

Mr John Foster
Maidstone Borough Council
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Maidstone
Kent ME15 6JQ

Network Rail South East
2nd Floor Cottons Centre
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25 May 2016

Dear John,

Maidstone East and Royal Mail Sorting Office

As recently discussed I confirm that Network Rail supports the Councils' (MBC and Kent County Council) intention to promote a mixed use development of the area surrounding and adjacent to Maidstone East station. We recognise a viable redevelopment will need to consider all land railway ownership including the large station car park adjacent to the vacant Royal Mail Sorting Office site.

The station car parks and buildings are leased to the train operating company Southeastern under a franchise managed by Department for Transport. Any development of land within the existing franchise demise will require DfT approval so I recommend an exploratory meeting with the DfT franchise team.

Experience from similar proposals elsewhere indicates that developments requiring significant alteration to the franchise lease (particularly revenue generating assets such as car parks), are more likely to succeed if the proposal is recognised when the franchise is awarded, rather than attempting to negotiate changes to terms and revenue streams of a franchise once underway. In this case timing may be fortuitous given DfT have the option to rebrand in 2018/19.

I'm happy to arrange and attend a meeting with DfT's franchise team and will be in touch shortly to make the arrangements,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Smith", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Smith
Route Enhancement Manager
Network Rail South East Route