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OUR REF: JN/hc

YOUR REF:

Dear Alan

**STATION COMMERCIAL PROJECT FACILITY (CP4) FUNDING BIDS FOR
CONGLETON AND SANDBACH RAILWAY STATIONS**

I am pleased to confirm Cheshire East Council's full support for the improvement and extension of car parking provision at both Congleton and Sandbach railway stations. Indeed, these improvements have been sought for many years.

Local Elected Members have been briefed on this funding bid and are likewise fully supportive.

Our new Local Transport Plan focuses on the two principal themes of 'Business Growth' and 'Ensuring a Sustainable Future'. Investment in these two projects can help us achieve these aims in a number of ways, including:

Business Growth	Ensuring a Sustainable Future
These stations serve our principle travel to work area of Manchester and the proposals will make it easier for people to seek opportunities for employment.	On-going consultation with local communities has established that there is 'suppressed' demand from commuters put off by limited car parking at (and adjacent to) these stations.
These stations provide rural market towns with a key link to the national transport network. Improvements to accessibility are directly linked to economic growth.	Encouraging modal shift from the private motor car to public transport helps achieve our address local carbon emissions from transport.
Heavy congestion associated with people seeking limited 'on street' parking for the stations acts to reduce the 'quality of place' of the area, impacting on external investment.	These proposals would contribute to the general environmental improvement of Sandbach and Congleton,

In addition, one of the principle themes in the Council's recent bid for funding from the Government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund focuses on 'Enabling Smarter Travel Choices'. This includes targeted marketing campaigns, employer engagement and a range of incentives and reward promotions. Clearly, the investment in facilities at both Congleton and Sandbach railway stations would directly complement this.

As a measure of the importance this Council places on securing this funding, we would, after examining the proposals in detail, be prepared to make a local financial contribution towards these schemes from our own resources. Please liaise directly with my officer Paul Griffiths (01270 686353) on this aspect.

I wish you every success with this funding bid and look forward to developing and promoting improved rail access from Congleton and Sandbach in partnership with Northern Rail.

Yours sincerely



John Nicholson
Strategic Director - Places