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

06 September 2007

Dear Secretary of State

I am very pleased to send you the response from BCSC to the consultation on the Draft Local Transport Bill, *Strengthening Local Delivery*.

BCSC strongly supports partnerships between public agencies and private operators and welcomes the proposals in the draft Bill to ensure that partnerships work better, with partnership contracts the preferred choice over quality contracts. BCSC also wants to make sure that Community Transport is more accessible and that new routes match the growing demand for flexible transport during evenings and weekends.

BCSC, whose membership includes retailers, developers, owners, architects, local authorities and others with an interest in the managed retail environment, is concerned that if mandatory road pricing is implemented, many of the greatest losers would be retailers as consumers opt to drive elsewhere rather than pay for entry into an area. However, voluntary opportunities could work to provide consumers with more choice, more efficient travel and better access to shops.

Sir Rod Eddington's review highlighted the lack of clarity resulting from the mismatch between the economic footprints of major cities and the current boundaries of transport planning authorities. There is therefore scope for much better joint working on transport planning. BCSC therefore supports governance arrangements which provide greater certainty and clearer transport plans that help to reduce the risks associated with major retail developments.

Our consultation response recommends that any new transport strategies, or transport authorities, need to be more firmly linked into the wider development planning process. The retail property industry has been the main delivery agency of the Government's 'town centre first' policy over the last ten years, helping to reduce car dependence and create more attractive, accessible, competitive and pleasant places. Local transport plans should therefore take their lead from the wider Regional Economic Strategies (RES) and Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).

Please do contact me if you would like any further information about the details of our consultation response.

Yours sincerely

Michael Green
Chief Executive, BCSC