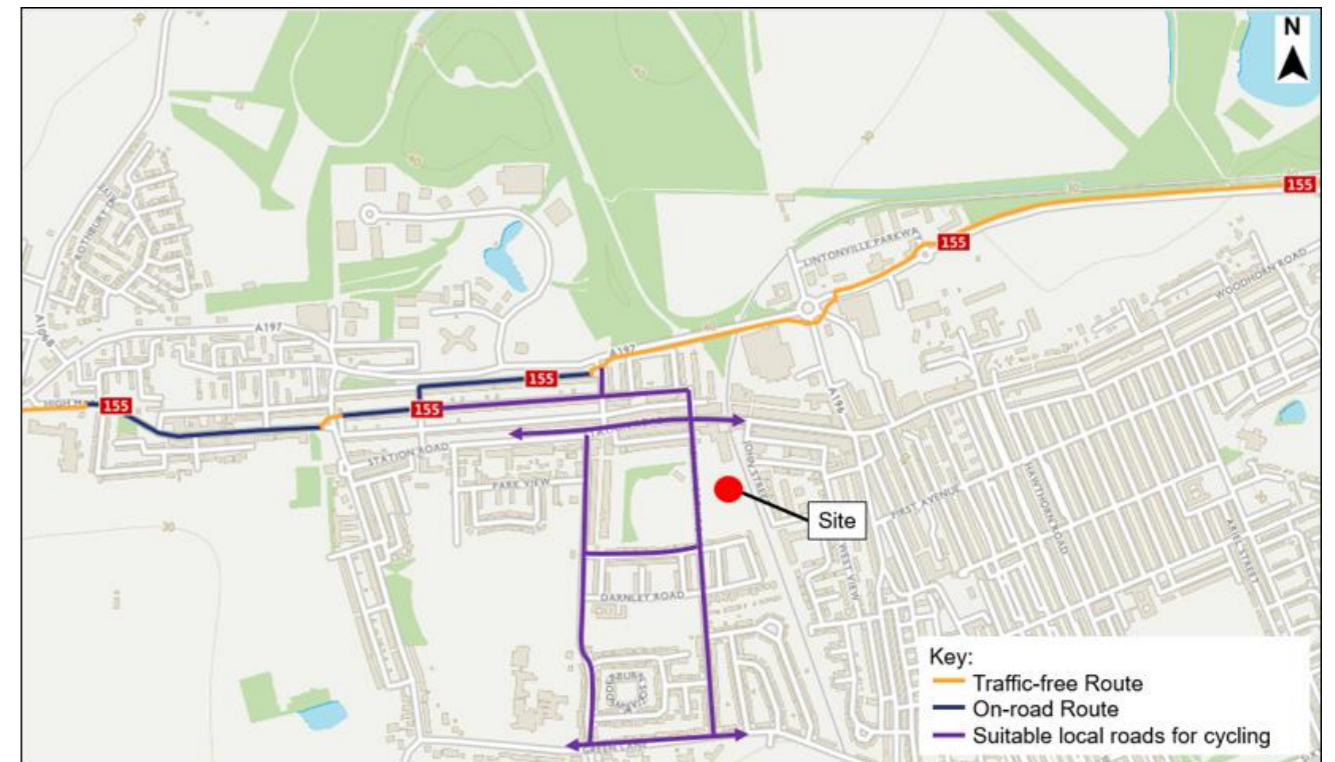


Figure 13.2 Extract image from Transport Statement showing local cycling network

### 13.5 Public Transport

- 13.5.1 The proposed station is located approximately 750m from Ashington Bus Station to the east. It is anticipated that the presence of the rail station would ensure operators take advantage of the existing bus stops located along Station Road, approximately 250m from the centre of the site as shown in Figure 14.3 These bus stops fall within the recommended 400m walking distance from the centre of the site. Currently, whilst the bus infrastructure is present at these locations, there are no active bus services using them.
- 13.5.2 A further two operational bus stops are located to the west of the Station Road, approximately 450m from the centre of the site.
- 13.5.3 The site is therefore considered highly accessible by all modes, including sustainable modes of transport, with public transport and pedestrian facilities readily available in close proximity to the site.
- 13.5.4 The bus is generally considered a viable mode of travel over short and medium distances although some routes and services with limited stops can make longer distances viable. The CIHT in their document 'Planning for Public Transport in Developments' (1999) advises that bus stops should be located within 400m of a development for ease of accessibility.
- 13.5.5 Further two operational bus stops are located to the west of the Station Road, approximately 450m from the centre of the site.
- 13.5.6 A bus stop on the northern side of the carriageway along Station Road is provided with a shelter and timetable. Bus cages are present at both bus stops, with westbound services stopping on the main carriageway. The northern bus stop accommodates an inset bus layby. Both bus stops offer regular services to Morpeth and Bedlington. Table 3 provides summary of existing bus services.



