

Annex 1 - ECC's Response to the Airport Commission - Discussion Paper 06 – Utilisation of the UK's Existing Airport Capacity

Section 1 – Introduction

ECC's response to the Discussion Paper 06 is set out in three sections –

- **Section 1 – Introduction** - Provides an initial introduction to the ECC response to Discussion Paper 06.
- **Section 2 - Strategic Context** – Outlines the context for the ECC to the Discussion Paper 06.
- **Section 3 – ECC Response to the Discussion Paper 06** – Sets out the ECC response to the questions of relevance to ECC and outlined throughout the Discussion Paper 06.

Background Context -

The Interim Report was published in December 2013 and set out the nature, scale and timing of steps needed to maintain the UK's status as an international hub for aviation, alongside recommendations for making better use of the UK's existing runway capacity over the next five years. The report concluded one net new runway will be required by 2030, with the probability of a further net new runway required in the 2040s. The Commission identified two existing airports as credible locations for the first net new additional runway; Gatwick and Heathrow.

The Interim Report highlighted the Commission's intention to undertake further analysis of the feasibility and impacts of an Isle of Grain airport. It also indicated that the Commission would reach a decision in the second half of 2014 as to whether the Isle of Grain Option would be short listed.

The Interim Report included short and medium term proposals and strategy that may be considered by the Government to enhance capacity at our airports in the near future.

Discussion Paper 06 investigates connectivity and capacity provided by airports other than those short listed by the Commission for further consideration as long term capacity options. The Commission wishes to understand the long-term strategic context within which the eventual expansion option is likely to sit, and any recommendations it could usefully make to shape this context. The Commission is therefore interested in receiving evidence and information that may contribute to their understanding regarding making the best use of existing operations.

Section 2 - Strategic Context

Overview of the County Council's Strategic Aviation Policy

In September 2013 ECC produced "Flights of Fancy: Getting Real on Aviation" to articulate the organisation's position on airport capacity for submission to the Airport Commission.

The document clarifies that ECC supports sensible growth at Stansted in the short to medium term by maximising use of its existing runway to its operational capacity of 45 million passengers per annum. It recognises that additional runway capacity may be required at Stansted in the longer term, but that a robust business case would be needed and massive investments in road and rail infrastructure would be required.

In addition 'Flights of Fancy' highlights that ECC does not believe that either a new super hub at Stansted or in the Thames Estuary are viable options.

Essex County Council – Interest in the Consultation

ECC aims to inform and shape emerging spatial and aviation policy. This interest reflects ECC's role as a social, community and physical infrastructure provider for the local living, working, visiting and investing Essex community. ECC is also eager to support and work collaboratively with the operators of the Essex airports Stansted and Southend, as well as other relevant stakeholders. It is important that ECC ensures there is widespread awareness of the existing and future connectivity and capacity available at our airports, and shapes future aviation and spatial policies to take full advantage of this, and promote appropriate physical infrastructure and development to support our airports now and in the future.

Section 3 – ECC Response to the Discussion Paper 06

The Discussion Paper 06 sets out the questions the Airports Commission is keen to understand. ECC has reviewed all the questions and supplied comments in relation to those questions where we consider a response is warranted.

Discussion Paper 06 Questions

Questions on the role that non-London airports currently play in providing connectivity and utility to the UK

Question - Is the Commission correct to identify a reduction in air connectivity between the UK regions and the London airport network over the last decade? How do recent new routes to the capital, and the stabilisation in passenger numbers on domestic routes to and from London since 2010, affect this analysis?

Response - The Airport Commission defined aviation connectivity in the Discussion Paper 02 whereby it is the "ability and ease with passengers and/or freight can reach a given destination by air". The County Council understands from discussions with London Stansted and London Southend airport, that whilst frequency of flights to UK regions may have declined in recent years, larger planes are now in operation facilitating travel for a similar quantity of passengers to and from the UK regions. The frequency of flights to the UK regions has therefore declined.

