

## **THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: SOUTH EAST**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks Members views as to whether the District Council should endorse a composite County-wide response in respect of the above which has been drawn up with a view to securing a “One Essex voice”.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council considered Central Government’s consultation document on the future of air transport in the South East at the meeting of the Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> September. At that meeting, it was agreed that the Council’s response should comprise the following:-
- i) London Southend Airport should be developed as a regional airport.
  - ii) One additional runway should be provided at Stansted Airport
  - iii) The site at Cliffe should not be considered for a new international airport. (Min. 437/02)
- 2.2 At the Association of Essex Authorities meeting at the end of October, the content of the Government’s consultation paper was considered. It was agreed that it would be useful if an Essex-wide composite response could be drafted, so that Essex could be seen to be “speaking with one voice”. At the same time, the meeting recognised that individual Districts may have differing views or wish to place a slightly different emphasis on the comments given. Nonetheless, it was felt that there were probably a number of points on which all Essex authorities could agree.

### **3 Detailed Considerations**

- 3.1 The matter was further discussed at a joint meeting of the County and District Councils on 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2002, on Strategic Planning Matters. Arising from that meeting, a suggested ten point response has now been drafted. A copy is attached as Appendix 1 for Members’ consideration. The County would like responses prior to 10<sup>th</sup>

December, when they consider the matter further and compile their response to the Government on the consultation paper.

- 3.2 Members are now asked whether they wish to support the 10 recommendations outlined. All would generally appear to be in line with this Authority's views except Recommendation 8, which opposes any further runway development at Stansted.

#### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is proposed that Members consider whether they wish to support, either wholly or in part, the composite recommendations outlined in Appendix 1.

Paul Warren

Chief Executive

---

#### **Background Papers:**

Letter and attachments received from Essex County Council dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2002

For further information please contact Paul Warren on:-

Tel:- 01702 318199  
E-Mail:- paul.warren@rochford.gov.uk

## **Association of Essex Authorities and County Strategic Partnership**

### **1 Draft Comments on SERAS report**

#### **Recommendation 1**

Essex authorities express strong reservations about reliance on the air travel demand forecasts and their size, and, in consequence, urge the Government not to commit to meet them in full. We urge the Government to adopt a demand management approach to runway provision, taking into account lead times for runway, terminal and infrastructure provision.

#### **Recommendation 2**

Essex Authorities consider that a case for an additional 'hub' airport in the SE has not been made. Unless Heathrow's role were to be significantly downgraded, a second hub is of highly doubtful commercial viability. An airport of the size and with the impact suggested would be environmentally unacceptable at either Stansted or Cliffe.

#### **Recommendation 3**

Essex authorities urge the Government to ensure that maximum use is made of potential capacity at airports in UK regions outside the south-east and east of England, to enable those regions to secure maximum economic growth and regeneration benefit, and to accord with sustainability principles, by reducing the need for people to travel unnecessarily to the south-east and east of England to gain access to air travel services.

#### **Recommendation 4**

Essex authorities believe that the aviation industry should meet its full external costs, including environmental costs. The Government should undertake a thorough sustainability appraisal of airport expansion at the macro level, and require exhaustive environmental assessment of detailed proposals before decisions about airport expansion are taken.

#### **Recommendation 5**

Essex authorities believe that the following measures are required to ameliorate the effects of airports on the community in any of the scenarios proposed:

- night flying should be phased out
- compensation should apply to a wider area than at present and payment should be made more quickly
- new definitions and assessments of noise nuisance should be introduced to reflect community concerns, and to measure more effectively the change in noise levels in

the light of existing ambient noise levels

#### **Recommendation 6**

Essex authorities consider it essential that airport development should be integrated with essential surface access provision and should integrate with regional policies and plans. The SERAS report does not make adequate provision for surface access

in relation to either Stansted or Cliffe proposals and therefore underestimates the resource costs of these options. The cumulative effect of regional policies for growth and the urbanisation effects of the airport proposals need to be considered together in evaluating the sustainability of the proposed options.

#### **Recommendation 7**

Essex authorities are very concerned about the air traffic control and safety implications of major airport expansion affecting the air space over Essex. It is not felt that this has been given sufficient weight in the evaluation. Coupled with this, are concerns over the increased noise of over-flying and stacking areas, which would have a detrimental effect on the environment over a wide area, affecting many thousands of people.

#### **Recommendation 8**

Essex authorities recognise the value of Stansted to the regional economy, and appreciate that a case can be made for further expansion of the airport within the limits of the existing runway, in order to make maximum use of the existing airport infrastructure.

Stansted with one new runway would have a similar capacity to Heathrow when Terminal 5 is fully utilised. Potentially it could become twice the size of current Heathrow. Planted on a comparatively tranquil rural area, much of which is green belt, it would have an unacceptable impact on one of the best parts of the Essex countryside. A very large part of rural Essex would be affected by the expanded footprint of the airport, the associated infrastructure, the pressures of related urbanisation and the effects of light corridors and stacking areas.

The economic benefits of the airport expansion would be difficult to realise in an area with no unemployment and with no brownfield land requiring redevelopment. The need for substantial infrastructure would divert resources away from priority regeneration areas within the County (and the region).

Further runway development at Stansted is therefore opposed.

#### **Recommendation 9**

Essex authorities object to the proposals for development of a major hub airport at Cliffe. A case has not been made to justify developing a new airport operation of this scale. The environmental implications of developing such an airport at this location would be unacceptable, and there is a serious doubt that this hurdle could be overcome. Implications include the destruction of internationally important wildlife habitats, noise and disturbance effects on a population of over 300,000 living within 2 miles, and pressures for supporting housing and infrastructure over a much wider area, much of which is Green Belt. Substantial new infrastructure, such as a Lower Thames Crossing and a new motorway / rail line, would be required, and would have significant consequences over a large part of Essex.

The development of a new hub airport at Cliffe is therefore opposed.

#### **Recommendation 10**

Essex authorities are of the firm view that Gatwick should be included as part of the options.

