

# Proposal for Liverpool City Region SUPERPORT to engage with West Lancashire Borough Council

## 1. Overview

The Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is the region's leading membership organisation committed to the economic growth of the region, representing a unique alliance of businesses and organisations.

The LEP, its members and partners, seek to stimulate business growth and job creation in Liverpool City Region by driving forward the key business sectors of the economy. These are; **SUPERPORT**, Low Carbon Economy, Knowledge Economy and Visitor Economy. More information can be found at [www.liverpoollep.org](http://www.liverpoollep.org)

## 2. SUPERPORT

Built on its history as a great maritime trading centre, Liverpool City Region's ports, airport, road, rail, inland waterway and logistics assets, together comprise strategically important freight capability for the UK and Ireland. These assets coupled with the natural geography comprise **SUPERPORT**. With a further £1 billion investment in these assets in the next 3 years, including the development of Liverpool2, a deep water container facility at the Port of Liverpool, and Mersey Gateway, a 6 lane bridge across the River Mersey, Liverpool **SUPERPORT** will drive substantial economic growth in the City Region, creating over 20,000 new jobs.

Centrally positioned in the UK, and situated in the largest economic region in the UK outside of London, **SUPERPORT** is an ideal location for retailers, manufacturers and associated supply chains to take advantage of the port and population centric benefits of reducing supply chain costs, reducing carbon output and reducing lead times to market.

## 3. The Proposal

Following an initial meeting between Liverpool City Region LEP **SUPERPORT** and West Lancashire Borough Council on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2013 it has been proposed that collaboration could benefit both parties. West Lancashire falls within the natural employment hinterland of Liverpool City Region and it is practical to recognise and maximise the value workforces flowing in both directions offers to inward investors in all sectors.

Widening the geographical scope will also enhance the **SUPERPORT** offer with more well located distribution sites being actively marketed through our activity. In turn this will provide advantage to West Lancashire in promoting their sites to relevant markets and investors. Longer term there may be scope to further develop the relationship to mutual advantage.

## 4. Initial Programme

The **SUPERPORT** agenda is a natural fit between Liverpool City Region and West Lancashire due to the requirement for distribution space to fulfil the economic benefit of Liverpool2 in terms of local employment. This provides a basis for active collaboration.

To maximise the economic development and job creation potential in the City Region, sites and land need to be available for distribution warehouses for the cargo owners who will be moving goods through the City Region. Failure to understand the current supply and future demand for sites will result in cargo owners utilising space out with the City Region.

To inform the work an analysis of the projected demand for logistics facilities in the City Region and its immediate environs over a 20 year horizon is required. This will be based on an understanding of regional, national and global trends in retail and manufacturing logistics, including port and population centric logistics, together with the potential economic, environmental and operational impacts of meeting the projected demand for logistics provision; and impact of associated major infrastructure investments including Liverpool2, Mersey Gateway, 3MG, the proposed HS2 and the widening of the Panama Canal. This should be coupled with an analysis of the current and potential supply of suitable sites and buildings in the City Region and environs to inform interventions required for supply to meet this demand for space.

Geographically, **SUPERPORT** is defined by the six local authorities in the City Region: Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton, Halton and Wirral; however we recognise the economic benefit spreads beyond and for this study we will define it by a 1-2 hour drive from the port. Therefore it is feasible to include the immediate environs such as West Lancashire.

Furthermore there will opportunities to include West Lancashire sites in our marketing activity and promotional brochures and to attend conferences and exhibitions as part of the **SUPERPORT** promotional programme which includes a major presence at the UK leading logistics event Multimodal 2014 in April.

## 5. Commercial

The development and promotion of **SUPERPORT** is reliant on funding from partners so a financial contribution which reflects the input and value of joint activity is required for West Lancashire Council to actively participate in both the Demand and Supply Study and the promotion of sites and facilities to the retail, manufacturing and logistics industry. This contribution may take the form of a specific contribution to the study, marketing and business development activity, or more broadly through Corporate Partner Membership of the LEP. This will need consideration by both organisations and their respective Boards/Members.

## 6. Next steps

This proposal will be shared with the LEP Chair and Board for consideration, and with West Lancashire Borough Council. This will provide an opportunity to consider the implications and desirability of this proposal for each party. On the basis of a positive outcome of these considerations it will then be necessary to quickly substantiate a work programme, agree contacts and to confirm the commercial arrangement.