



AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ECONOMIC EXPANSION

London Southend Airport

London Southend Airport is a long-established regional airport for South East Essex and is the Eastern Gateway to London.

Expansion plans have been subject to public consultation closing in May 2009.

A new airport railway station is due to open during 2009 providing fast and frequent train services direct to Stratford (for Docklands and Canary Wharf) and to central London's Liverpool Street Station will soon provide its passengers with faster door-to-door times inbound to London than most other London airports - and at lower costs.

Existing Companies

Southend Airport is already "home base" to a wide range of aviation companies, airlines and operators, with more than 1300 people employed across the airport

A multi-million development scheme - including new control

tower, terminal building and high-quality hotel - is currently being progressed to extend the range of passenger services facilitated by the new airport railway station.

The airport is a major asset of the Thames Gateway Regeneration Zone, and enjoys positive support from its community and local authorities for the introduction of more scheduled passenger services to European destinations.

Growth Plans

It is expected that the airport will be used primarily for passengers supporting a number of Fixed Based Operators (FBOs).

However, it is also expected that the airport will see growth in its maintenance, repair and overhaul facilities (MRO) supporting the provision of a range of high skilled jobs in the area.

It is not considered desirable for the airport to handle significant volumes of freight due to its location and the pressure that this would place on the local highway network, although it is recognised that

some growth in the handling of niche (high value low volume) cargo could be taken forward without compromising the airport's core passenger and MRO functions.

Access Routes

London Southend Airport is located close to the A127 (part of South Essex's strategic highway network), whilst the Southend-London Liverpool Street railway runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of the airport.

Notwithstanding these strong connections the transport infrastructure is, at present, inadequate to cope with expansion of the airport to 2mppa and various improvements will be required.

Improvement Ideas

Suggested improvements include a new railway station; the provision of a link road between Nestuda Way and Eastwoodbury Lane to link the airport directly to the A127; good linkages to the proposed park and ride facility adjacent to Nestuda Way; and investment in public transport, walking and cycling.

Essex FSB

The FSB is Essex's leading business organisation with more than 3,500 members.

The Essex FSB Region includes the geographical county of Essex as well as the two London Boroughs of Havering and Redbridge. Nationally the FSB has more than 215,000 members across all sectors of business.

With a successful track record of evidence based lobbying the FSB has an excellent reputation for the quality of its data.

Regular meetings with Ministers, Shadow Ministers, MPs, EEDA, GoEast, and ERA representatives as well as leading local authority councillors and senior council officers ensures a good flow of information between the business community and key decision makers.



Joint Area Action Plan

FOLLOWING the Issues and Options consultation in June 2008, Rochford District Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council have jointly published their preferred option for the development of the airport and the surrounding area.

The report is very detailed and covers a wide area - not just the airport.

In summary it supports:

- A small extension to the current runway (without touching the church)
- Eastwoodbury Lane could be diverted not closed
- The development of the airport to support 2million passengers per annum
- Introduction of tough new night noise quotas to limit noise at night
- Development of a significant new business park (off airport)
- Significant improvements to local transport infrastructure

- The creation of over 7,000 jobs by 2021 both on and off airport

The councils preferred option envisages a modern regional airport with good transport links offering frequent passenger services to Europe.

A small increase to the size of the existing runway, around 200metres, would allow modern, quieter planes to operate commercial routes from Southend.

Essex FSB Response

ESSEX FSB supports the principle of expanding London Southend Airport as bringing extra prosperity to the area and attracting new businesses and visitors.

This policy response is based on business needs and does not reflect the interests of residents outside the economic benefits.

We wish to see the projected 7,000 additional jobs being ones that are

appropriate for the local community and that suitable education and training is provided to enable local people to successfully fill such jobs.

In addition we wish to see the environmental impact of the project minimised including the use of local firms during the construction phase and then to provide goods and services to the airport and other companies based on the site and on the business park so the carbon footprint is reduced and the revenue is retained in the local economy.

The planned Business Park needs to address the current shortage of start up and incubation units in the Thames Gateway corridor and also the shortage of a suitable conference/training venue for business use.

Provision of additional hotel accommodation as part of the scheme is another aspect Essex FSB would like to see as there is a shortage of reasonable quality hotel accommodation in the area.