ECC considers that airports and airlines should have a robust understanding of their market. ECC strongly encourages and supports the Essex airports in appreciating their markets, emphasising the importance of market research to ensure flights provided reflect those demanded by our living, working, visiting and investing community. An important element in developing this understanding of existing and future market demand is undertaking research and analysis.

In July 2014 Ryanair launched 2 new routes between London and Edinburgh and London and Glasgow International (both three times daily) as part of an extended London Stansted 2014 winter schedule, with 12 new routes in total and increased flights on 36 other routes, which will deliver growth of 2.5 million customers per annum and support 2,500 new on-site jobs at London Stansted Airport.

Ryanair have confirmed that the recent additions to the Stansted operations to and from Glasgow and Edinburgh is in response to strong demand from their UK customers, in particular UK business travellers, and domestic routes are an important part of the Ryanair strategy.

Whilst Stansted airport is seeing growth of UK domestic routes, Southend airport has recently lost the Easy Jet Edinburgh connection. From discussions with Southend airport it is apparent that the time and frequency of the flight has contributed to low passenger numbers and resulted in the loss of the route. ECC considers that the timing of connections to the UK regions is important to appreciate customer demands from services.

ECC considers that Air Passenger Duty (APD) is having a detrimental impact on UK domestic and international connectivity. Evidence from Price Waterhouse Cooper (2013) and an All-Party Parliamentary Group Aviation Workshop suggest that APD is the highest tax of its type in the world. ECC recommends that the Airport Commission advises Government to reform APD. We are confident that a reform of APD will enhance UK productivity and output facilitating domestic and international passenger travel that is price competitive with international airlines. The reform of APD should be removed from domestic flights to make them a more competitive option against alternative modes such as rail and road

Question - Is the Commission's analysis of the multiple factors influencing domestic air connectivity between London and the UK regions accurate? Of the factors outlined, which are the most significant or important for explaining how the market has developed? What additional factors, if any, should the Commission be mindful of?

Response - Discussion Paper 06 provides an appreciation of the reasons for a reduction in air connectivity between London and the UK regions. It indicated that capacity constraints may be an issue that have contributed to airlines prioritising the operation of larger aircraft and maximising revenue, resulting in a decline in the number of UK regional services. Whilst the County Council appreciates that this may be an issue for Heathrow and to a lesser extent Gatwick, this is certainly not the case at Stansted and Southend where there is readily available capacity.

ECC considers that the availability of capacity at the Essex airports may be attributed to the need for delivering high quality surface accessibility. Accessibility to our airports should be enhanced to ensure air service users have the surface access that meets their needs. ECC welcomes urgent attention to the West Anglian mainline. ECC are supportive of calls from businesses and the airport to improve rail services between the airport and London. ECC also welcomes improvements to rail services to Cambridge and beyond.

It is considered that rail services should reflect Stansted and Southend airport operating times. This would facilitate travel for passengers and airport workers to access the airport by rail in the early mornings and late nights.

To understand the likely future trends at the airports with regards to the provision of services to and from the UK regions ECC recommends that consideration be given to the following –

- An appreciation of the long term deals that airports have with certain airlines, determine the likely flights provided by such airlines and the airlines future market direction.
- Understand the impact that improved rail connectivity throughout the UK may have on demand for flights to certain UK regions. Note that the introduction of HS1 contributed to declining flights to Paris and Brussels, consider whether a similar trend will become apparent in the UK with HS2.
- Appreciate the air freight market by ensuring a robust understanding of existing and future trends, to understand how this may impact upon connectivity.
- Marketing the airport and the region can also ensure more effective and efficient use of aviation existing capacity. The Essex airports both have spare capacity to provide improved

connectivity, it is important that the UK regions understand the benefits of flights to Stansted and Southend given the proximity to London, Cambridge and other key economic hubs. This will ensure that the region is seen as a place for business, as well as promoting UK domestic leisure flights.

