



# Northumberland

## County Council

### **RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY SERVICE DIRECTOR – LOCAL SERVICES**

**Paul Jones**

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#### **Introduction of and Amendments to Off-Street Car Parks, Hexham**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor John Riddle**

**17 May 2022**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

This report sets out the background to the proposed changes to off-street car parking restrictions in Hexham town centre.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the proposed time limit amendments to Wentworth Car Park and proposed restrictions at the new Hexham Alemouth Road Car Park (old bunker site) are implemented.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

Living - "We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for"

Enjoying - "We want you to love where you live"

#### **Key Issues**

1. Studies carried out in 2017 identified a lack of available parking provision compared to demand in Northumberland's main town centres including Hexham.
2. The proposal has been developed in order to encourage vehicle turnover and increase parking facilities at Wentworth Car Park and Alemouth Road Car Park.
3. The car park at the Hexham Alemouth site has been built by the developer and is to be purchased by the County Council, however the associated parking order changes will be funded from the 2022/23 Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme.

## Delegated Decision

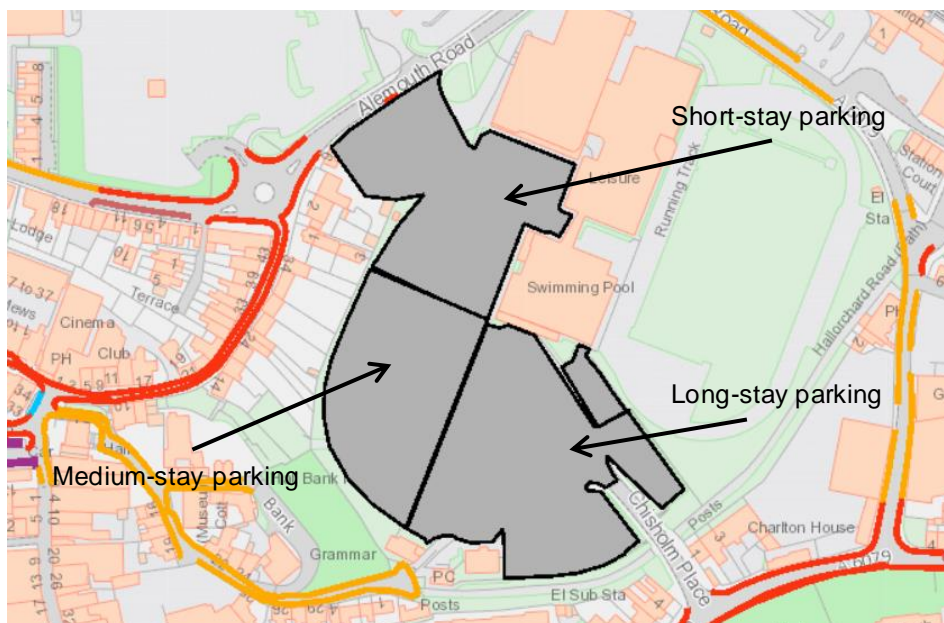
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### Background

Wentworth Car Park is situated in the heart of Hexham town centre and provides the best access for visitors to the area. It is currently divided into three sections denoted by signage and by the coloured surfacing of its parking bays:

- 'Short-stay' parking = maximum length of stay is 2 hours, parking bays marked in red;
- 'Medium-stay' parking = maximum length of stay is 4 hours, parking bays marked in blue;
- 'Long-stay' parking = maximum length of stay is 24 hours.

A section for Coach parking is also provided. The extents of the car park are highlighted in Figure 1 below.



