



South West of England
Regional Development Agency

Rt Hon Geoffrey Hoon MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

26 February 2009

Your Ref:
Our Ref:

Dear Mr Hoon

**Re: BRISTOL RAPID TRANSIT ASHTON VALE – TEMPLE MEADS
MAJOR SCHEME BID**

I am writing to lend the support of the South West Regional Development Agency (South West RDA) to the above major scheme bid currently before your department.

The scheme was included in the South West's original Regional Funding Allocation advice which set out transport priorities for the next ten years. In responding to this advice, your Department approved the scheme for entry into the regional programme and identified it as one to come forward for funding within the next three years.

The region's support for the scheme was recently reaffirmed through an RFA 'refresh' exercise to update the programme of schemes coming forward. It will unlock major development potential adjacent to the alignment of the Rapid Transit, and complement investment activity which the South West RDA has been taking forward with partners in the West of England sub-region.

An early decision on the major scheme bid would be extremely welcome as it would allow the scheme to come forward as planned in the RFA programme to 2014. It's implementation would support the reduction of congestion in the Bristol area and help deliver significant sustainable development adjacent to the south west of Bristol as identified in the region's draft Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026.

Yours sincerely,

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