



**Councillor Duncan Goodfellow
Leader of East Staffordshire Borough Council**

8th November 2021

Direct Line: (01283) 508 601
Reply to: Cllr Duncan Goodfellow
Our Ref: Towns Fund Project E
(please quote this reference on all correspondence with us)

Cllr Alan White
Leader of Staffordshire County Council

Dear Alan

Burton upon Trent Towns Fund Programme – Project’s D (High Street Linkages) & E Library and Enterprise Hub (Market Hall)

The Burton Towns Fund programme provides the town with a real opportunity to instigate transformative change in the town centre, facilitated by our respective organisations, delivering a better, brighter Burton for the future as first articulated in the adopted Burton Regeneration Strategy (2019) and by the Town Investment Plan we collectively submitted to Government (December 2020).

One year on, the Borough Council’s own Towns Fund project, Project D, is currently progressing well. We have recently completed our second round of public consultation, through which we set out a number of proposals for the High Street, asking for feedback and support from the public. Through various key developments, Project D aims to re-focus the town in the direction of the River Trent and the Washlands by creating the environment to “break through” from the town centre to the river, creating a more dynamic tourism attraction.

You will be aware that one of our proposals is to create a new Washlands visitor centre on the area currently occupied by the library. A visitor centre would act as a hub and gateway to the Washlands and would be used to provide education on the natural environment. It would also provide other facilities such as bike or scooter hire so visitors can explore the extensive natural feature which the Washlands offers.

The initial response to this idea has been very positive and the proposal has ranked third out of 9 in the consultation, narrowly missing out on second. There is clearly public support for the Library becoming a visitor centre.

The use of the library area is fundamental to our plans both as the Borough Council but also as a wider Towns Fund partnership looking to deliver on the whole vision of the Burton Town Investment Plan. The successful delivery of Project D is dependent upon the relocation of the library as it provides us with the unique opportunity to redefine the town centre in the Market Place but also how it interacts with our soon to be enhanced Washlands. To that end, we are ready to utilise the library building through the delivery of our proposed visitor centre for the Washlands. You may be encouraged to hear that we have already engaged positively with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and the Transforming the Trent Valley partnership to support the successful delivery of this facility, in partnership with the Borough Council.

Having seen first-hand the successful relocation of Lichfield's Library, I am confident that rather than being forced to close, our underperforming market can be repurposed and the heritage retained for the future as well as playing a central role in the broader strategy along the Burton waterfront.

With this in mind, I would ask that the County Council Cabinet supports the proposal to relocate the library into the Market Hall, if the whole business case for Project E is positive. In turn, the Borough Council will quickly follow this outcome and take the appropriate decisions for the future use of both buildings including the closure of the Market Hall for your use, the relocation of remaining small number of market hall traders and the decision to deliver a visitor centre in what will be the former library building.

Our council decisions are key to the plans for Burton upon Trent town centre.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Duncan Goodfellow
Leader of East Staffordshire Borough Council