**Fig. 1: Wentworth Car Park and its zones highlighted in grey**

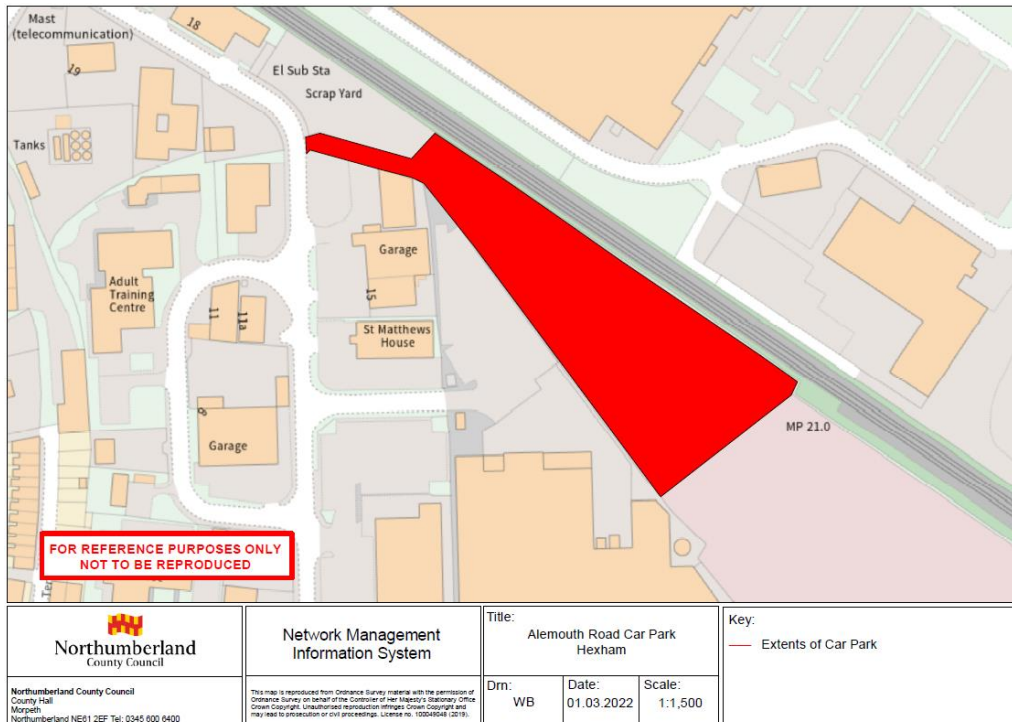
In 2017 NCC commissioned a study into the existing car park capacity and usage in Hexham and to produce a strategy for meeting future parking needs. Parking is considered to be a significant issue that is considered by some people to be a constraint on the growth of their economies and their sustainability. The study concluded that the demand for parking in Hexham is assumed to increase by approximately 0.9% per year in the future years, based on housing and traffic growth forecasts. This is expected to lead to further capacity issues and overspill of parking into other locations, including surrounding streets.

### Proposals

Part of the suggested interventions to address the issues of limited parking facilities within the study included increasing car park capacity by around 250 spaces. Subsequently, a new off-street car park at Alemouth Road has been approved and constructed to accommodate this requirement.

## Delegated Decision

It is intended to introduce long-stay parking restrictions on the section of the new site which is to be owned and maintained by the County Council. The area will be known as Alemouth Road Car Park and its extents are shown in Figure 2.



**Fig. 2: Area of the Hexham, Alemouth Road Car Park to be enforced by NCC**

Once introduced, the existing long-stay parking bays within Wentworth Car Park are to be amended to become part of the medium-stay restrictions i.e. a maximum stay of 4 hours, so that any motorists wishing to park for longer than 4 hours can be directed to the new Alemouth Road Car Park. The removal of all long-stay parking bays from Wentworth Car Park is therefore intended to avoid the issue of unnecessary traffic movements into the car park by drivers looking for long-stay spaces and will help mitigate the demand for higher turnover shorter stay parking for shoppers, service users and other visitors to the town.

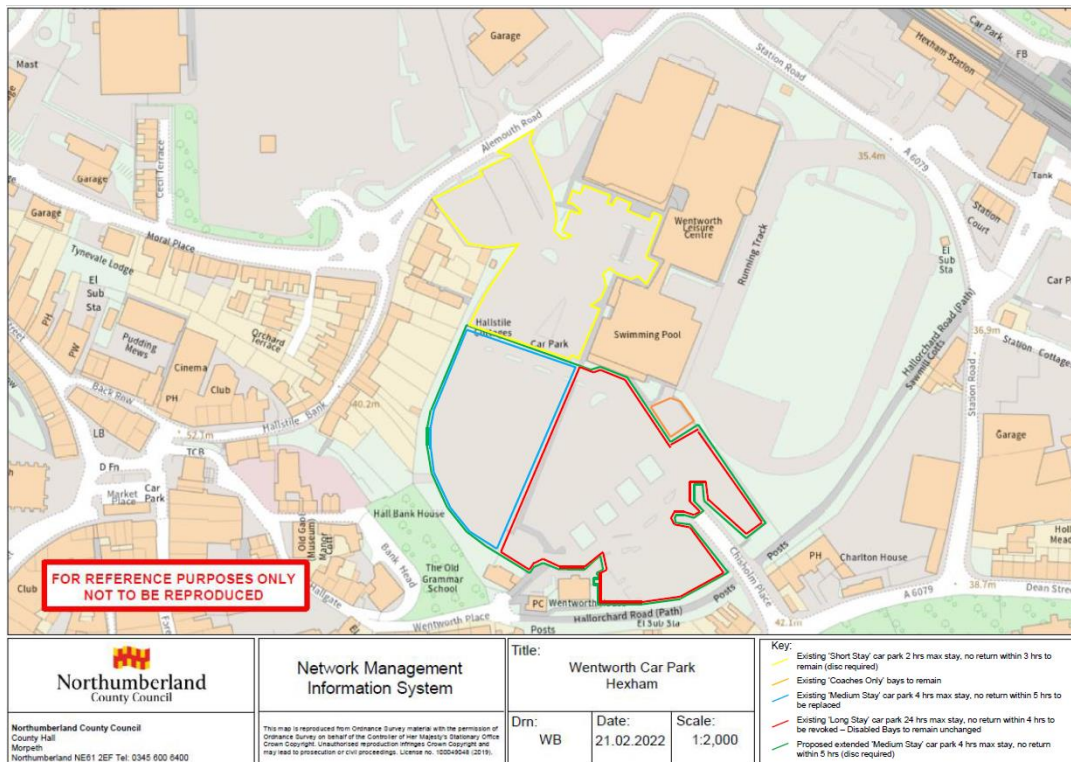
Consideration has been given over the most appropriate timescales for implementing these changes and it is the County Council's intention to do so as soon as is reasonably possible following the opening of the new car park off Alemouth Road, so that the desired changes to current parking behaviours can be encouraged from the outset.

