



Department for Transport

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
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From the Secretary of State
The Rt Hon Grant Shapps

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Our Ref: MC/389794
Your Ref: MG14469

28th February 2022

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your email of 3 February, about step-free access at Ash Vale Station.

I understand that the scheme in question at Ash Vale is intended to be part funded by Surrey County Council, which proposes to contribute £300,000 to support its delivery, and is seen as a local priority investment. I am pleased that the scheme has recently completed the detailed design phase and has secured the necessary planning permission.

The Department continues to discuss funding options with all stakeholders to try to identify solutions to funding projects. The Spending Review settlement has meant we are continuing to invest at record levels in rail enhancements across England and Wales with increased budgets from 2022-23 to 2024-25.

Although I am unable to discuss individual schemes and stations at this point, we remain committed to publishing the Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline update, which lists all rail infrastructure schemes in the pipeline. We want to provide as much clarity and certainty as possible on rail enhancements and will set out our plans shortly.

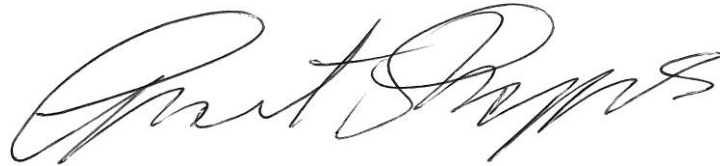
The Access for All (AfA) programme was launched in 2006 and has installed accessible, step-free routes at over 200 stations. The Inclusive Transport Strategy, published on 25 July 2018, included a commitment to extend the programme to 2024, with an additional £350million of funding from the public purse. The current round of Access for All funding has been allocated and is in the process of being spent.

All inaccessible stations deserve funding, and you may find it useful to know that we are in the process of setting the funding envelopes for the next control period (2024-29).

I would therefore recommend you look at all possible sources of funding and continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that Ash Vale station is a high priority for the industry. When further funding is available, any station without an accessible route into the station and to all platforms will be a potential candidate.

I am committed to improving access at all stations, and will continue to seek further opportunities and funding, to provide more improvements.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Shapps', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT