



Pacific House (Second Floor)
Hazelwick Avenue
Three Bridges
Crawley
RH10 1EX
01293 305965
coast2capital.org.uk

Transport for the South East
By E-mail

03 January 2020

Transport for the South East - Draft Transport Strategy consultation

Context

I am writing on behalf of Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership in response to the Transport for the South East (TfSE) consultation on the Draft Transport Strategy. Coast to Capital is a unique business-led collaboration between the private, public and education sectors across a diverse area which includes East Surrey, Greater Brighton and West Sussex.

We have previously supported the need for TfSE to represent the transport interests of the South East as a whole. We have and continue to work as a partner to TfSE and considered and contributed to the development of the Draft Transport Strategy through our position on the Board, the Senior Officers group, the Transport Forum and other opportunities.

Given our role and our position on the Board, we have elected to submit a 'higher level' written response. We are pleased with the consultative approach to developing the strategy, and would encourage TfSE to use the local knowledge that comes forward from local transport authorities and communities to develop the more granular interurban and local journey priorities for the strategy.

We are in the later stages of developing our draft Local Industrial Strategy proposals for the Coast to Capital area, in preparation for negotiation with Government in early 2020. For our own evidence base we used the framework of the '5 Foundations of Productivity' set out in the UK Industrial Strategy, which include transport under the Infrastructure foundation.

As we finalise our Local Industrial Strategy, we will take the opportunity to draw on the extensive evidence base for the TfSE Draft Transport Strategy, which was not yet published at the time we launched our own consultation.

Draft Transport Strategy

We are fully supportive of the strategy's overarching message and approach that:

"The traditional approach, one that is akin to 'planning for vehicles' with extensive highway capacity enhancements for cars, is not sustainable in the longer term. Instead, there needs to be a transition from the current focus towards more 'planning for people' and more 'planning for places'."

Transport for the South East, Draft Transport Strategy, page viii

The Coast to Capital Strategic Economic Plan, Gatwick 360°, sets out a vision by 2030 for our towns and cities to be known around the world as fantastic places to live, to grow and succeed. It describes how international connectivity is one of our area's major economic competitive advantages. But, if our economy is to grow, we need a transport network that supports faster, more reliable, and less polluting journeys. Wider transport infrastructure needs further investment to improve our links to London, to international gateways, along the coast and between our main centres of economic growth.

In addition to transport planning, it is necessary to influence good infrastructure planning and design more widely, with the support of the Local Planning authorities and planning policy, to encourage and allow for sustainable modes of transport as we develop new housing and business infrastructure in the region.

We support the thoroughness and detail of the Draft Transport Strategy as a coordinated picture and plan for the South East. We are in agreement with the vision, goals and priorities as set out.

Although the Coast to Capital area shares economic strengths and characteristics with neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships, we are – arguably – experiencing greater challenges to our future productivity. This is summarised best by the steady decline in our relative economic growth (measured by GVA per head), from a productivity peak at the turn of the millennium and considerably before the 2008 recession.

The reasons for this are complex – social and environmental as well as economic – but must be addressed through coordinated targeted interventions, agreed with

Government and delivered with key strategic partners across public and private sectors. We consider the TfSE Draft Transport Strategy and the subsequent area studies to be a key part of this approach.

In our recent consultation for the Local Industrial Strategy, the most frequently mentioned intervention by respondents was the need for enhancements to the region's transport network and wider transport infrastructure. Whilst much of this was focused on the area's road network (such as the lack of progress on the A27), the majority saw investment in sustainable/public transport as the most important intervention to be proposed to government.

The need to connect skilled individuals, or individuals who can be skilled, with specialist employers in our employment centres, and the difficulty to recruit skilled individuals to some of these places, was also seen throughout our engagement activity as central to our area's productivity challenge.

