**From:** **Dave Axam, Chair of Enterprise M3**

**Sent:** 17 June 2020
**Subject:** Ash Vale Station

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your email earlier today regarding Ash Station and the potential to fund access improvements through the MHCLG invitation to put forward proposals to delivery capital projects in order to stimulate the economy over the next 18 months.

I am very aware of the access issues at Ash Vale Station as I use this station with my 93 year old father who uses a wheel chair.

Whilst I personally would therefore support such a development I am bound by the funding criteria of this specific request.

The LEP is charged with a mandate to support and drive economic development and growth. The development areas targeted are laid out in our existing strategic economic plan and also in our emerging Local Industrial Strategy, which can be found here [https://enterprisem3.org.uk/local-industrial-strategy](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/X8_nC3QL5hDjGvKugIBd5?domain=enterprisem3.org.uk) and that we are currently reviewing to ensure that it is aligned with economic recovery. The case put forward for any intervention therefore needs to reflect outputs in these areas for us to be able to support.

The letter from Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP clearly requires that proposal meet the following criteria and we are in the fortunate position of having a number of very strong candidates.

* town and city centre modernisation through targeted infrastructure investments unleashing their longer-term economic potential;
* investment in physical connectivity to improve the functioning of the local economy;
* investment in innovation ecosystem including through improvements to research and development facilities driving up business productivity;
* improvements to human capital;
* improving digital connectivity, in order to support economic performance, particularly in more isolated areas.

Unfortunately whilst, undeniably worthy, I do not feel I would be able to make a strong case matched against these criteria for the accessibility improvements needed at Ash Vale; certainly compared to the long list of other projects under active consideration. We will however be in the position to submit a strong list of proposals for our area and I look forward to sharing details of these projects with you in the coming days.

Nevertheless whilst this may not be the right funding to pursue I will continue to work with colleagues at Surrey Heath Borough Council and in South Western Railway to explore other more suitable funding opportunities as they arise.

Best wishes

Dave

Dave Axam

Chair, Enterprise M3