

Ensignbus

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1st September 2011

- 2 SEP 2011

Dear Mr Bird,

South Essex Rapid Transit

Further to my letter of 8th February 2010, and our more recent meetings with representatives from the **sert** development team, I now write to confirm Ensign Bus Company's continued support for the **sert** project.

In particular, we note the proposed changes to **sert** Route 1 to Basildon, but we still believe that this route will continue to provide opportunities for growing passenger usage, linked to new developments at Lakeside and Basildon Town centre, and in the future as other developments such as Thamesport are linked to the **sert** network.

We are very supportive of proposals such as **sert** to provide Bus Rapid Transit, and our knowledge and experience of the Kent Fastrack scheme tells us that **sert** will be able to attract people out of their cars and benefit both existing and future passengers in South Essex.

Following the discussions with your representatives, Ensign Bus is certainly interested in discussing becoming one of the operators of **sert** services. We see this as providing the opportunity to link with and enhance our existing local bus services, and see **sert** complementing and expanding the network rather than competing with it.

We note the intended use of an umbrella partnership for **sert** with further voluntary partnership arrangements to cover individual routes of operators. We can support this concept and would be prepared to enter into detailed discussions with the promoters to operate routes on the **sert** infrastructure. This would include any discussions on the intended use of a Statutory Quality Partnership scheme for all or part of the routes. In

particular, we believe that the draft heads of agreement would form a useful starting point for further negotiations.

Ensign Bus is therefore keen to continue to be engaged in the development of **sert** and supports the aspiration to add additional routes in later phases to create a wider network.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Peter Newman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Newman
CHAIRMAN