Changes to the space allocations are to entail the following:

- Wentworth Car Park will become a short and medium-stay only car park, with a maximum stay of 4 hours and no return within 5 hours for the medium-stay area;
- The existing short-stay parking bays (marked in red surfacing) nearest to Waitrose and Wentworth Leisure Centre will remain as is, with the requirement to display a parking disc set to the time of arrival;

## Delegated Decision

- Some existing parking bays will be reallocated to increase the provision of dedicated disabled bays for Blue Badge holders along the rear of Wentworth Car Park near to the public toilets;
- All other bays within this car park will require a parking disc to be displayed and are to be restricted to a maximum stay of 4 hours;
- The car park is to remain free of charge and time limits will apply between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 from Monday – Sunday;
- Parking discs can be obtained from Wentworth Leisure Centre, Waitrose, local shops and disc dispensers for £1.00;
- Those who wish to park for longer than 4 hours would be expected to park in Alemouth Road Car Park, which is also to be free of charge all day and the limitation on time of stay being a maximum stay of 72 hours, no return within 6 hours. There will be 3 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points available to car park users within Alemouth Road Car Park.



**Fig. 3: Proposed changes to Wentworth Car Park at Hexham**

It is expected that the operation of an additional off-street car park at the former Hexham Alemouth Road site will encourage more visitors to the area and promote growth for local businesses, whilst the changes at Wentworth Car Park will afford motorists with greater opportunities to park within the town centre by increasing vehicular turnover without the need to use on-street parking facilities, thus freeing up capacity for local residents. All relevant statutory consultees will be notified of these amendments as part of the process for making the permanent Orders.

## Delegated Decision

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### Implications Arising out of the Report

<b>Policy</b>	Consistent with existing policies
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	Parking order changes will be funded from the 2022/23 Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme
<b>Legal</b>	Motorists will be required to comply with the Traffic Regulation Order
<b>Procurement</b>	Signage and road markings to meet Regulations for Traffic Regulation Orders
<b>Human Resources</b>	None
<b>Property</b>	None
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	None
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	Regulations in place to carry out enforcement
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	Off-street car parks provide a safer location to leave vehicles for all road users
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	Removing long stay car parking from Wentworth car park is intended to avoid unnecessary traffic movements into the car park by drivers looking for long-stay spaces
<b>Wards</b>	Hexham Central with Acomb & Hexham East

## **Delegated Decision**

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### **Background Papers:**

File reference –

S:\Highways\PROJECT\18\FC PARKING SCHEMES\FC180024 - Hexham  
Bunker Site

### **Author and Contact Details**

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Report Author     **William Binks, Programme Officer**

## Delegated Decision

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### DECISION TAKEN

**Title of Officer:** Service Director, Local Services

**Subject:** Proposed off-street car parking changes at Hexham.

**Consultation:** Statutory consultees will be notified of these changes.

**Decision Taken:** To introduce new off-street parking restrictions at Wentworth Car Park and Alemouth Road Car Park, Hexham.

Signature of Director



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**Date**

7th June 2022

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