



Rochford District Council  
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

## **London Southend Airport & Environs Joint Area Action Plan Issues & Options Report**

June 2008



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An aerial photograph showing a coastal town, Southend-on-Sea, and the London Southend Airport. The town is built on reclaimed land, with a dense residential area in the foreground and a large airport terminal and runways in the middle ground. The sea is visible in the background under a clear sky.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 What is a Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP)?

The Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) is being prepared by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Rochford District Council in response to the challenges and opportunities offered by London Southend Airport together with an airport related employment cluster. Its preparation is in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which allows for the preparation of a development plan document (DPD) by two or more local authorities. Area Action Plans are new-style planning documents that are targeted at areas of significant change and conservation. They should integrate land use, transport and regeneration proposals with clear mechanisms for delivery.

The JAAP will provide the basis for coordinating the actions of a range of partners with an interest in the London Southend Airport and environs and establish planning policies until 2021. It will:

- Manage growth and change in the area by establishing development and design principles
- Ensure the protection of areas and places sensitive to change
- Direct investment and form the basis for regeneration in the area
- Be deliverable.

### *1.1.1 The Evidence Base*

The issues and opportunities have been identified through an examination of the evidence base that has been collected to underpin the JAAP. The evidence base consists of national and regional planning policy, best practice guidance, background studies, socio-economic statistics and other published data, and consultation feedback.

### *1.1.2 Sustainability Appraisal*

The Joint Area Action Plan will need to be informed and modified by the process of Sustainability Appraisal, which will test out the Plan's effect on agreed sustainability objectives. The first stage in the Sustainability Appraisal process is the preparation of a Scoping Report. The purposes of the Scoping Report are to identify other plans or programmes and sustainability objectives, collect baseline information, identify sustainability issues and develop a suitable framework for assessing the sustainability of the Plan. The Scoping Report was completed in January 2008 and has been subject to statutory consultation. This Issues and Options document is submitted for consultation along with a supporting Sustainability Appraisal that will inform, and be part of the consultation at the Preferred Options stage.

## **1.2 What will the Joint Area Action Plan (JAAP) include?**

The JAAP will provide the framework for the regeneration and expansion of economic growth by providing opportunities for a range of economic, social, environmental and transport benefits. It builds on policies in the Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Rochford District Council Core Strategies and Community Strategies which provide the overarching strategic policy frameworks for the development of London Southend Airport and environs.

The JAAP will include site specific allocations and general policies for the area. It will:

- Consider land uses
- Consider the form of development
- Set out specific standards which will be applied to the area.

The JAAP will need to take into account:

- Existing and surrounding uses
- The impact of the proposals on other parts of Rochford District Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council areas
- Transport links and need for improved infrastructure
- Impact on landscape, amenity and the existing built environment, including listed buildings.

### **1.3 The Issues & Options Report**

A key step in the process of establishing the JAAP is the preparation of an 'Issues and Options' report that provides an opportunity for all interested parties to have their say in the future development of London Southend Airport and Environs. It sets out the initial analysis and potential spatial plans for the development of London Southend Airport and Environs in the period to 2021 that have been derived from the evidence base and analysis. It also sets out the vision and objectives of the area, the key issues facing it and options for the future.

Throughout this report a number of questions are posed that are aimed to generate feedback and discussion to help inform the preferred strategy that will shape the JAAP. The feedback received from this document will be used to develop Preferred Options for future development in the area. This is due to be adopted in 2009. Once adopted it will be kept under annual review and will be revised to adapt to changing circumstances. Any future revisions will be consulted upon in the same way as this process.



## 1.4 Policy Context for the JAAP

There exists a comprehensive framework of planning and economic guidance for policy makers to follow in the case of London Southend Airport and its surrounding area. The key features of these policies (both national and regional) is the adherence to similar principles, i.e. the need for development to be sustainable.

The growth of London Southend Airport is strategically aligned to the Future of Air Transport White Paper which recognises the economic benefits of the expansion in air travel. The growing pressures on airports in the South East are highlighted, as is the important role smaller airports have to play in the future provision of airport capacity in the Region. However the paper does recognise that potential environmental consequences need to be considered and there is a need to find a sustainable way forward.

At a regional level the East of England Plan highlights the important roles airports perform in their local areas and the regional economy by providing significant job opportunities. The document states the significant regional role London Southend Airport will play in meeting local and niche markets. In addition the Regional Economic Strategy identifies the airport as a key site and states that the region's airports are important assets which act as drivers for growth and expansion and will play an important role in improving the region's competitive strength and attractiveness as a business location and tourism destination.

The local context supports national and regional policies and recognises that the development of London Southend Airport would act as a key driver for economic development. The Southend Core Strategy presents the strategic and local importance of the airport and surrounding area which employs a significant amount of local people. Strategic Objective 11 is to secure the regeneration of London Southend Airport to enable it to reach its potential to function as a local regional airport providing for significant new employment opportunities and improved surface access subject to environmental safeguards. The Rochford Replacement Local Plan also recognises the significance of the airport site

and supports its development as a regional air transport and airport maintenance facility. This will be carried through to the core strategy in due course.

Transport plans relevant for the area highlight issues of congestion and accessibility in and around the JAAP area. With expansion of the airport, these issues will need to be addressed. However, the potential benefits of the airport are also recognised. These include the regeneration and growth of London Southend Airport and its potential role during the 2012 Olympics.

Overall, the growth and vitality of the Airport are seen as important to the economic development and prosperity of Southend and Rochford. Local policies support the growth of the airport, prioritise the safeguarding of the important Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) sector and providing adequate employment land (in terms of quantity and quality) to accommodate future employment needs of the area.

## **1.5 Getting Your Views**

Your views are needed to help us assess whether we have fully considered all the issues and opportunities facing the study area and have adequately assessed the potential future options for development of the area. We invite your views on:

- Vision and objectives for the London Southend Airport and Environs
- The key issues raised regarding the role of the airport, employment, transport, environment and direction of growth
- Options for development put forward.

In order to encourage discussion and consideration of the matters in this report we have presented questions throughout this report. These questions are meant to be thought provoking and there is no requirement to answer all these questions. A full list of the questions is set out in Appendix A. Your responses to these questions and any other submissions will be taken forward to the preparation of the Preferred Options Document later in 2008.





## 2 Assets, Opportunities and Constraints



### 2.1 The JAAP Area

The site area covered by the JAAP is shown in Figure 2.1. The area straddles the administrative boundary between Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Rochford District Council and lies partly within the Thames Gateway South Essex growth area. It is bounded by the A127/Prince Avenue to the south; Cherry Orchard Way to the west; Hall Road to the north and Southend Road to the east.

The area essentially comprises:

- London Southend Airport
- Adjoining employment areas (including Aviation Way and Laurence Industrial Estate)
- Open countryside, redundant brickworks and recreational facilities to the north
- Residential areas and agricultural land to the south. The residential area stretches from Wells Avenue (adjacent to southern airport boundary) to Prince Avenue in the south.

The northern part of the study area falls within Rochford District Council. The airport runways are predominantly zoned Metropolitan Green Belt (Rochford Replacement Local Plan). Current policy and emerging policy on the Metropolitan Green Belt has a presumption against development unless it is agricultural or exceptional circumstances can be proven. Rochford District Council undertook a comprehensive review of the Metropolitan Green Belt and made minor boundary modifications to make it both more logical and defensible.



Figure 2.1 - JAAP Area





The Southend-London mainline railway line runs along the eastern boundary of the study area. The proposed Southend Airport railway station will be served by this line thereby reinforcing its importance. Southend Road, which is one of the major road links between Rochford and Southend, runs parallel to the railway line. An established residential area fronts onto Southend Road.

