



TRANSPORTEAST

CONSULTATION SUMMARY: TRANSPORT
STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT & DELIVERY
PROGRAMME

July 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Transport East is the sub-national transport body for Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend-On-Sea and Thurrock. It brings together councils, business leaders and the Government to identify the investment needed in transport in the region to support sustainable economic growth and improve people's quality of life.

Our role is to develop and deliver a collective vision for the future of transport in the East, and work with other bodies to deliver cross-boundary schemes.

A regional Transport Strategy is needed to help guide transport investment in the East over the next 30 years. The strategy will set priorities for better transport for everybody living, working, and learning in the region up to 2050. It will also help ensure that strategic transport projects are prioritised based on their ability to help meet national and regional objectives.

The Transport Strategy is supported by an Investment and Delivery Programme (IDP). Which sets out our approach to delivering the Strategy.

A consultation for the draft Transport Strategy and IDP ran for eight weeks from Thursday 2nd December 2021 to Sunday 30th January 2022.

The full consultation report can be found at www.transporeast.org.uk/our-documents

1.2 Consultation approach

The public consultation was held online with dedicated web pages on the Transport East website. This decision reflected COVID-19 restrictions and the large geographical area to be consulted.

A consultation brochure and online questionnaire were produced and available online for the duration of the consultation period. People were also able to request hard paper copies and alternative formats of all consultation materials through a Freepost address or from Transport East by email.

The consultation was publicized through our own channels and paid advertising, as well as the supporting local authorities and other delivery partners across the region. The consultation was fully digital, with a virtual event space and live web events scheduled for people to find out more about the plans.

The consultation material included a consultation brochure, including easy-read and audio versions, a consultation survey. Supporting documents were provided including the full draft Transport Strategy, draft Investment and Delivery Programme, Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) and the technical evidence base reports.

The consultation survey asked questions on the level of support for the Transport Strategy vision, approach and asked respondents to prioritise the goals within each pathway;

- Decarbonisation to net-zero
- Connecting growing towns and cities
- Energising rural and coastal communities
- Unlocking global gateways

The survey also asked for the level of support for the IDP and gave respondents an opportunity to comment on the Transport Strategy, IDP and ISA. Finally it asked optional questions about travel behaviour and demographics.

1.3 Engagement with the consultation

Over the 8-weeks we secured a good level of engagement with the consultation.

- 4,125 views of main consultation website
- 42,361 views of social media content
- 75 attendees of online webinars
- 2,500 stakeholders contacted

2. Consultation results

2.1 Overall results

A total of 590 consultation responses were received, with 514 responses to the online questionnaire and a further 76 responses received by email.

Responses to the online questionnaire were received from 80 different areas from 143 different postcode groups, showing strong geographical coverage. The greatest number of responses came from addresses within the Norwich (71 responses from 15 postcodes) and Colchester (47 responses from 7 postcodes) postcode districts, accounting for 14.1% and 9.3% responses respectively.

The 514 online responses received via the online questionnaire provided responses to quantitative questions around the level of support for key aspects of the Transport Strategy.

- We asked respondents whether they supported the Vision.
 - 74.3% (382 respondents) either supported or strongly supported the Vision laid out in the draft Transport Strategy
 - 10.5% (54 respondents) either opposed or strongly opposed the Vision
 - 14.2% (73 respondents) were neutral, and 1% (5 respondents) had no opinion
- We then asked whether respondents whether the Transport Strategy identifies the right overall approach to transport development across the region.
 - 55.4% (285 respondents) either agreed or strongly agreed
 - 18.3% (94 respondents) either disagreed or strongly disagreed
 - 25.3% (130 respondents) were neutral, and 1% (5 respondents) had no opinion

- Most respondents supported or strongly supported the strategic priorities:
 - 79% supported decarbonisation to net zero
 - 79% supported connecting growing towns and cities
 - 81% supported energising coastal and rural communities, and
 - 62% supported unlocking international gateways (ports and airports)

This showed strong overall support for the priorities with only 9%, 6%, 6%, and 12% opposing or strongly opposing to the priorities respectively.