An additional factor that is influencing UK domestic and international connectivity is APD. ECC draws the Airport Commission attention to a study that was undertaken by Price Waterhouse Coopers to investigate the economic impact of APD. The study was commissioned by a consortium of UK and Irish airline operators – British Airways Plc, Virgin Atlantic Airways Ltd, and Easy Jet. The findings from the study relate to a scenario where APD is abolished at the 2013 Budget. It highlights the contribution that abolishing APD may have on the price of air fares, and the associated benefit for the UK economy and increasing jobs. ECC recommends that consideration be given to a reform of APD, as it is the highest tax of its type in the world. This reform of APD should ensure that APD is removed from domestic flights making them more competitive against alternative modes such as rail and road

Question - Is overall transport connectivity between London and the regions at an appropriate level? What are the social or economic consequences of changes to air connectivity? Can respondents provide any comparisons or other evidence to support their response?

Response - MAG Stansted undertook a business survey earlier this year. Whilst it is recognised that some of the information may be commercially sensitive, ECC welcomes information regarding the key conclusions or recommendations that may be derived from the survey. The aims of the business survey were to –

- Provide an understanding of how important aviation connectivity is for local businesses;
- Appreciate the destinations that businesses are currently engaging with and where they would be seeking to expand business operations;
- Determine whether there are specific industry sectors in Essex that use air travel for business;
- Determine whether proximity to air travel is a key factor in determining business location;
- Understand the frequency and volume of air travel required by local businesses;
- Understand the importance of accessibility to and from the airport; and
- The importance of air freight for local businesses.

ECC considers that this information would be extremely useful in determining the types of flights demanded by local businesses. The survey may provide an insight into the importance of transport connectivity to the UK regions for business within the local community.

Questions on how the business models of these airports are changing, and how they can be expected to change further in time

Question - Is the Commission right to identify particular financial challenges for smaller airports? Can respondents corroborate or refute any of the Commission's evidence on financial pressures at regional airports?

Response - Discussion Paper 06 focuses on the financial pressures that non London regional airports face within Chapter 2. ECC recognises that smaller airports such as Southend will experience similar financial pressures to the non-London regional airports. It is recommended that the Airport Commission and Government fully appreciates these issues, and provides support to smaller airports.

Surface Access improvements are paramount in ensuring passengers have a choice of transport modes to use when accessing the airports. Government investment should deliver improved access to the smaller airports. In particular as outlined later in our response rail services, operating times and rail stock should reflect the services demanded by both the local Essex community and airport operations.

ECC supports the continued work with Southend Airport in delivering the day to day and future airport operations. ECC work closely with the airport operator and other stakeholders to ensure issues experienced by the airport, and our local community are addressed and appropriately mitigated. ECC aims to ensure that airport operations reflect our local living, working and investing community needs now and in the future.

Consideration should be given to the impact that APD may have on all airports, including smaller airports such as Southend. ECC recommends a reform of APD be undertaken to ensure that UK airfares are comparable with other international airlines; this will boost UK productivity and the UK economy.

Question - In the longer term, what is an appropriate, adequate or ideal shape for the UK's airport system? Is consolidation of the airport network desirable, inevitable, both or neither?

Response - Discussion Paper 06 highlights the role airports serving London and the South East play in providing utility and connectivity. The chapter demonstrates that the London system comprises several independent competing airports that drive additional benefits to London and the South East. The Discussion Paper states that "several airports serving London and the South East have taken advantage of the scale of the London market to specialise in a specific passenger or travel type" (Airports Commission, Discussion paper 06, 2014, 41). ECC considers that the conclusion drawn by the Airport Commission concerning specialisation is too vague. It fails to fully appreciate the impact that airport owners have on determining the nature of airline services provided at airports.

In August 2012 Stansted was put up for sale after BAA, which is owned by Spanish group Ferrovial, was forced by competition regulator to sell off assets to increase competition. In January 2013 it was confirmed that MAG's Australian partner, Industry Funds Management (IFM), will become a strategic investor in the UK airport group as part of the transaction, owning 35.5pc of the company. MAG also owns Manchester, East Midlands and Bournemouth airports and IFM owns investments in nine airports across Australia, including five major state capital city airports.