The western boundary of the area is Cherry Orchard Way. Most of the north-eastern part of the study area is within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Stroud Green, a relatively small settlement is located at the north-western corner of the study boundary off Cherry Orchard Way/Hall Road junction. The former Brickworks site within the boundary has been put forward in the emerging Rochford Core Strategy as a potential residential site. To the west of Cherry Orchard Way is the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park. A golf course together with a row of large detached houses is adjacent to the airport boundary.

Based on existing land use, particularly the Metropolitan Green Belt designation, existing transport network and established residential areas there appears to be very limited opportunities for expansion within the northern part of the study area. Britannia Business Park is contiguous to the western boundary of the study area.

The southern portion of the study area lies within Southend Borough and is well built up. The south eastern part of the study area comprises an established residential area, allotment gardens, open arable land and the employment area off Nestuda Way. To the south of Eastwoodbury Lane is land currently used as small holdings and is designated in the current Southend-on-Sea Borough Local Plan as Land of High Grade Agricultural Quality (G2). Development, other than agricultural is currently restricted on this land.

In the western part of the study area are Laurence Industrial Area and Aviation Way Business Park. The western edge of the JAAP, Cherry Orchard Way, bisects this area from other employment on Britannia Business Park and Comet Way. Nestuda Way and Cherry Orchard Way are major transport routes serving not only the immediate areas but also connecting Southend with Rochford.





## 2.2 London Southend Airport

A thriving airport and related activity will act as catalysts for the economic growth within the study area and environs. Expansion of the airport operations and the adjoining employment cluster are fundamental in realising the shared vision for the future development of Southend Airport and growth of the associated and adjoining employment cluster/hub.

London Southend Airport currently occupies 125 hectares within the central part of the JAAP. It is leased by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council to the London Southend Airport Company Limited (LSACL), currently part of Regional Airports Ltd. There were no regular commercial scheduled or charter flights for a number of years until 2005 when Flybe reinstated a weekly scheduled service to Jersey during the summer.

Current traffic through the airport is estimated at around 39,000 aircraft movements and passenger movements of around 30,000 passengers per annum<sup>1</sup>. The flying clubs located at the airport account for around 55% of aircraft movements, followed by business aviation (comprising business aviation, air taxi and private aircraft movements) which represent around 30% of movements.

Current operations at the airport are constrained by its facilities, including its runway which at 1,610 metres long and 37 metres wide is capable of handling a range of aircraft types up to and including Boeing 757s for maintenance, but is restricted in respect of 'fully laden' aircraft it can accommodate. For example, it is not long enough for fully laden Boeing 737s that are commonly used by low cost carriers. In addition, the range of facilities, such as the terminal building and accessibility to the airport, restrict the airport's attractiveness as a location for Fixed Base Operators (FBOs) and carriers that may be looking for a base.

<sup>1</sup> Source: CAA Annual Airport Statistics 2006

To move beyond its current operational model it is recognised that further investment will be needed in the airport and LSACL has identified proposals for a major two phase redevelopment programme. Phase One started in 2007 and completion is expected in 2010. It comprises the following projects:

- Refurbishment of the current terminal
- Development of a quality hotel
- A new control tower
- A new airport railway station for which planning consent has been granted

This initial phase would increase the airport's passenger catchment into the London market and make the airport more attractive to potential operators. These improvements would help increase passenger movements to around 1 million passengers per annum (mppa) by 2012-15.

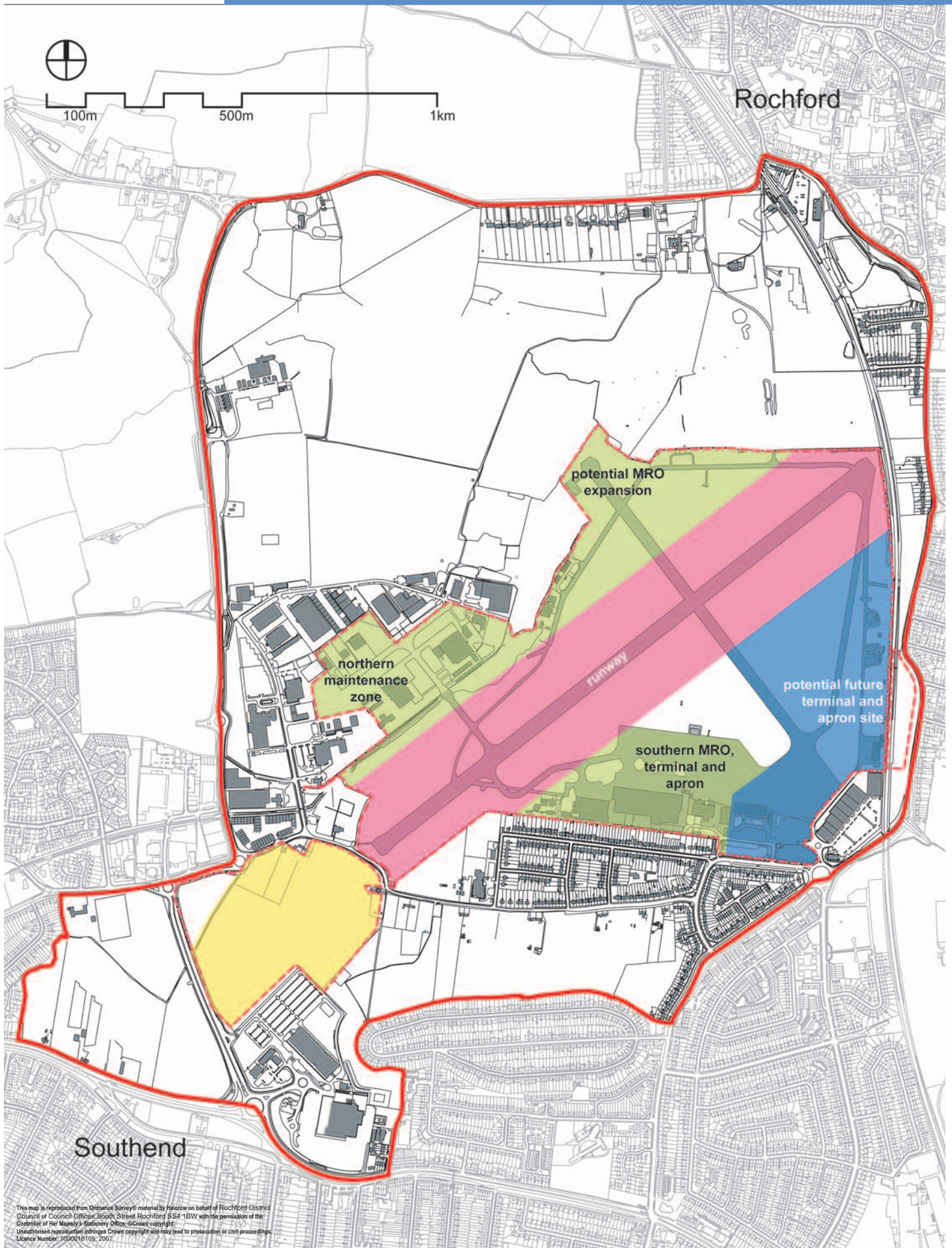
Phase Two involves the building of an entirely new, re-sited terminal building (for which planning approval exists) and the possibility of a runway extension to accommodate the new generation of medium capacity, high-efficiency jets being adopted by regional airlines. This development phase is at an early planning stage. LSACL intends to seek the necessary planning permissions and approvals to enable work to progress for completion by 2011 (in time for the 2012 London Olympics).

While analysis suggests that the airport could reach a maximum capacity of 2 mppa by 2030 using its current constrained runway, an extended runway would increase the attractiveness of the airport to a wider range of commercial and business operators and increase the potential for the airport to reach its capacity figure. This would also be reached sooner, increasing the overall economic benefit for the sub-region.





