

TWA Response

Stansted Generation 2 Stansted Rail Improvement Order On Site Railway Infrastructure

I write to inform you of Essex County Council's views on Stansted Airport/BAA's Transport and Works Act (TWA) application for on site railway infrastructure as part of the Surface Access Strategy for the Stansted G2 development proposal. This proposal is for a second runway and terminal plus other airport related facilities which will allow a significantly increased throughput at the airport.

Essex County Council would wish to make it clear that it is opposed to this development at Stansted Airport and that any comments on the TWA application should be read in this light.

The TWA application is for on site railway infrastructure, specifically a new railway tunnel and a fourth platform and associated facilities at the airport station. This infrastructure will allow significantly more trains per hour to access Stansted. The existing tunnel is limited to 6 trains per hour each way, currently 4 Stansted Expresses, 1 local train from the south and 1 from the north from Cambridge.

The proposed on site railway infrastructure the subject of the TWA application is to be built to serve the G2 proposal and the environmental assessment envisages completion in 2018. However the proposed rail services for G2 require a major expansion to the West Anglia Line between Tottenham Hale and Cheshunt where there are serious capacity constraints at present.

It is understood the G2 proposals envisage that the new tracks in this area would be provided by Network Rail at the Department for Transport's behest, possibly in the next decade (after 2010), but neither the timing of the provision nor the provision itself can be assured at the present time. The County Council would therefore object to the TWA application as it stands as it would be insufficient to meet the needs of the overall G2 proposal.

It is unclear whether BAA only intend to implement the on site infrastructure when and if the capacity of the West Anglia Line is expanded with new tracks. Essex County Council would support maximising the rail mode share of passengers and employees accessing Stansted and, if necessary for this, increasing the rail infrastructure capacity on the airport provided that the provision of rail services to the airport is not to the detriment of other non airport rail passengers.

The on site infrastructure would provide access benefits if it were installed in the near future in allowing more local trains to terminate at the airport improving access to local stations (the West Anglia capacity constraints are largely south of Broxbourne junction) and allowing more trains to Stansted from the north. Provision of the tunnel and station platform could bring benefits regardless of the timing of the provision of new rail capacity on the

West Anglia Line provided the service pattern is not altered to the detriment of other users.

However it appears such improvements are not the intention even as part of the G2 development. The project objectives (4.3 Stansted Rail Improvement Order Design and Access Statement) only look to maintain journey opportunities between Harlow and Bishops Stortford and the airport and to maintain airport journey times. There is no intention to improve local access which is regrettable.

The County Council will make no comment at this time on the detail of the infrastructure to be provided. It is though concerned that the Environmental Statement does not make clear where the spoil from the excavation will be reused/disposed of.

It also notes the distance between the proposed new platform and the new exit to the railway station which is at the opposite end of the airport terminal. From the far end of a 12 car train to the existing terminal would be over 300 metres and to the proposed rail station exit at the end of the terminal over 500 metres.

While these distances may be adequate for passengers with luggage accessing the departure hall of the existing terminal the practicality of accessing the proposed new terminal a further 300 plus metres away must be assessed.

Essex County Council will be analysing the rail implications of the G2 planning application. Until then it wishes this response to be considered an objection not on the basis that it is opposed to the rail enhancement but that it seeks clarification on the intended timing of the implementation of the proposed rail infrastructure.