Since the acquisition of Stansted airport by MAG, a major £80 million terminal transformation programme has commenced. The redevelopment includes a new security lane area, increasing the size of the departure lounge with new shops, food and beverage facilities and increasing the quantity of seating for passengers. The improvements to the airport aim to enhance passenger experience to meet the expectations of current and future users of Stansted airport. Investment in such facilities clearly impacts on the types of airlines that may serve Stansted in the future, and therefore the lack of investment to diversify the airport by the previous owners illustrates the power airport operators have in influencing passenger profiles.

MAG have made it clear that Stansted aims to grow its mix of airlines attracting both short and long haul full service schedule carriers. MAG is seeking to diversify the choice of airline services available at Stansted through attracting new airlines, and routes. Passenger throughput evidence from MAG suggests that in June 2014 Stansted experienced that highest monthly growth since 2006, sending a message that the airport is changing and developing for the better. Andrew Harrison Stansted's

managing director has indicated that “Stansted has a critical role to play in the coming years in meeting the UK's need to increase connectivity.... (The airport) will shortly begin consulting on our local communities Sustainable Development Plan that considers the benefits and effects of how the airport might develop to make full use of the existing runway. (The airport has) planning permission for 35 million passengers a year but could provide additional capacity with relatively low impacts, high benefits and supporting the UK's economic growth ambitions in the most cost effective and sustainable way possible. (Herts and Essex Observer, 10th July 2014)”

ECC considers that it is important that airports deliver services that reflect the needs and demands of their local communities. ECC supports working collaboratively with the Essex airports to ensure that the services and facilities offered attract airlines and services that our local community need for business and leisure. It is also considered that the Essex Airports in the future may be mutually beneficial, as Stansted seeks to develop more long haul flights and services; Southend may play an increasing role in the short haul point to point market. ECC considers that the dispersed South East airport system ensures local community needs are addressed in the future.

Questions on how the connectivity provided by these airports can be enhanced, and on the options to intervene in this sector

Question - Has the Commission correctly identified the major options to support or bolster the regional airports sector? Of the options here explored, which have the potential to be most beneficial?

Response - The Discussion Paper 06 clearly demonstrates that the Airport Commission is eager to understand views regarding state aid. ECC welcomes Public Service Obligations (PSO's) especially those that assist connectivity to the UK regions and beyond as they provide an opportunity for improved connectivity for local businesses. ECC is particularly supportive of PSO's that may be used to assist and contribute to economic growth and development within Essex. The outcomes of the Stansted Business Survey are particularly welcomed here to appreciate those locations where businesses within Essex and the wider Stansted catchment area would welcome connectivity.

ECC is aware that the Department for Transport has agreed a deal with Dundee City Council worth £2.85million to keep the route open for the next two years. It is the first time a public service obligation (PSO) has been used for such a route. Money for the PSO comes from the Regional Air Connectivity Fund, which was set up in 2013 and doubled in this year's budget to protect domestic flights connecting regions to London.

LoganAir will operate the route from 1st July, providing two daily flights each way means business people and visitors will continue to be able to visit both destinations. Each flight takes around an hour and a half.

ECC is keen to support PSO's and ensure that connectivity between the UK regions and international connectivity can be enhanced at Stansted and Southend to support economic growth and prosperity for Essex businesses.

Discussion Paper 06 indicates that Cornwall County Council has been in discussion with the Department for Transport and will shortly be in a position to launch a tender process for a Newquay to London route. It is important to note that EasyJet, the UK's largest airline offers a route from London Southend Airport to Newquay. The service has been operational since the summer 2013. The three times weekly service - which departs on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays - was anticipated to attract almost 10,000 passengers per annum.

ECC considers that it is important that surface accessibility at the Essex airports to London and other key economic centres is improved. High quality surface accessibility at our airports ensures that when routes are secured benefits for Essex businesses are fully grasped. ECC also considers that it is important when new routes are established that all of Essex's benefits are promoted to the reciprocal destination. This would ensure that there is a wide awareness that Essex is open for business.

Question - Can respondents suggest means of bringing about positive change in the context of these options? What recommendations could the Commission make in these areas?