# Figure 2.2 - Current and Future Land Use Constraints of Southend Airport





The potential opportunity presented by London Southend Airport is a key factor in determining the future of the JAAP area and raises a number of important issues.

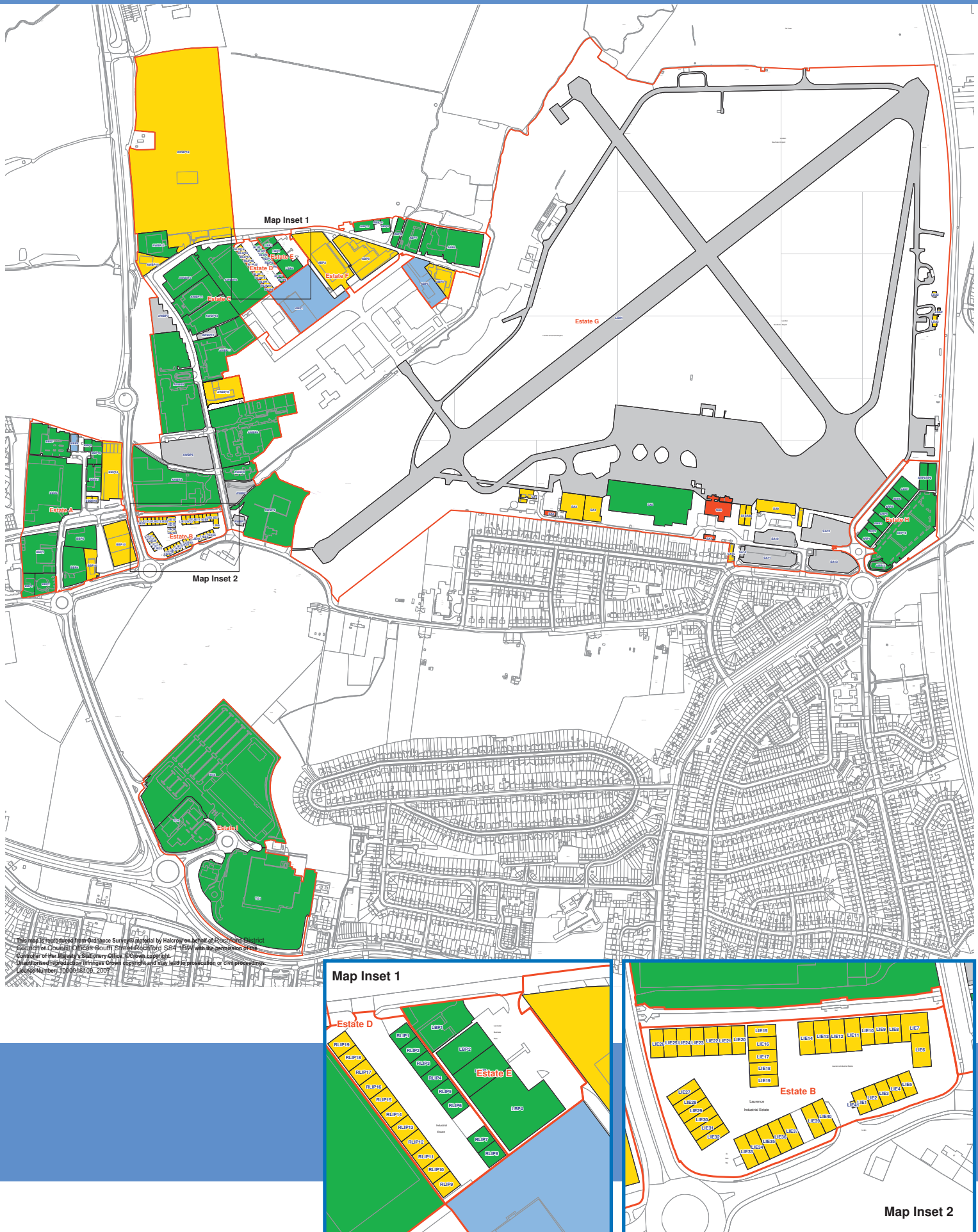
- The future role of the airport and its environs will be determined by investment in its facilities and not least whether or not the runway is extended to 1,799 metres.
- Future development plans within the airport boundary need to maximise the efficient use of land. Given the operational constraints within the airport boundary (see Figure 2.2), land opportunities are limited to more efficient use of southern and northern maintenance zones; re-use of the flying club area to the east of the airport; and potential redevelopment of land around the existing terminal area.
- Realisation of the economic potential of the airport asset can be achieved through improving the offer to aviation operators, businesses and passengers. This includes improved accessibility via the rail network (to increase the size of the passenger catchment) and improved facilities for passengers and business operators.
- The wider potential created by an active airport will need to be harnessed by the rationalisation and use of employment land opportunities adjacent to the airport.
- Balancing the growth of the airport with necessary controls to mitigate environmental impacts.



#### Key:

- **Site Boundary**
- - - **Airport Boundary**
- Airport Runway and Bund**
- Maintenance and Support Zone**
- Passenger Terminal and Apron Zone**
- RESA**

# Figure 2.3 - Condition of buildings



## 2.3 Supply and demand for employment areas

The JAAP area plays an important role in the provision of employment opportunities for residents in the sub-region. In total there are eight industrial estates and retail parks in or adjacent to the JAAP area. These include Britannia Business Park; Comet Way; Laurence Industrial Estate; Aviation Way Business Park; Robert Leonard Industrial Park; Lancaster Business Park; Aviation Business Park; the Airport Retail Park and the retail park at Thanet Grange. It is estimated a total of 51 ha of land is accounted for by these areas.

An assessment of these employment areas was undertaken in 2007 via a site-based survey. Overall within the JAAP area the current employment land allocations are generally of good quality, well occupied and vibrant. The area is home to a diverse mix of businesses (not just B-class uses); the stock is generally modern (78% of sites) and condition is either good (42%) or average (48%) - see Figure 2.3. While there were vacant sites at the time of the survey, there is generally a limited amount of land for future development opportunities. The main area of opportunity is the intensification of employment land close to the airport, in particular within Aviation Way Business Park. Here there are a number of potential sites but also opportunity to better use existing development land which in parts is inefficiently occupied.



### Key: (Condition of Buildings)

	<b>Good</b>
	<b>Average</b>
	<b>N/A</b>
	<b>Poor</b>
	<b>Unknown</b>



Businesses in the JAAP study area are generally long standing businesses, located in their premises for a significant period of time (24% had been there for over 20 years). The characteristics of the area that were important to them and attracted businesses were clearly:

- access to the main road network
- the quality of land and premises
- the relative cost
- the quality of the environment

Proximity to the airport was not an important factor for the majority of businesses, reflecting the current nature of business in the area and the lack of relationship between businesses and airport activity. However, two-thirds of businesses welcome the potential airport expansion.

Within the context of wider employment land allocations in Southend, the JAAP area provides a relatively attractive location that is likely to attract investment. The area forms part of a wider concentration of employment sites located along the A127 corridor that are the most attractive and accessible locations for business. Even within this concentration the quality of stock is sometimes poor and very constrained in terms of expansion land. Sites further east in the borough tend to be struggling for investment and the strategic approach in the sub-region is to maximise opportunities in areas where investment might be possible.

In terms of the wider market demand in Southend, the relatively low level of take-up reflects the fact that demand is being constrained by poor stock. Given the low importance of an airport in the general location decision making process, the direct impact of airport expansion on office demand in the area is uncertain. But case studies show that office provision around smaller airports can attract occupiers (and RBS demonstrates the potential of the JAAP location for offices). There is a view that new and improved industrial-related property offering around the airport would be a stronger proposition and attract current and potential future demand.