Coast to Capital specific routes

We support the key challenges and corresponding initiatives, by Journey Types, identified for the Coast to Capital area in Chapter 4 (Our strategy). These are in line with our own view of the challenges faced by the transport network and would help increase our area's productivity and economic opportunity more widely across the wider South East:

- **Radial journeys** – the M23/A23/Brighton Main Line (Challenge 3, p69) – both the capacity and the reliability of the road and rail network. We continue to advocate for Government to prioritise investment in the Croydon Area Remodelling Scheme (CARS) to unlock rail capacity and we support the development of a 'digital railway' that will improve rail efficiency but also form part of a wider network of enhanced digital infrastructure for our area. Crossrail 2 offers significant opportunity to improve the connectivity of East Surrey to central London, with direct benefits to Epsom and indirect benefits to towns in Mole Valley.
- **Coastal journeys** – the poor performance of the east west M27/A27/A259/West Coastway/East Coastway Corridor (Challenge 3, p74) – the constraints and congestion of the road network for competing journey types and low use of the railway. We support Highways England to bring forward a preferred route for the A27 at Arundel but a wider solution to the coastal route requires a coordinated approach between road and rail, private and public transport. The coordination of road and rail is equally as relevant to inter-urban journeys (below) and integrated planning needed for different journey types on the same routes, according to the most suitable modes for shorter, longer and medium distance travel.
- **Orbital journeys** – the east-west connectivity gap to Gatwick airport/the Gatwick Diamond (challenge 2 and 4, p74) – new east to west routes serving Gatwick should be seen as part of a wider and necessary programme of

coordinated infrastructure investment to increase surface access for Gatwick's projected growth, either as a single runway airport or dual runway airport if plans to bring the second 'emergency' runway into use are successful. Future demand is not likely to be restricted to the airports own growth but much wider plans for the sustainable development of the area surrounding the airport

- **Inter-urban/local journeys** – we refer TfSE to our Local Industrial Strategy [consultation report](#) which includes a map showing a number of place-specific transport infrastructure priorities for our area identified by respondents. Congestion on the transport network was seen throughout our engagement work to be a major constraint to economic growth and contributor to our productivity challenge. We support Challenge 2 (p76) that interventions will be needed to provide bus prioritisation infrastructure, not only to ensure that bus performance does not deteriorate but is actively encouraged to improve. Affordability, particularly in relation to ticketing choices and value for money incentives, is an issue that has been voiced throughout our engagement. It is also important to ensure that walking and cycling is increasingly planned for, to be seen as an attractive option and a beneficiary of the move toward sustainable travel, avoiding the suggested risk posed by new technology under Challenge 3 (p88).
- **International gateways and freight journeys** – as above, the inclusion of Gatwick airport is imperative but, more than this, the potential for substantial, coordinated and sustainable growth around the airport – the full opportunity of which may not be represented by the current picture in Local Plans given these span a considerable number of different local authorities surrounding the airport. While the two ports within Coast to Capital (Shoreham and Newhaven) are smaller than other ports, it is important to recognise the scope they offer – with investment – for international freight and passenger movement but also to create a national network of sea freight.
- **Future journeys** – early adoption of new technology is vital to achieve the desired step change in transport planning set out in the Draft Transport Strategy. There should be an ambition to achieve net-zero carbon emissions for transport before the 2050 time frame of the strategy, despite the potential challenges of doing so. We agree that there should be a role for TfSE to steer the direction and uptake of necessary innovations for future journeys and shape the regulatory framework governing them. Working with industry – collaboration between the public and private sectors – will be vital to develop technological solutions, with the added economic benefit if they can be produced locally making use of our strengths in the creative and digital industries.

We look forward to the completion and publication of the TfSE Draft Transport Strategy, and our contribution to the development of the further Journey Type and Thematic studies as they come forward. These will support the development of strong business cases for investment in necessary transport infrastructure to support sustainable economic, social and environmental growth across our own area, the South East and UK more widely.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martin Harris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Martin Harris

Transport Sponsor, on behalf of the Coast to Capital Board