



Transport East – Draft Transport Strategy Consultation, January 2022

Response from South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)

To what extent do you support the vision set out in the Transport Strategy – ‘A thriving economy for the East, with fast, safe, reliable, and resilient transport infrastructure driving forward a future of inclusive and sustainable growth for decades to come.’?	
Strongly support	X
Support	
Neutral	
Oppose	
Strongly oppose	
No opinion	

To what extent do you agree with the following statement ‘The Transport Strategy identifies the right overall approach to transport development across the region’?	
Strongly support	X
Support	
Neutral	
Oppose	
Strongly oppose	
No opinion	



To what extent do you support the strategic priorities set out in the Transport Strategy?						
	Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	No opinion
Decarbonisation to net zero	X					
Connecting growing towns and cities	X					
Energising coastal and rural communities	X					
Unlocking international gateways (ports and airports)	X					

Which of the following goals in each strategic priority do you think are the most important?
Please rank the options (1=the most important, 2= second most important etc.)

Decarbonisation to net zero	
Zero carbon growth Support authorities and developers to plan new development that reduces the need for people to make carbon-intensive transport trips.	2
Reduce demand for carbon intensive trips Make it easier for people to access services locally or online.	4
Shift modes Support people to switch their journeys from private car to walking, cycling and passenger transport.	3
Switch fuels Support residents and businesses to switch all private, passenger transport, fleet and freight vehicles to net zero carbon fuels as quickly as possible.	1

Connecting growing towns and cities	
Enhanced sustainable transport Improved access and connectivity for walking, cycling and passenger transport to enable sustainable travel for education, training, employment, leisure and access to services	2
Faster and more reliable transport connections Deliver improved transport connections between our growing towns, cities and corridors, and the rest of the UK to support business growth, skills development and employment.	1



Fully integrated transport Fully integrate transport networks, services and operations through a customer-focused approach, enabling seamless and safe end-to-end journeys by sustainable modes of transport.	3
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Energising coastal and rural communities	
Increase access to education, training, service and employment for rural communities Support residents and businesses travelling in rural areas to switch modes or fuels. Support communities to make more local trips by encouraging goods and services to be provided locally. Support partners to provide alternative options to travel through better access to ultrafast broadband and digital communications.	2
Improve connectivity along our coastline Connect our coastal communities to the rest of the region and the UK to support levelling-up and boost our coastal industries, such as energy, shipping and tourism.	1

Unlocking international gateways (ports)	
Better access Improve road and rail capacity, journey times and reliability for freight and passengers accessing our ports	1
Alternative fuels Support our ports and freight sector to increase their use of alternative fuels	2
Shift modes Modal shift of freight from road to rail or short sea shipping and increase the use of sustainable transport by port employees and passengers	3

Unlocking international gateways (airports)	
Enhanced connectivity to airports Improve connectivity to airports for passengers and employees through better connected and more sustainable transport options.	2
Net zero aviation emissions Support the Government and aviation industry to deliver net zero emissions by 2050.	1
Shift modes Support all passengers and employees to access our airports by sustainable transport, such as by bus or train.	3



Do you have any comments about the strategic priorities and goals set out in the Transport Strategy?

- 1.1. The Transport Strategy provides a comprehensive and evidence-based approach to strategic transport planning, seeking to address the immediate challenges and set a clear direction for the next 30 years. SELEP welcomes this strategy and recognises its importance in enabling a conversation with Government about the economic opportunity of the area and to be able to compete for investment against other areas of the country.
- 1.2. The Strategy will inform the plans of both Government and local/regional partners and therefore it is important that the document reflects key national policy areas. As such **the Strategy should articulate more clearly the contribution that a robust and resilient transport network can bring to the Levelling Up agenda**. We recognise that there will be a flexible approach to the delivery of the Strategy, which will enable Transport East to respond to the details of the Levelling Up White paper as they become available. However, access to education, training and employment opportunities is undoubtably a crucial part of Levelling Up and in many communities within Essex and the wider region this remains a barrier.
- 1.3. The four strategic priorities of the Strategy align well with the priorities set out in the SELEP Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy, which are:
 - 1.3.1. Business Resilience and Growth;
 - 1.3.2. UK's Global Gateway;
 - 1.3.3. Communities for the Future; and
 - 1.3.4. Coastal Catalyst.
- 1.4. SELEP officers and Board members have been engaged in the process of developing the Strategy. In December 2021 Transport East presented the draft Strategy to the SELEP Strategic Board, providing an overview of the strategic priorities and goals which were well received by members of the Board. The 15 goals, each supported by actions, were felt to provide a comprehensive approach to tackling the significant challenges set out in the strategy.
- 1.5. We welcome the recognition of the diverse nature of the Eastern region and the differing needs of communities across the area. In SELEP we would place particular emphasis on our role as a Gateway to the UK and maximising the economic opportunities afforded by our major infrastructure assets, as well as improving connectivity and access to opportunities for our coastal and rural communities. **There is potential for the Strategy to outline more clearly how it will help to address the deprivation and levelling up needs of coastal and estuarine communities within Essex**, in addition to supporting the economic recovery and growth of large coastal destinations in Suffolk.
- 1.6. **There are communities within Essex and the wider region that are amongst the most deprived in the country** and we must ensure that they are not overlooked by Government policy and investment for Levelling Up. This Strategy could therefore better demonstrate the needs of those communities and articulate how the priorities and goals will help to reduce inequalities within the region.
- 1.7. The Transport East vision seeks to have by 2050 'Places that make it easy and attractive for people to move around sustainably' and we feel **it is important that this also reflects the**



need to ensure that places are attractive for businesses to locate and operate effectively, particularly in relation to the rural and coastal areas that the strategy identifies as requiring a tailored approach.