Growth targets for the sub-region, based on the Regional Spatial Strategy, indicate that to meet targets, up to 43% of future employment growth could come from the B-class sectors and that the trends within this show a strong growth in Offices & Light Industrial (B1) uses supported by more constrained growth in the Storage and Distribution (B8) market. General Industry (B2) is set to continue declining. This growth translates into an anticipated future need of employment land across Southend and Rochford that is likely to be accommodated in accessible locations (along the A127 corridor) to the west of the sub-region.

In considering the future potential of the JAAP area as an employment location the following considerations will be prevalent.

- The JAAP area is already a vibrant employment area that attracts investment and development. Its prominence as a business location is evident when analysed alongside other employment sites within Southend. As such there is potential for the area to play an increasing role in supporting wider employment in the sub-region.
- While the current employment offer is relatively strong, there are limited opportunities within existing allocations for expansion. Opportunities are largely restricted to infill sites or redevelopment of existing sites.
- Expansion of employment land is currently constrained by the Metropolitan Green Belt designation that covers a significant part of the northern JAAP area. Outside of this area there is limited scope for additional employment allocation.
- Therefore, any future allocation of employment land would require robust justification. It also requires to be clearly focused towards meeting future demand and needs by supplying investment opportunities that are currently not catered for in Southend and Rochford.
- While the current link between businesses and the airport is weak, in developing the future role of the JAAP creating greater synergy between these two assets will generate additional opportunities for investment and employment.



## 2.4 Transport & Accessibility

Transport and accessibility are significant issues throughout the sub-region and clearly any development in the JAAP area will have an impact upon the whole highway network in the wider area. Any development will therefore need to take into account existing congestion along the main corridors in the region, notably the A127 and A13 which suffer from significant levels of congestion and major improvements are planned or are currently taking place along these two roads.



The current transport and accessibility character of the JAAP area is summarised as follows.

- **Highway Network.** Most of the highway network is operating at or near capacity. Recent junction capacity assessments carried out highlight a number of local capacity problems during the peak hours - in particular at the Anne Boleyn roundabout (Sutton Road – Southend Road roundabout), the Prince Avenue/Rochford Road/ Hobleythick Lane signalised junction and the Manners Way / Priory Crescent / Victoria Avenue/Prince Avenue (Cuckoo corner) roundabout.
- **Bus Services, Cycle Routes and Pedestrian Facilities.** Analysis has also highlighted that the current bus services, pedestrian and cyclist facilities serving the area are not considered to be a valid alternative to the car, as confirmed from the airport staff who find it more convenient to drive to work. Two bus stops are located within a 5-minute walk from the airport entrance. However, there is no connectivity with the adjoining Aviation Way Business Park.





- **Railway.** Although the airport is within 2.5km - 3.5km to four railway stations, connectivity with the JAAP area is relatively poor. However, a new airport related railway station is proposed to support the growth of the airport. From the perspective of the airport, a new station will provide direct accessibility to the London market, which has been identified as a target market for growth in the future. It will make the airport more attractive to potential fixed based passenger operators. From a railway/commuting perspective, a new station with accompanying car parking would be an attractive offer for London commuters, an issue that would need to be explored and addressed.
- **Eastwoodbury Lane.** The current and future role of Eastwoodbury Lane is critical to the JAAP area. As the airport grows in terms of the number of aircraft movements the road will be increasingly constrained (i.e. shut to allow aircraft movements). The ultimate result will be the eventual closure and/or diversion of the route.


















Development of the JAAP area would increase the traffic flows on the highway network as the new development would become a destination in its own right and potentially attract additional vehicle traffic from visitors and servicing. Any proposals to redevelop the study area should take into account the existing congestion in the area – especially along the A127 - and suggest appropriate measures and solutions in order to alleviate the congestion and improve connectivity. In doing so, transport solutions proposed for the JAAP area would need to integrate with wider transport strategies across the local authority areas and key proposals such as the South Essex Rapid Transit (SERT).



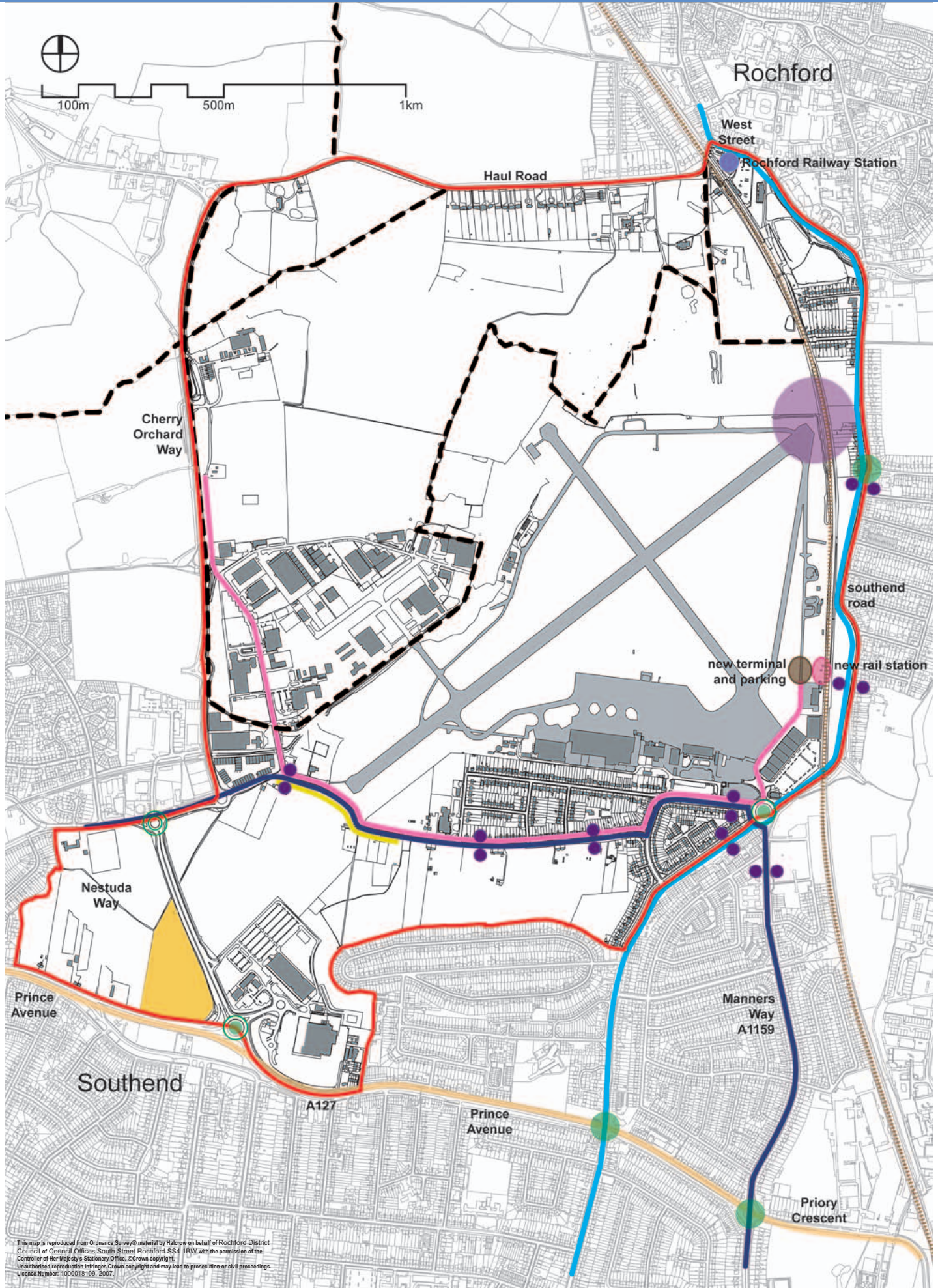
Transport issues and opportunities are shown in Figure 2.4.