Response - ECC recommends that marketing the economic advantages of the east of London including Essex to ensure wider connectivity benefits are fully recognised and captured. This is positive for existing and future businesses thinking of locating within Essex and increases awareness of the economic productivity gains for businesses from reciprocal destinations.

Chapter 3 of the Discussion Paper 06 highlights possible Government and other bodies options for intervention in improving connectivity trends and regional airports. Whilst ECC appreciates that our airports – Stansted and Southend – are London airports it is considered important to highlight the role Stansted airport has played for the Harlow Enterprise Area.

Enterprise West Essex @ Harlow is the key business location in the M11 corridor connecting London, Cambridge and London Stansted Airport. The locational benefits are essential to the potential success of the Harlow Enterprise Area. The M11 motorway provides excellent transport connections with Cambridge and London Stansted Airport, as well as the M25 and London. Rail Links provide direct access to London and Cambridge. The A414 connects to Harlow Town Railway Station and the line to London Liverpool Street.

The businesses and sectors considering locating within the Harlow Enterprise Area are –

- Advanced Manufacturing/Engineering;
- Aerospace;
- Creative Industries; and
- Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare

From preliminary discussions with companies one of the key factors influencing their relocation to the Harlow Enterprise Area is proximity to Stansted airport. Businesses are particularly interested in the close links they can have with the airport, and seeking to influence the types of flights and services provided in the future. ECC sees the airport as incredibly important for existing and future economic growth within the County, and appreciates that its sphere of influences stretches beyond the County boundary.

Questions on the constraints to developing further utility and connectivity at airports serving London and the South East, as well as how and by who these constraints can be mitigated

Question - Are there longer-term or more extensive surface transport improvements and developments (beyond those committed to in the National Infrastructure Plan) that could support the other London airports to make best use of their capacity?

Response - The Airports Commission Interim Report outlined a package of surface transport improvements to make airports with spare capacity more attractive to airlines and passengers. ECC considers that there are improvements that may be made to the Essex airports to ensure best use of

existing capacity. ECC considers that a range of surface access improvements are required at Stansted and Southend airports to facilitate best use of existing capacity.

Surface Access Requirements and Improvements at Stansted -

London Stansted Airport is located within West Essex, with close links to the Haven Gateway and also the M11 – London Stansted Cambridge corridor. Stansted Airport is located north of the A120 with easy access to the A120. The growth opportunities astride the A120 are in Braintree, Colchester district and Tendring and are generated both from ready access to Stansted Airport and the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe. The Haven Gateway has distinctive investment opportunities in low carbon and renewables sectors, offshore wind energy, manufacturing, and logistics.

Stansted Airport is located within West Essex and therefore in close proximity to the M11 and on the West Anglia Main Line link London, Harlow, Stansted and Cambridge all have significant economic assets building on local strengths in life sciences and other high value sectors. Stansted Airport, offers significant potential to attract investment from a wide range of global companies seeking a UK base.

ECC recognises that several key transport investments are required to unlock the full growth potential of West Essex and the Haven Gateway. Furthermore the County Council considers that if Stansted airport is to make best use of existing capacity investment in surface access is urgently required to facilitate future passenger and possible freight growth. The future road infrastructure investment required at Stansted airport include –

- Improved capacity at the M11 Junction 8 to provide for future airport traffic and planned housing and employment growth in Essex (Uttlesford, in particular Elsenham) and Hertfordshire (East Herts in particular in Bishop Stortford and along the A120 West corridor), currently there is no spare capacity. Initial short term improvements are estimated at approximately £5m with the medium/long term proposals circa £50 million.
- Deliver in a timely and effective manner the M11 Junction 7a (current estimates £47m) to provide access to the M11 and the strategic road network for future industry and housing development within and around Harlow.

Companies enquiring about locating at the Enterprise Zone have indicated the importance of good links to Stansted and J7a brings Stansted much closer to the EZ and the Harlow labour market with shorter and more direct journey times. Detailed design, modelling, consultation including with the HA is well advanced and the junction is programmed for completion by 2020 to meet the significant housing and business growth proposed in Harlow, Epping Forest and East Herts Districts Local Development Plans.