- 1.8. The strategy does highlight the importance of ports and airports in the region, including the designation of two new Freeports and **we support the recognition of the access improvements that will be required to fulfil the potential of these opportunities**. It will be important to ensure ongoing collaboration to ensure that partners are able to consider the full implications of these as they develop.
- 1.9. Given the prominence of ports and maritime in the region, we also **welcome the inclusion of support for the freight sector to increase their use of alternative fuels and to increase sustainable transport by port employees and passengers** within Goals 11 and 12 which will potentially make a big contribution to the decarbonisation priority and is an area where collaboration across multiple partnerships will be crucial. The Strategy could expand further on the opportunities around alternatives fuel such as hydrogen, in relation to both freight and other transport uses and some of the work that is already underway in the region to support this.
- 1.10. It is important that the Strategy reflects the importance of key national policy areas, such as decarbonisation and Freeports as referenced above. It will also play an important role in highlighting how future transport planning, particularly in relation to key priorities such as the Lower Thames Crossing, the Thames Estuary and the two Freeports, can help to bring value to the SELEP area and beyond.
- 1.11. As such **the Strategy could more robustly set out the regional and national importance of the Lower Thames Crossing and its role in improving connectivity, including consideration of the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing on changing travel patterns** across the SELEP and Transport East area. Linked to the significant growth opportunities in and around South Essex, it is also important that the strategy recognises the need to improve north-south connectivity between South Essex and the wider region.
- 1.12. In relation to the 'Core Corridors' we feel that the South Essex corridors, although busy, do not clearly show the link from North Kent through to the north of the region and wider UK which will be improved/enhanced by the implementation/addition of the Lower Thames Crossing.
- 1.13. As part of the Strategy's decarbonisation pathway, it could go further in reflecting the wider implications of a net zero approach. For example, in relation to the construction of projects identified in the delivery plan and the challenges in meeting the skills and workforce needs to support net zero.
- 1.14. The Strategy also refers to the implications emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, including the potential to capitalise on positive behaviour change and seek to sustain these. However, we feel that **greater analysis of the ongoing implications of changing patterns of work, including our changing relationship with London and what this could mean for where people choose to live and work and how they travel will be needed to support delivery of the Strategy**. Future travel needs and behaviours and the resulting connectivity between our growing towns, cities and economic corridors, and to the rest of the UK will need to be kept under review, including through engagement with other transport bodies such as Transport for London and Transport for the South East.



Do you have any other comments about the Transport Strategy?

- 1.15. The role of Transport East as outlined in the Strategy is strongly aligned with that of SELEP and we are keen to continue to collaborate on this core area of work to help unlock economic opportunities for the area. In addition to supporting collaboration across partners and making the strategic case for investment there are opportunities for us to share data and intelligence to build a robust evidence base to inform ongoing planning and activities. We also have active groups and networks that would provide valuable insights in relation to particular priorities within the Strategy.
- 1.16. Across the SELEP geography, our Coastal Communities Working Group is a unique coastal partnership of 15 local authorities and has successfully collaborated on the production of the 'Coastal Communities Economic Prospectus – Boosting Coastal Productivity' which outlines clear, ambitious proposals to seize new opportunities and 'level up' deprived coastal communities across the South East at scale. There is an opportunity for this group to work with Transport East to support delivery of both the Coastal Prospectus and the goals of the Transport Strategy.
- 1.17. Similarly, there are particularly strong links between Transport East's strategic priorities and SELEP's activities in relation to Housing and Development, Clean Growth and our Major Projects Group. Across the SELEP area we will be delivering 25% of the Garden Communities housing in the UK, with our Garden Communities leading on new approaches for improved planning development and for the coordination of infrastructure investment, providing the opportunity for implementing best practice and sharing learning across the area. As such, these provide further opportunities for collaboration between SELEP and Transport East.
- 1.18. To maximise these opportunities, particularly in relation to key transport routes and infrastructure planning, it is also important that there continues to be alignment, where appropriate, with the Transport for the South East Transport Strategy and ongoing collaboration between the two Transport Boards.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Investment and Delivery Programme (IDP) sets out the right approach for delivering the Transport Strategy?

- 1.19. We strongly agree that the IDP sets out the right approach for delivering the Transport Strategy. The process used to identify the project pipeline is sensible and has been developed using well developed procedures, including the regions many partner groups, organisations and stakeholders.

Do you have any comments about the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal?

- 1.20. Funding of potential projects is explained in the IDP and is clear on potential delivery and ensures that it is clear in differentiating between those projects that are deliverable right down to projects that are nice to have, but also is clear on projects/ideas that would require



a lot more work before they might be realised.

- 1.21. In some cases, projects identified as being at 'ideas' stage would need to move quickly in order to meet the emerging needs, for example the ports access package and roll-out of EV charging infrastructure. Recognising that major schemes can take a long time to come to fruition, there should also be a regular review of the strategy and delivery plan to ensure that schemes identified will still be required in the way they were originally envisaged by the time they are operational.
- 1.22. We are pleased to see the emphasis on monitoring and evaluation at this early stage. However, there is little information around the format of this process and this needs to be in place early on in order that proposed projects are clear on what they will be monitoring against through the lifetime of the project and after completion.
- 1.23. Multi year funding and long term certainty is an important element to raise. It is quite reasonable to ask but may be harder to ensure commitment.
- 1.24. We are pleased to note that committed projects mention align well with current projects being delivered as part of the SELEP programme.