**Key:**

-  **Railway Station**
-  **Traffic Congestion**
-  **Railway Line Restricts Runway Strip Lengthening in North-Westerly Direction**
- Junction Capacity**
  -  **Operating with Abundance of Capacity**
  -  **Operating Around Capacity**
  -  **Operating Above Theoretical Capacity**
-  **Bus Route 9**
-  **Bus Route 7/8**
-  **Public Right Of Way**
-  **Bus Stop**
-  **Eastwoodbury Lane Crosses Runway Strip**
-  **Proposed New Railway Station/ Interchange**
-  **Proposed New Terminal**
-  **Potential Park 'n' Ride**
-  **Potential Route for Shuttle System From New Railway Station to Employment Areas**



# Figure 2.4 - Transport issues and opportunities







The transport strategy is likely to require a broad-ranging approach, including:

- Improved connections within the site to public transport.
- Improved public transport connections between the study area and Rochford, Rayleigh and Southend railway stations. The potential SERT and railway station at the airport will have a very important role in improving public transport connections.
- Considerations of the wider impact of the redevelopment upon the whole highway network in the area, beyond the agreed study area of the JAAP.
- Detailed review of operation of junctions and pedestrian crossings in the area, to ensure that roundabouts and signals are providing the most effective levels of service for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and vehicles.
- Consideration of all planned developments and highway schemes in the area.
- Examine the potential for community bus services, utilising smaller vehicles that penetrate individual neighbourhoods within Southend-on-Sea, Rayleigh and Rochford, to facilitate local movements throughout the day.
- Public realm improvements, including enhanced pedestrian and cycle facilities within the study area and other routes in the town centre.
- A workforce travel plan.

## 2.5 Environmental character and assets

The JAAP area is situated within the London Basin Natural Area which is characterised by urban areas and agricultural landscapes that contain semi-natural habitats. The northern section of the JAAP which is mostly open countryside (Metropolitan Green Belt) accommodates recreation areas, a network of Public Rights of Way, and several brooks. The north eastern and north western parts include Cherry Orchard Way, Stroud Green. There is also a disused brickworks site within this part of the Green Belt. The disused brickworks offers an opportunity for redevelopment.



Development within the northern part of the JAAP will need to take into consideration the small country town nature of Rochford including the centre and area around the Rochford railway station which all fall within a Conservation Area. The setting and relationship between Rochford Hall, St. Andrew's Church and a number of nearby buildings is highly sensitive to visual change. Development on the airport and surrounding areas have to pay particular attention to potential adverse visual impacts of any proposed development. This open countryside forms a clear separation between Rochford and the more built up Southend urban area to the south. This open countryside offers the only opportunity for future expansion of the airport and related industrial activities.



The southern, south-western and eastern areas of the JAAP are characterised by industrial/business parks and post-war housing estates with associated facilities. The proximity of these developments means that they are particularly affected by developments at the airport. Expansion or increased activities at the airport could adversely impact on these uses. The whole of the JAAP area is subject to road traffic noise. Traffic noise is particularly evident along the major transportation routes that are often congested. However, one of the JAAP objectives is to ensure a high quality environment including addressing the noise and vibration pollution. The proposed development offers an opportunity to address some of these issues.



Within the JAAP, there are potential areas at risk of flooding in the absence of flood defence mechanisms or in the event of breach of defences. Areas of flooding include Eastwood, Rayleigh and Hawkwell Brooks within the site. Other areas include parts of Aviation Way and Rochford Hundred Golf Club.



Rochford District Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council do not fall within any Air Quality Management Strategy Areas. However, both councils are concerned about the effects of a reconfigured runway as well as associated additional traffic emissions. Development in the JAAP will generate road traffic emissions, and aircraft emissions are expected to increase if passenger activity increases (although this may be offset by improvements in aircraft technology).



In considering the future development of the JAAP the following environmental issues need to be taken into consideration:

- **Noise and Vibration.** The major noise and vibration sources within the study area are airport operations, traffic and the railway line. Potential on-site and off-site noise and vibration receptors comprise most of the residential properties in the south and south-east of the study area. Increased airport activity and expansion of industrial and commercial activities may potentially increase noise and vibration. Appropriate mitigation measures will be needed to minimise increased noise and vibration.
- **Flood Risk.** Flood Risk areas have been identified within the study area and development should be appropriately located to minimise adverse impacts on people and property.
- **Landscape.** The landscape within and adjacent to the study area is a mix of rural, broad open spaces with large sheds, small holdings, arable land and post-war housing. Proposed future development within the study needs to minimise any adverse impact on visual receptors and also avoid degradation of existing landscape features. Opportunities for enhancement will be a major consideration in future development opportunities.
- **Biodiversity.** The study area is located within the London Basin Natural Area which is characterised by urban areas and agricultural landscapes containing islands of semi-natural habitats. Valuable habitats within the study area include hedgerows, linear tree belts and ponds in the northern section. Some of the habitats will be affected by the proposed development but there is also an opportunity to maintain and enhance areas of existing and ecologically important habitats including hedgerows, waterways and Eastwood Brook.



- **Open Space and Recreation.** The study area has open spaces, recreation facilities and a network of Public Rights of Way. Maintenance and enhancement of the open space, recreation facilities and public footpaths could be incorporated into new development where possible.

The habitat plan of the JAAP area is shown in Figure 2.5 overleaf.

## 2.6 Conclusions

Based on the above analysis a composite land use plan of the JAAP area is presented in Figure 2.6. It clearly shows the context of the area and the land use contrast between the southern part and northern part of the JAAP. This prevailing context will be important in shaping the nature of change and development in the area.