FSB RECOMMENDATION:

That the new Business Park should:

1. include units which have rateable values below the £15,000 Small Business Rate Relief threshold
2. include units which have integral reliable, high speed broadband access
3. include units which are constructed to be energy efficient
4. include units which are suitable for start up businesses and for those looking to move on from a start up unit to one slightly larger as well as having units suitable for established businesses
5. include sufficient car parking for staff and visitors
6. include a good and effective public transport interchange
7. include a centre which provides serviced facilities for SMEs including meeting rooms and a conference facility
8. have within the project design out crime features to reduce the likelihood of businesses becoming victims of crime.
9. ensure that the units provided deliver the space required for businesses and that change of use of units from their designated purpose should be avoided.



■ Essex FSB believes the Harlow Enterprise Hub (pictured left) which opened in 2008 is an excellent example of flexible working space suitable for start up and small businesses looking for accommodation where they can develop and expand.



■ AN aerial view showing the London Southend Airport site where new jobs can be created for the Thames Gateway corridor.

FSB RECOMMENDATION:



That the provision of the Aviation Academy is supported to help raise the skills base in the Thames Gateway corridor.



FSB RECOMMENDATION:

That the provision of a park and ride facility needs to be carefully planned to ensure that the buses provide a reliable service for employees at the business park and for the airport terminal, including outside normal working hours, and also should provide the opportunity for bus services to central Southend for visitors and shoppers to use to encourage more use of Town Centre facilities including shops.



FSB RECOMMENDATION:

That as part of the planning permission conditions be attached to enable Essex based firms which can provide the same quality service and goods at a competitive price to be given preference for contracts to supply the airport and its associated companies during the construction and subsequent operational phases. It is suggested that a minimum of 25 per cent of such contracts (by value) should be given to Essex based firms.

■ Essex FSB believes the Chelmsford Park and Ride system is a good model to be adapted for the proposed London Southend Airport scheme.



FSB RECOMMENDATION:

That transport infrastructure improvements are completed before the occupancy of the expanded airport facilities and/or the business park is permitted.



FSB RECOMMENDATION:

That suitable legal agreements are put in place to finance transport infrastructure improvements before planning permission is given.



FSB RECOMMENDATION ONE:

The the principle of expansion at London Southend Airport be supported as a positive move for the South Essex economy.



FSB RECOMMENDATION TWO:

That the new Business Park should:

1. include units which have rateable values below the £15,000 Small Business Rate Relief threshold
2. include units which have integral reliable, high speed broadband access
3. include units which are constructed to be energy efficient
4. include units which are suitable for start up businesses and for those looking to move on from a start up unit to one slightly larger as well as having units suitable for established businesses
5. include sufficient car parking for staff and visitors
6. include a good and effective public transport interchange
7. include a centre which provides serviced facilities for SMEs including meeting rooms and a conference facility
8. have within the project design out crime features to reduce the likelihood of businesses becoming victims of crime.
9. ensure that the units provided deliver the space required for businesses and that change of use of units from their designated purpose should be avoided.



FSB RECOMMENDATION THREE:

That the provision of a park and ride facility needs to be carefully planned to ensure that the buses provide a reliable service for employees at the business park and for the airport terminal, including outside normal working hours, and also should provide the opportunity for bus services to central Southend for visitors and shoppers to use to encourage more use of Town Centre facilities including shops.



FSB RECOMMENDATION FOUR:

That the provision of the Aviation Academy is supported to help raise the skills base in the Thames Gateway corridor.



FSB RECOMMENDATION FIVE:

That transport infrastructure improvements are completed before the occupancy of the expanded airport facilities and/or the business park is permitted.



FSB RECOMMENDATION SIX:

That as part of the planning permission conditions be attached to enable Essex based firms which can provide the same quality service and goods at a competitive price to be given preference for contracts to supply the airport and its associated companies during the construction and subsequent operational phases. It is suggested that a minimum of 25 per cent of such contracts (by value) should be given to Essex based firms.



FSB RECOMMENDATION SEVEN:

That suitable legal agreements are put in place to finance transport infrastructure improvements before planning permission is given.