- M11 improvements between J8 and J9, including in the short term a daytime HGV no overtaking ban (already proposed by Highways Agency following an experiment a couple of years ago, but with no date for implementation of a permanent ban) and longer term improvements to improve access from the Cambridge area and beyond in particular with the potential impacts improvements planned for the A14 could have on attracting traffic to the airport.
- Improvements to the A120 including access from the east and capacity improvements (Braintree to Colchester (A12))

The Commission emphasised that work on developing proposals to improve the rail link between London and Stansted should be a priority. This was further re-iterated within the National Infrastructure Plan 2013 (paragraph 3.55) which demonstrated that the Government is committed to taking forward the proposals by the Airports Commission outlined within the Interim Report.

Measures recommended for Stansted include the establishment of a business case for 4-tracking the West Anglia Mainline to Broxbourne, and improving rail connectivity to London especially Stratford. The opportunity should be taken during CP5 for preparatory work and quick wins associated with the 4 tracking, which would ensure that the main scheme could be taken forward early in CP6.

The Network Rail Anglia Route Study Working Group (ARSWG) is investigating the train patterns and infrastructure required up to 2043 to meet demand identified in Network rail's marketing studies. The Route Study will identify the requirements for Control Period 6 (2019-2024), which is the next period for which funding has yet to be allocated. A draft Anglia Route Study is anticipated to be published for consultation in October 2014.

ECC supports the need for rail improvements between London and Stansted, and welcomes working with key stakeholders to deliver better rail connectivity for the West Anglian Mainline.

In July 2014 a new Greater Anglia hourly service between Cambridge and Stansted airport commenced in the inter-peak and evening. The service complements the existing Cross Country Trains service from the airport to Birmingham, travelling via Cambridge providing a half hourly service to Cambridge.

Consideration should be given to forms of intervention that may enhance surface accessibility and increase passengers using our airports. ECC believes that increased rail connectivity at Stansted airport may be provided through the construction of a second rail tunnel under the runway. The single tunnel limits the airport to 6 arriving and 6 departing trains per hour. Capacity may increase by extending the Stansted Express services to 12 car, but without the second tunnel connectivity is restricted.

The Airport Commission outlined the need for improvements between Stansted and London; ECC also welcomes improvements to the West Coast Mainline between Stansted and Cambridge. It is important that the Airport Commission is mindful of how successful Stansted airport and partners have been in delivering the highest public transportation mode share of all the UK airports at 51.4%. ECC recognises that the ability for Stansted airport to fulfil such a high public transportation mode share is due to effective working relationships with various stakeholders. MAG is currently preparing the Sustainable Development Plan for Stansted and we are hoping to maintain high public transportation mode share.

ECC is currently commissioning a study aiming to appreciate the surface access impacts of Stansted operating at 35 million passengers per annum and up to 45 million passengers per annum (the capacity of the single runway). ECC is aware of the work that the airport has undertaken to appreciate how the airport may facilitate growth in passengers, and what we are keen to understand is what impact this will have on surface access. The precise nature and terms of reference for the study is yet to be finalised, however ECC anticipate that the outcomes will be delivered in autumn 2014. This will ensure it may support work for the Airport Commission and MAG Stansted in developing their Sustainable Development Plan.

Surface Access Requirements and Improvements at Southend Airport –

London Southend Airport is strategically located immediately to the east of London. It is considered that the Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) area benefits from direct road and rail links to the capital and, via the M25, to the rest of the South East and UK markets. It has excellent port and airport connectivity to markets in Europe and beyond. With a mature and growing business environment, it contains one of the largest port clusters in the UK and London Southend Airport.

TGSE has an ambitious growth agenda to build on existing strengths and make the most of a unique combination of opportunities, including the £1.5bn London Gateway Port and London Southend Airport. It has the potential to further develop strong, established economic sectors (advanced

manufacturing, ports and logistics, construction and financial & business services) and support smaller, emerging sectors (energy, digital, creative, cultural and environmental technologies) to generate an additional £2.4bn per annum towards the national economy.