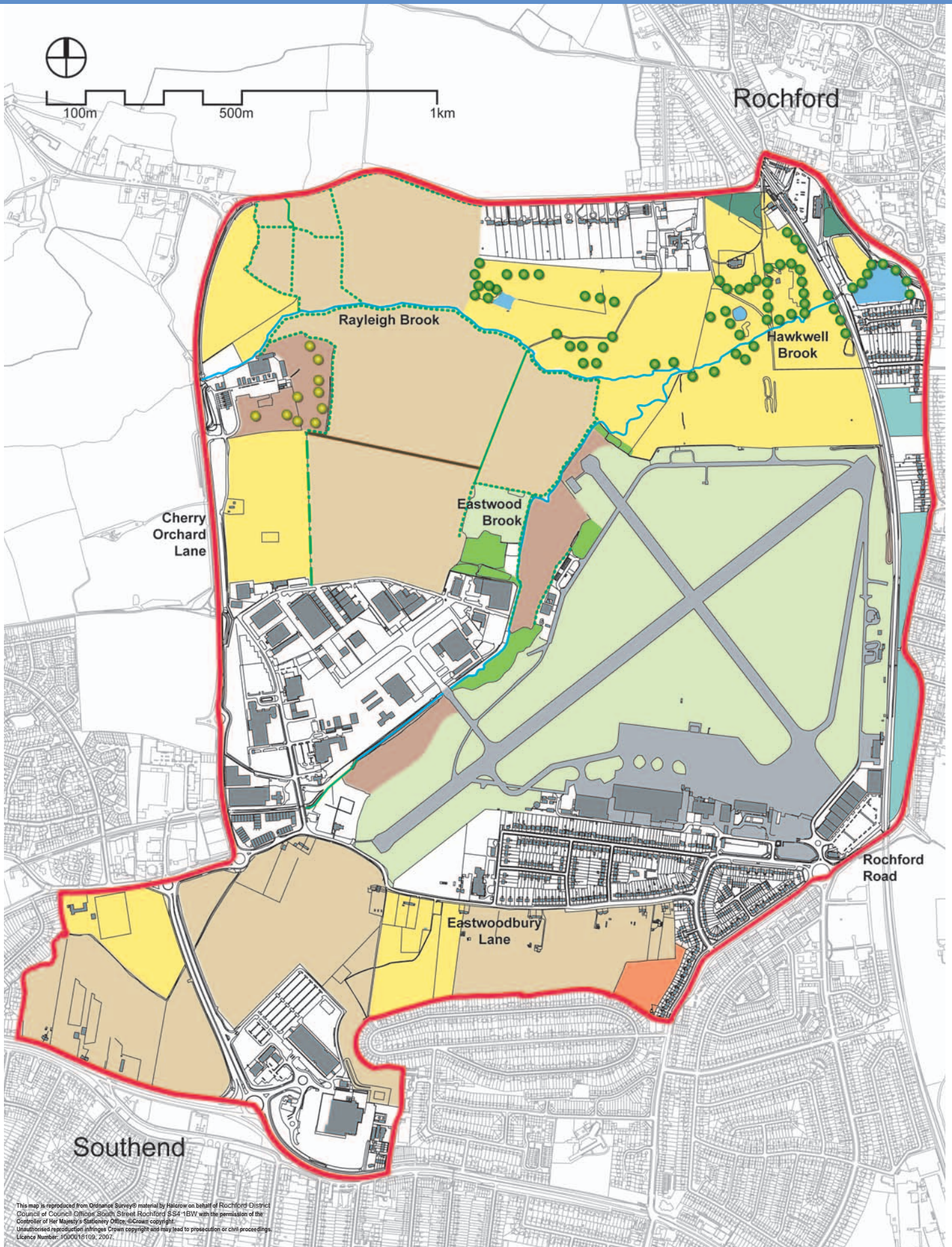
## Questions

**Q2.1 Are the assets of the JAAP area fully reported and understood?**

**Q2.2 Are there any important assets or issues missing from the assessment?**



# Figure 2.5 - JAAP Habitat Plan





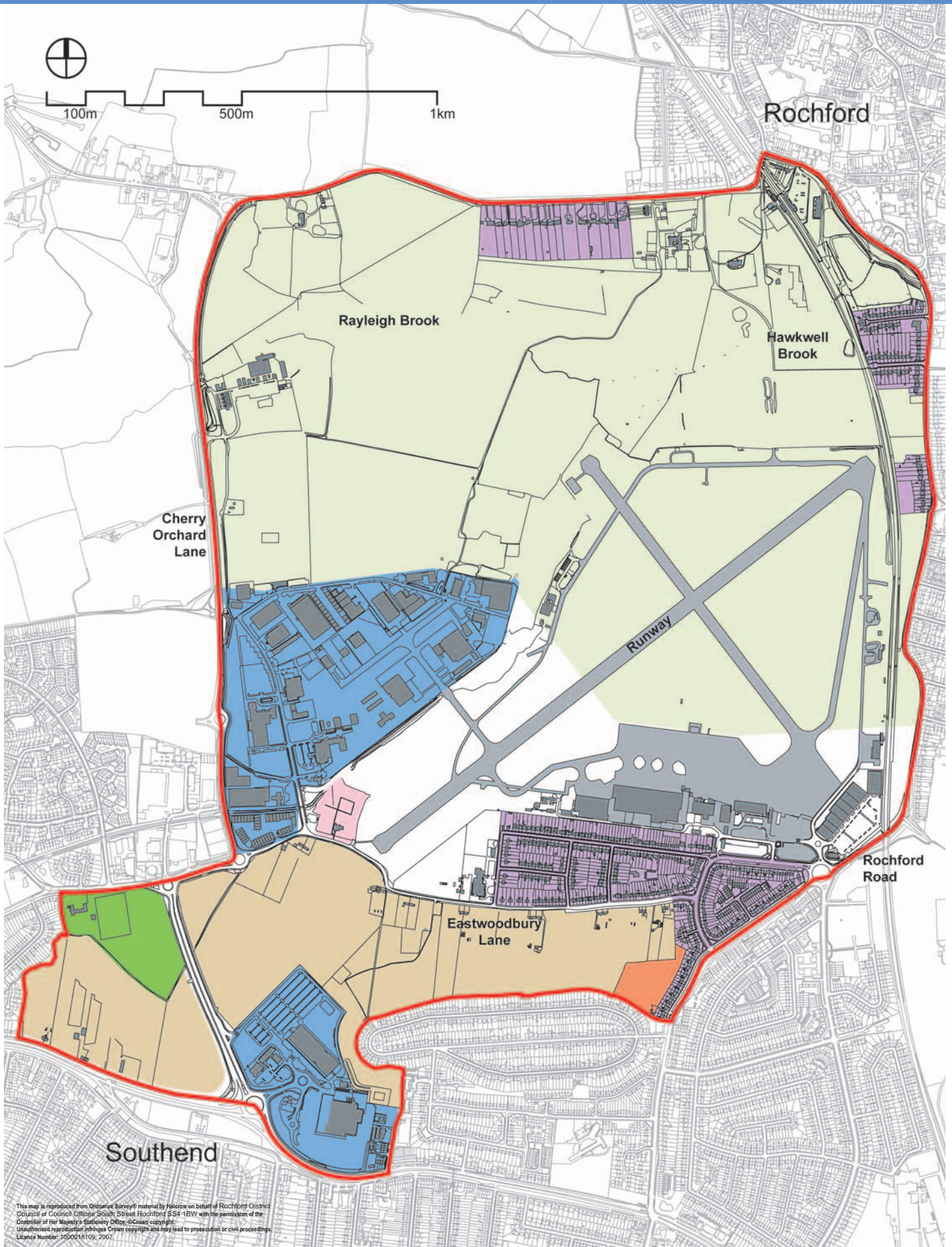
## Key:

- Site Boundary
- Semi-natural Broad-leaved Woodland
- Broad-leaved Plantation Woodland
- Semi-improved Neutral Grassland
- Natural Grassland
- Tall Ruderal Vegetation
- Ponds
- Arable Land
- Amenity Grassland
- Allotments
- Running Water
- Hedge, Species Poor
- - - Hedge and Trees, Thick
- . - Hedge and Trees, Sparse
- Track
- Scattered Trees
- Scattered Scrub





# Figure 2.6 - Summary Land Use Plan





**Key:**

- Site Boundary
- Airport Boundary
- Metropolitan Green Belt
- Employment Land
- Residential Land
- Private Open Space/Sports Facility
- Crematorium, Graveyard or Cemetery
- Allotments
- Agricultural Land







## 3 Vision and objectives



### 3.1 Vision

The JAAP Vision is set within the context of the regeneration and growth of Southend as part of the Thames Gateway growth area. The shared Vision for the future development of London Southend Airport and its environs (i.e. the JAAP) is:

“An area that realises its potential as a driver for the sub-regional economy, providing significant employment opportunities and ensuring the quality of life for its residents and workers. To achieve this, the area’s assets and opportunities for employment need to be supported and developed”

The Vision acknowledges that London Southend Airport is already a major employment location, for both aviation related businesses and general businesses. This is in spite of the airport having significant spare capacity for flights and the potential for new industrial and business premises to be developed adjacent to its existing area. Without employment growth in this area, it is considered that both authorities’ job targets will not be met.

The vision is supported in the current and emerging policy framework in the area.



The Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy (Adopted December 2007) has as its aim

'To secure a major refocus of function and the long term sustainability of Southend as a significant urban area which serves local people in the Thames Gateway. To do this there is a need to release the potential of Southend's land and buildings to achieve measurable improvements in the town's economic prosperity, transportation networks, infrastructure and facilities; and the quality of life for all its citizens<sup>2</sup>'.