Figure 13.3 Extract AECOM Transport Assessment Bus Stop Locations, Source: Google Maps 2020)

Table B Extract from AECOM Transport Assessment showing Existing Bus Services

Service	Route	Approximate Frequency	
		Monday - Fridays	Weekends
35	Woodhorn Church – Newbiggin by the Sea	Every 20 min	Every hour
434	Linton – Bedlington Station via Ashington	Every hour	Every hour*

\*No service on Sunday

The Number 35 operates from 06:23 until 18:17 on weekdays meanwhile the Number 434 operates from 09:26 until 14:21. It is reasonable to assume that these services will have some attractiveness to commuters to reach residential areas and shopping area of Ashington as an alternative to walking and cycling.

### 13.6 Inclusive Access

- 13.6.1 Draft designs have been shared with stakeholders representing those with disability/access groups and informed by a Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA).
- 13.6.2 Level access is provided within station public areas with minor ramp facilities externally to accommodate any level change requirement around the site. Entrances have level thresholds and appropriate access point widths to enable any non-able users to enter the station platform area.
- 13.6.3 External seating is located in areas not more than 50m apart (as set out in BS 8300:2009+A1:2010 document). These will provide resting places for those people with limited mobility along the access routes between the accessible parking spaces and the station entrance.
- 13.6.4 Emergency and refuse waste vehicles will be able to access the site via the car parking entrance. A vehicle tracking exercise has been carried out for all types of operational vehicles within the site (including deliveries to the existing Wilko store) to ensure there is enough manoeuvrable space, adequate turning circles and passing areas.
- 13.6.5 Step-free access is provided with the provision of a lift adjacent to Wansbeck Square to take passengers to the lower level from where the station forecourt can be accessed.
- 13.6.6 Accessible parking is in close proximity to the main entrance area.
- 13.6.7 The station facilities themselves have been designed to be fully accessible to all groups in accordance with the Department for Transport's "Design Standard for Accessible Railway Stations".

## 14 Conclusion

- 14.1.1 It is considered that the proposed railway station and overall scheme accords with the relevant national and local planning policies, and all other material considerations, as set out in the Planning Statement which has been submitted in support of this planning application. The proposed development which is the subject of this application will deliver significant economic, social, and environmental benefits, including the potential for the development to act as a catalyst for further investment and regeneration within Ashington and South East Northumberland more widely.
- 14.1.2 Ashington Station will increase and improve the opportunities for use of alternative modes of transport to the private car, helping to better meet the needs of those without access to the private car and encouraging those with access to the private car to consider using a more sustainable mode of travel. This will help reduce carbon emissions and deliver many environmental and health benefits including improving regional air quality and reducing congestion on the local highway network.
- 14.1.3 The scheme will provide a safe and secure railway station, with appropriate lighting and CCTV camera provision to encourage all parts of the community to use the transport services and the railway station.
- 14.1.4 The proposed development has been designed with the ambition to provide suitable access provision for all users. Following feedback from the public consultation the project has reviewed pedestrian access. A lift is now proposed to provide access to/from the station to Wansbeck Square.
- 14.1.5 The engineering and technical design of Ashington station is continuing. As such it is anticipated that the local planning authority will seek to condition any detailed design elements, such details will then be agreed through the subsequent discharge of conditions on a planning permission.
- 14.1.6 The scheme has been designed based on a sound understanding of the site and the adjacent land uses. The application is accompanied by various environmental and other assessments to demonstrate that the scheme would have an acceptable impact on residential amenity and public safety.