The A127 is an ageing corridor (originally opened in 1924), but one that is a vitally important primary route for the Thames Gateway South Essex area which connects the M25, Basildon and Southend including London Southend Airport. It provides access to the wider area such as Brentwood, Billericay, Canvey Island, Rayleigh, Rochford and Wickford residential areas for Airport employees and locations for airport related services and / or generators of freight. ECC is the responsible highway authority for the A127 from the M25 to the Southend boundary and Southend Borough Council is responsible for the remaining length of road to Southend Victoria Station and London Southend Airport.

The A127 carries a significant amount of traffic, with volumes in excess of 70,000 vehicles per day, (comparable to a motorway in other parts of the country and equal to some of the busiest sections of the A14). The A127 has significant capacity issues, as highlighted in the **ITE** Study on Surface access, and flows which need to be addressed if it is to maintain current jobs and aid the delivery of new jobs and housing growth along the corridor and, in particular, to areas such as Basildon Enterprise Corridor (BEC), at the new Saxon Business Park adjacent to London Southend Airport and Southend Central Area.

The A127 suffers from congestion during peak hours, often extending outside of these hours and throughout the day. Due to its location, running adjacent to the A12 and A13, and in the vicinity of the M25, any incidents on these roads naturally lead to traffic using the A127 as an alternative. It is the single corridor and primary route for traffic travelling between Basildon and Southend. Any delays or reliability to journey times can be a deterrent to air passengers and freight carriers choosing London Southend Airport.

The estimated cost of current proposed improvements for the A127 is in the region of £76m, excluding any widening or realignment of the route to improve capacity. Essex and Southend have considered the short, medium and long term requirements to improve the corridor and prioritised the investment need. Fairglen Interchange, Kent Elms Corner Junction and the Bell junction have been identified as priorities within the next six years. A successful bid was submitted to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SE LEP) for funding support for these priorities. ECC and SBC recognise that other junctions and links along the route require major investment and further funding opportunities will be investigated as one of the future work streams.

There are also maintenance issues that urgently need to be addressed if the road is to support and facilitate the planned growth for TGSE and specifically London Southend Airport. The existing route is of substandard quality, with numerous side roads and direct accesses. As a result, it is extremely sensitive to incidents such as collisions and broken-down vehicles.

ECC recommends that the Airport Commission emphasises the importance of ensuring adequate funding for the delivery of a coordinated approach to improve conditions along the whole length of the A127 including a catalogue of measures for junction upgrades and improvements, maintenance, signing, lighting and safety camera installation.

General Rail Improvements Required for Stansted and Southend –

ECC recommends that at the Essex airports Southend and Stansted rail services reflect airport operating times, to allow passengers and staff to access the airport by rail. This is particularly important for the early flights and the late evening flights. ECC considers that government and Network Rail should deliver an improvement in the capacity and quality of rail services to the Essex airports, strengthening their ability to attract airlines and passengers. Joint working is welcomed

with stakeholders to ensure that adequate rail services are provided for our airports and the local living, working, visiting and investing community.

Question - Are there any ways that government, or any other stakeholders, could improve airport site access? Are there any innovative ways that airports could resolve site access problems?

ECC would welcome support for and allocation of funding to –

- Improve rail access, services and times at the Essex airports – Stansted and Southend;
- Improve highways access at Stansted from the A120;
- Improve capacity on the M11 in particular Junctions 7a and 8.
- Improve the A127 in terms of condition and capacity.

Planning Constraints

Question - Could either the NSIP or Town and Country planning process be improved, either the process itself or development of supporting policy, to support developers and meet the needs of local communities?

ECC welcomes reference within the National Infrastructure Plan 2013 (paragraph 3.55) that demonstrates commitment on behalf of the Government to taking forward the proposals by the Airports Commission outlined within the Interim Report. The measures recommended for Stansted include the establishment of a business case for 4-tracking the West Anglia Mainline to Broxbourne, and improving rail connectivity to London especially Stratford. However, ECC is disappointed that this commitment failed to identify and be supported by appropriate funding, to allow measures to be implemented in a timely and effective manner.