Supporting this aim, Objective SO11 is to secure the regeneration of London Southend Airport to enable it to reach its potential to function as a local regional airport providing for significant new employment opportunities and improved surface access subject to environmental safeguards. It is also reinforced by the Renaissance Southend Regeneration Framework vision:

"Southend-on-Sea – the regional centre, hub for higher education and culture, a centre for international air services in South Essex – a great place to live, do business and visit!"<sup>3</sup>

The Rochford Core Strategy Preferred Options (Draft) sets an emerging vision to 'make Rochford the place of choice in the county to live, work and visit'. Supporting this, the vision sees a flourishing new employment area underpinned by the growth on London Southend Airport that attracts high technology businesses and high value employment to the area.

## **3.2 Objectives of the JAAP**

The following objectives were identified after consideration of the issues facing the area as well as the opportunities presented by the area. The objectives have been developed within the planning context and are in conformity with current national, regional and emerging local policy. They are the guiding principles for devising the options for the JAAP, with each of the options achieving some or all of the objectives to a different level.

<sup>2</sup> Source: *Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy: Development Plan Document One (December 2007)*

<sup>3</sup> Source: *Renaissance Southend Ltd: Regeneration Framework 2007-2021 (September 2007)*

The objectives are:

- Creation of sustainable and high value employment and other land uses within the study area
- Maximising the economic benefits of a thriving airport and related activity
- Ensuring appropriate improvements in sustainable transport accessibility and facilities
- Ensuring a high quality environment for residents whether expressed through noise pollution management or protection of green space
- Maximum return on public investment through attracting inward investment
- Efficient use of existing employment land resources.

The objectives outlined above can only be achieved through the resolution of key issues identified in the study area and also by exploiting identified opportunities.

## Questions

**Q3.1 Do you agree with the overall Vision for the JAAP?**

**Q3.2 Do the objectives set out above cover the key requirements from the area?**

**Q3.3 Are there any other additional objectives that might help to guide the selection of the preferred option/options and JAAP?**





An aerial photograph showing the London Southend Airport and its surrounding environment. The airport's runways and taxiways are visible in the upper left, adjacent to a large body of water. To the right and in the foreground, there are dense residential neighborhoods with numerous houses and streets. A large, modern airport terminal building with a distinctive orange-brown facade is prominent in the lower right. The sky is clear and blue.

## 4 Issues and Options

### 4.1 Introduction

While there are a range of opportunities and constraints that need to be resolved and/or balanced in the JAAP area, the future strategy for the area will be principally determined by a small number of 'Issues and Options' for the area. These are discussed below.

### 4.2 Issue 1: The future development and role of London Southend Airport

There are a number of ways in which the future development and role of London Southend Airport will materialise, as discussed previously. In essence there are potentially three 'scenarios' for the future of the airport that are determined by the investment potential and the extent to which the asset can be utilised to act as a driver for the local and sub-regional economy. The potential options are:

i) **Continue the current airport model (MRO focus).**

The low investment option for the airport would continue to see incremental growth in the functioning of the airport using its current infrastructure. Growth in activity at the airport has been limited in the recent past and very much focused towards expansion of the MRO functioning of the airport. Aircraft movements are currently in the order of 39,000 movements per annum and would be anticipated to increase to around 50,000 movements per annum (last seen in 2000). Investment would be restricted to redevelopment or improvement of existing

facilities and limited MRO opportunities as they come forward. Within this constraint the result would be limited growth in passenger numbers from a current level of 30,000 passengers per annum<sup>3</sup>, but this would be constrained by the fact that limited operators would find the airport an attractive commercial proposition given its facilities and catchment. In terms of economic benefits, new employment would be limited to MRO growth and any wider aviation clustering opportunities would be restricted. The airport, however, would not be the economic driver required by Southend and Rochford to help achieve employment aspirations.

- ii) **Airport growth: existing runway and new facilities.** The Airport Masterplan 2005 sets out a vision for how the airport could grow towards being a regional airport based on using its current runway (length 1,610 metres). The key to this option is the provision of new passenger infrastructure in the form of a new railway station for the airport and investment in new passenger terminal facilities. The importance of the railway is fundamental to increasing the attractiveness of the airport to potential airline operators as it increases the size of the passenger catchment to include core markets within London (by reducing the travel time to the airport). With this investment, the airport masterplan indicates there is the potential to increase passenger movements at the airport to around 1 million passengers by 2012 and up to 2 million passengers by 2030. Independent analysis of the masterplan forecasts undertaken by York Aviation highlight that while they are theoretically achievable, they are highly optimistic given the airport would remain constrained to airlines who operate smaller aircraft. In this regard there is a high level of risk associated with this option. The economic reality is that passenger operators are operating larger and more efficient aircraft and will view the airport as a constraint to commercial operation. This then casts doubt on whether the investment in the infrastructure is viable to proceed. In terms of economic benefits, growth of the airport would underpin the wider aspirations of the area but are relatively high risk in respect of potential deliverability given the reality of the situation.

<sup>3</sup> Source: CAA Annual Airport Statistics, 2006

iii) **Airport growth: extended runway and new facilities.** The final option for the future of the airport is based on the option above with the addition of increasing the length of the runway (up to 1,799 metres). This addition has an important impact in terms of the capacity potential of the airport and its resultant attractiveness to airline operators. Currently the runway is an identified constraint on the operation of the airport. By lengthening the runway across Eastwoodbury Lane into the current RESA area it would mean that larger aircraft (such as Boeing 737s) would be able to be operated fully laden out of the airport for business and passenger uses, making the airport a more attractive fixed base for a wider range of operators. The airport is likely to grow faster to a capped passenger capacity of 2 million passengers per annum because given the new runway and railway station it would attract two or three fixed base operators to the airport in a relatively short period of time. The lengthened runway would also give a boost to the business market and MRO markets by attracting new fleets and making the airport a more efficient base for these purposes. Given the growth on the airport is dependent on its ability to attract operators (through offering an enhanced asset) the risks of this option are greatly reduced. The likelihood of reaching the passenger forecasts is strong which in turn improves the potential for investment in the other assets of the railway station, passenger terminal, and supporting facilities. In economic benefit terms the airport under this option would clearly act as a driver for the local economy, providing direct employment as well as enhanced opportunities for wider aviation-related and business employment.

## Questions

**Q4.1 What do you see as the role of London Southend Airport in the future?**

**Q4.2 How can the airport best be developed to drive and support the local economy?**



### 4.3 Issue 2: The future of the JAAP as an employment area.

Reflecting the area's position within the Thames Gateway South Essex growth area, the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has set challenging employment growth targets for the Southend and Rochford area. In total an additional 16,000 jobs are targeted for the area in the period to 2021, of which approaching half will be B Use Class employment requiring land allocations within the emerging Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). Within the context of existing employment land in Southend (which as identified in the evidence base is generally poor quality and constrained) the Southend Regeneration Framework and emerging LDF policy anticipate an increased employment focus within the JAAP. For example, the recent Regeneration Framework indicates the JAAP area could provide approximately 80,000 sq.m. of new commercial floorspace in the form of a new business park to the north of Aviation Way.

Given the amount of potential land within the JAAP area the scale of employment provision in the area will be constrained not by land but by market conditions; sequential testing to justify the level of office provision appropriate outside of the Town Centre; and sustainability in transport and environmental terms.

The proposed increased employment focus in the JAAP could take a variety of different forms depending on the both the scale and nature of employment growth that is envisaged, and the level that can be sustainably accommodated. The potential options for increasing the employment focus are outlined below.

