

**DRAFT COVERING LETTER
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BY EMAIL

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**HIGH SPEED 2 PHASE 2 CONSUTATION
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION RESPONSE**

On behalf of the Liverpool City Region (LCR), we are pleased to enclose our response to the HS2 Phase 2 Consultation.

We wish to make a clear statement of intent around support for HS2, which is essential to bridge and rebalance the economic gap between North and South. HS2 is absolutely critical to the future economic prosperity of the LCR and indeed the North of England. It represents a unique opportunity to stimulate transport development in the region, bring benefits to existing networks, and transform our infrastructure beyond recognition.

Our response is intentionally strategic and high-level; we understand the necessity for HS2 Ltd to continue to augment and evaluate their evidence base during the consultation process, including the publication of "The Strategic Case for HS2" published on 30th October. Our own studies (as detailed within our response) this will supplement HS2 Ltd.'s already extensive library of economic, environmental, engineering and supporting technical documents, facilitating a greater appreciation of the potential impacts on the LCR during the developmental phase of the project. Our work will help us determine what options are realistically available to the LCR, and we are due to complete our analysis in spring 2014 after the consultation closes; it is manifestly more important to ensure the quality of the outputs, rather than be driven by an artificial deadline.

Understandably our aim is to secure the best outcome for the LCR, be that in the short, medium or longer term. Whilst our strong aspiration is for a direct HS2 link into the city, we will work with HS2 Ltd to consider all the available evidence to identify not only the optimal solution, but also how to achieve it. We also appreciate that an incremental approach, whereby the ideal scenario is delivered at a later stage, may suit all parties.



We will continue to proactively plan for HS2, and will embrace every opportunity to work alongside with HS2 Ltd in coming months and years. The interest and positive support for HS2 in the LCR was demonstrated at our stakeholder seminar in June, at which both David Prout and Andrew Went were able to join us. Our successful hosting of the HS2 Ltd Board meeting in September equally demonstrated what can be achieved through effective collaboration.

In summary, we are confident that the response demonstrates our commitment to the future success of the HS2 project, and highlights those areas we would wish to explore in some more detail, in partnership with HS2 Ltd.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Liam Robinson, Chair of the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority

Joe Anderson, Mayor of Liverpool & Chair of the Liverpool City Region Cabinet

Robert Hough, Chair of the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership

