



## **HS2 LTD GEARS UP FOR NEXT STAGE OF WORK FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT'S PUBLICATION OF HS2 REPORT**

The Government today published its Command Paper response to the HS2 report, and in so doing set out the next stages of work for HS2 Ltd.

As part of that next stage, Government has asked that the company now take forward further development of its recommendations for High Speed Two – a new line between London and the West Midlands – so that a full public consultation can be held in the autumn.

Welcoming the publication of the Command Paper, the company's Chairman Sir Brian Briscoe said:

*High speed rail has enormous potential to benefit the UK, but the project will never get going without public support – which is why it is so important that we now prepare thoroughly for a full public consultation that gives everybody the chance to state their views and make their voice heard, particularly those who may be directly affected by the line. That process of open engagement and dialogue will ultimately be as crucial to the success of High Speed Two as world-class engineering and construction.*

HS2 Ltd has also been asked to begin detailed work on options for equivalent lines from the West Midlands to Manchester, and to Leeds via the East Midlands and South Yorkshire. This work – on a similar basis to that just completed for London-West Midlands – will develop specific route options as well as identifying full costs and benefits.

Commenting on this extension of HS2 Ltd's remit, the company's Chief Executive Alison Munro said:

*The work we have presented on the high speed line between London and Birmingham is the most comprehensive to date in the UK. We now look forward to developing detailed proposals for extensions to Manchester and Leeds. Though it will be a demanding task, our work during 2009 means we are in a good position to make progress quickly.*

*Our work on London-Birmingham was only possible with the help of our delivery partners and many others, and the further development of relationships with such partners in the North West, Yorkshire and the East Midlands will be a key early priority.*

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd is the company established by the Government in January 2009 to advise on the development of high-speed rail services between London and Scotland
2. HS2 Ltd's report was submitted to Government at the end of December 2009.
3. Having considered the HS2 report, the Government has today published its response, the Command Paper *High Speed Rail*. The response sets out a proposed strategy for a British high speed rail network. Alongside this response, the Government has also published HS2 Ltd's report and supporting documents, including detailed maps. All documents are available from the Department for Transport website: [www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail](http://www.dft.gov.uk/highspeedrail)

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