ECC recommends that the National Infrastructure Plan may be improved through the provision of funding to support the promoted schemes.

Question - Is there a current case for lifting planning caps for any airports in London or the South East? If not now, when should these caps be reviewed?

Response - ECC recognises that the Commission is aware that there is capacity at Stansted and Southend airports. At Stansted passenger throughput is currently 18.2 million passengers per annum with a total of 133,900 air transport movements, this is considerably below the 35 million passenger per annum and 264,000 air transport movements. Recently, throughput has started to increase again.

Similarly at Southend airport the total annual Air Traffic Movement limit is 53,300, and currently the passenger throughput is slightly less than 1 million passengers per annum. Following the terminal extension at the airport there is capacity for the airport to accommodate 5 million passengers per annum. Both our Essex airports have the capacity to expand passenger throughput.

The Airport Commission Interim Report published in December 2013, included medium term options for consideration to assist in delivering maximum use of existing runway capacity. The Commissions' Interim Report stated that "the maximum permitted use of existing capacity at some airports, including Stansted and Luton, is constrained by planning restrictions and also by the availability of non-runway infrastructure such as terminal and stands able to handle higher than current numbers of passengers or air traffic movements". It referred to the Airports' Commission Phase 2 work which would determine whether there is a case for taking action to address any of the limitations to enable more effective use of existing capacity. The work will focus on those airports where no proposal for new runway infrastructure has been taken forward for further consideration.

ECC has made it clear to the Commission that if the Airport Commission and/or the Government were to recommend any additional runway capacity at Stansted in the short term then Essex County Council would expect to see a robust business case for this and would require assurances that the environmental impacts would be minimised and mitigated. We are also clear that Essex would need massive investments in road and rail infrastructure on the West Anglia mainline to manage such large increases in passengers travelling to and from the airport and across the county. The existing infrastructure and transport system is already sub-optimal.

ECC recommends that if the Commission is minded to recommend to Government that airport caps are to be lifted then the following should be considered –

- Surface Accessibility - Analyse the impact that changes to the planning caps may have for surface accessibility to the airport. Outline the funding and delivery of improvements that may be required for the highway and rail networks.
- Air pollution – determine whether there would be any additional impacts from the alteration in planning caps to the air pollution from the combustion of aviation fuel, potential inefficient aircraft engines, particulate matter released from worn/burnt aircraft tyres, fuel tanks and transfer facilities and vehicles travelling to and from the airport and ground services. Also appreciate whether there will be any additional impact on the health of humans, animals and plants causing degradation. If there are any additional negative impacts these should be minimised and appropriate mitigation put in place.
- Light pollution – Determine whether the removal of the planning caps would contribute to any additional light pollution generated from the airport that may impact the local communities and wildlife, the airport operator should seek to minimise light pollution.
- Noise Pollution – Determine whether the removal of the planning caps would contribute to any additional noise generated from aircraft, airport ground operations and airport access roads. Impacts should be mitigated and appropriate mitigation introduced.
- Water pollution – Undertake research and analysis to determine whether the removal of planning caps may contribute to additional water pollution from airport operations and caused by run off may impact local water courses, partnership working with the Environment Agency, local authorities and the local community is important to ensure that innovative approaches are developed in partnership and promote the exchange of information and best practice.

Question - Are there any topics or areas of further study beyond those set out in the Appraisal framework that would allow the Commission to understand the impact of development at Heathrow or Gatwick on the other London Airports?

Response - It is recommended that the Airport Commission gives greater consideration to the impact of freight operations on existing and future aviation capacity. Furthermore how freight operations may change in the future, and what impact this may have on air transport, movements. The A380 and the Dreamliner aircraft are increasingly coming into operation; these aircrafts place customer experience at the forefront of their operation. Consequently the quantity of belly-hold freight carried by these aircrafts is smaller than their predecessors; hence belly-hold freight is diminishing. ECC are interested to understand what impact this new trend may have upon aviation capacity in the future, and how this may impact on future freight operations.