- i) **Low scale employment growth.** The analysis of the existing employment areas within the JAAP identify that land is currently under-used with a mixture of low density employment development and some opportunity sites. Therefore, there is an opportunity to increase employment in the area through intensifying the use of current employment land and not allocating additional employment land. In choosing this option, employment growth in the area would be relatively limited, providing

the potential for additional 15,000 sq.m. of B1 floorspace capable of accommodating up to 620 additional jobs. The nature of this additional employment would be partially constrained by the existing premises offer in the area as the complete restructuring of the area would not be possible. Therefore, any new employment development would be focused primarily towards light industrial and aviation-related uses, with some potential for office provision. The area would support employment growth in light industrial sectors but would provide a secondary role in terms of accommodating employment growth in the office based professional sectors. Recent evidence suggests there is demand for sites and premises in the area which indicates this limited scenario is highly achievable.

- ii) **Medium scale employment growth.** To increase the role the JAAP plays in future employment provision, a more focused and pro-active approach to developing opportunities will be required. This will entail allocation of new employment land to create a new 'market' offer for potential investors and businesses. This would be in addition to the intensification of existing land use. Given the character and assets of the JAAP it is seen that there are two approaches to medium growth.

One would be to focus effort towards developing an *aviation cluster* in the area by building on the current level of aviation related businesses. This approach is predicated on airport growth to create the capacity and depth of activity to generate a clustering opportunity. It would include businesses that require runway access (located within the airport boundary) and those that provide support MRO and related services that would be located on neighbouring employment areas. The new employment land allocation would be used to develop additional sites and premises restricted for use by aviation-related businesses. This would require a clear policy stance by the local authorities in terms of the types of businesses and development that is acceptable. There are risks associated with such a targeted approach to land use in that opportunities would be highly



dependent on the ability of the airport to grow. The JAAP would not support wider employment growth needs in the area and would therefore limit market potential to solely aviation related businesses and restrict other activities from locating in the area.

The other approach would be for the JAAP to support the wider employment growth envisaged in the sub-region by increasing the opportunity for *B Use Class* employment growth. With forecasts indicating growth in B1 markets over the period to 2021 the focus of new development would be towards business park and office style accommodation supported by some new light industrial provision. The lack of aviation focus would reflect either no anticipated growth in the airport or a conscious policy stance to restrict airport potential to within the airport boundary.

Under both these approaches there is the potential for up to 64,000 sq.m. of additional floorspace (49,000 sq.m. in a new business park) and the potential to accommodate up to 2,600 additional jobs.

- iii) **High scale employment growth.** To achieve high scale employment growth within the area and provide a significant contribution towards sub-regional employment aspirations, the JAAP area would need to take a pro-active role in encouraging employment development for both aviation-related growth (associated with an airport growth scenario) and targeting the accommodation of wider B-class sector growth. Given the current constraints of the local property market, this scenario would give the area the greatest chance of creating employment capacity and attracting investor demand. It would require the greatest allocation of additional employment land and a repositioning of land allocation towards the area (including potential release of less attractive sites elsewhere in the sub-region). The market analysis, while accepting the current market limitations, recognises that the area would be attractive to companies and investors and would help to provide an offer that is currently lacking. Accommodating a high growth scenario

in the area would mean allocating sufficient employment land to allow for the potential of the area to be realised. There is the potential for up to 94,000 sq.m. of additional floorspace to be provided (79,000 sq.m. in a new business park) to accommodate up to 3,900 additional jobs in the area over the planning period to 2021.

## Questions

**Q4.3 What role should the JAAP play in supporting wider employment growth in the sub-region?**

**Q4.4 Is the area appropriate for significant growth in employment?**

**Q4.5 Will the area be attractive to investors?**

**Q4.6 Are there additional options to consider?**

### **4.4 Issue 3: Balancing development with environmental enhancement in the JAAP**

A key objective of the JAAP is to ensure a high quality environment is maintained for residents alongside the utilisation of the area to deliver business and employment opportunities. To achieve this, a positive approach to environmental quality and amenity is necessary and should underpin any future development scenario for the area. The approach will need to consider the impacts that increased development and activity may have on the environment and provide mitigation to manage these effectively; consider how open areas may be enhanced to provide new habitats and recreational opportunities; and the policy designations necessary to determine boundaries and space between built areas and land uses.



The following outlines the key decisions that will need to be made in respect of enhancing the environmental quality of the area whilst sustainably realising its potential as an employment area.

- i) **The Green Belt.** Currently the Metropolitan Green Belt cuts right across the JAAP area, taking in all currently open space within the Rochford part of the JAAP, including a large proportion of the operational airport area. In taking forward development in the JAAP important decisions need to be made about the extent of Green Belt designation and whether it needs to be revised to reflect future aspirations for the area. The options for doing this include:
  - The Green Belt could be maintained as currently designated, thus precluding development outside of current areas unless by exception. This would not preclude development within the airport boundary (which is catered for in the Green Belt legislation) but would make additional employment land allocations very difficult to achieve.
  - The Green Belt could be revised to take identified new parcels of development land out of the designation, but would remain tightly drawn against proposed development boundaries so as to restrict development to that which is required for the current planning period.
  - A strategic revision to the Green Belt could be considered, realigning the designation to follow topographical boundaries and respond more flexibly to current and future development aspirations. In this option it would be used to clearly define a new 'Strategic Gap' between the urban boundaries of Rochford and Southend. This would involve removing the Green Belt from within the airport boundary and drawing it more widely than simply identified development areas in any future option.

- ii) **Enhancing amenity space.** The JAAP area includes large areas of open landscape, recreational and amenity space which help define the character of the area. In developing the future scenario for the JAAP decisions need to be made about which spaces must be protected, which ones can be enhanced to provide valuable habitats and assets for the area, and which areas could be considered for other uses. For those areas protected or enhanced, what enhancement is appropriate and what are the benefits of doing this?
- iii) **Mitigating environmental impacts.** More activity from the airport and businesses will inevitably result in environmental impacts that will need to be managed. The JAAP will need to consider physical and policy approaches that combined will help manage the sustainable future for the area. The key impacts (noise, pollution, air quality) are likely to result from increased aircraft movements and traffic in the area. What is important is that key receptors (potentially affected residents) are considered in taking forward future plans. This means that the location of new development needs to be carefully considered, controls on airport operation ensure quality of life is maintained for residents, and sustainable transport strategies are implemented to minimise traffic impacts.

## Questions

**Q4.7 Should the Green Belt be considered for revision? If so how should it be revised?**

**Q4.8 What enhancements to the environment and amenity of the area should be made? What are the priority areas?**

**Q4.9 What do you see as the greatest potential impact of development in the JAAP and how can this be mitigated?**

## 4.5 Issue 4: Transport and movement

Whatever strategy is agreed upon for the JAAP area, an appropriate transport strategy will need to be implemented to ensure that development is sustainable. As identified in Section 2, the area and its wider hinterland are facing a range of transport issues. Within this context development of the JAAP needs to integrate with proposals to improve the functioning of the wider network (including improvements to the A127 and SERT) and provide internal solutions to movement and accessibility. While the transport strategy will depend on the scenario being considered (dealt with in more detail in Section 5), the strategy will need to consider:

- i) Improvements to current 'constraints' identified within the immediate network to improve movement within and through the area
- ii) Linkages to the wider transport network and potential improvements envisaged to this network
- iii) Consider the location of new development in relation to the transport network and accommodate high levels of public transport accessibility
- iv) Encourage a modal shift from the current levels of car borne traffic through traffic management solutions
- v) New routes and key points of access to new development area. In this respect some key decisions and investments will need to be undertaken under the various growth scenarios.

### Questions

**Q4.10 What do you consider to be the transport priorities for the JAAP?**

**Q4.11 How can a shift from car use to other modes of transport be achieved?**