- Within each Strategic Priority, we asked respondents to rank the goals we had identified.
 - For decarbonisation to net zero: 34.6% (178 respondents) rated their first-choice goal as 'Shift modes'
 - For connecting towns and cities: 37.5% (193 respondents) rated their first-choice goal as 'Enhanced sustainable transport'
 - For energising rural and coastal communities: 32.3% (166 respondents) rated their first-choice goal as 'Increase access to education, training, service and employment for rural communities'
 - For unlocking global gateways 47.3% (243 respondents) rated their first-choice goal as 'Shift modes' for ports. 32.1% (165 respondents) rated their first-choice goal as 'Net zero aviation emissions' for unlocking international gateways (airports) – but this also had the largest number of respondents ranking it last.
- We asked respondents if they agreed the Investment and Delivery Programme sets out the right approach for delivering the Transport Strategy.
 - 45% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed
 - 30% of respondents were neutral
 - 18% indicated they either disagreed or strongly disagreed
 - 5% of respondents had no opinion and the remaining 2% chose not to provide a response to the question

2.2 Comments about the Transport Strategy and IDP

Respondents were provided the opportunity to provide written comments about the Transport Strategy, Investment and Delivery Programme and Integrated Sustainability Appraisal. Within these comment sections several themes recurred.

- **Positive role of public transport:** Many respondents highlighted the role of public transport in improving connections across the region and the benefits this brings, particularly to more isolated rural and coastal communities. Respondents made several suggestions on how to improve infrastructure and services across the region that would support the aims of the Transport Strategy.
- **Road investment and decarbonisation:** Several respondents highlighted the emphasis given to road related improvements within the Transport Strategy. Comments on this theme often raised how road improvements conflict with the strategic priority of achieving transport decarbonisation. Growth aspirations for the region were also identified as an area of concern, with growth often seen as a risk to sustainable development.

- **Overall ambition:** Some respondents asked for more ambition, for the Investment and Delivery Programme to identify new projects and prioritise existing projects that deliver decarbonisation. Respondents are keen for the improvements to be challenging and bold enough to achieve the desired ambition and facilitate the necessary change required to level up the capability of the region.
- **Funding and Delivery:** Responses questioned how the projects are to be funded and asked for more detail on delivery proposals and timescales for project implementation.

3. Changes to the Transport Strategy and IDP

3.1 Changes to the Transport Strategy following consultation

In response to the consultation feedback we have made the following notable changes to the Transport Strategy.

- Adjusting the **vision** to strengthen decarbonising transport in response to consultation comments and new national government policy objectives, and to reflect comments from the consultation around the word ‘fast’ and implications for safety. The new vision reads:

“A thriving Eastern region with safe, efficient and net-zero transport networks advancing a future of inclusive and sustainable growth for decades to come.”

- Merging the **pathway on Unlocking International Gateways** from two pathways, separate for ports and airports, to one. Text changes in response to comments from the consultation resulted in greater alignment between the two original pathways, allowing us to merge resulting in a clearer set of goals and activities.
- The ordering of **goals in Decarbonisation to Net Zero pathway** have been changed to reflect consultation comments about the main challenge being to tackle carbon emissions from existing journeys, rather than those relating to new homes and jobs. Changes to this pathway also include a commitment to improve carbon emission evidence to generate a transport carbon budget for the region.
- Several thematic changes were made throughout the documents in response to consultation comments or national government publications.
 - More emphasis on Levelling Up in line with national government policy objectives
 - Strengthening the link between rural and urban areas
 - More on boundary relationships to west and south
 - More on how transport can support environmental and social inclusion agendas including specific actions Transport East will undertake
 - Updates to tables and maps

3.2 Changes to the IDP following consultation

In response to comments made through the consultation we have also made notable changes to the Investment and Delivery Programme. Key areas include:

- Applying weighting to the project assessment criteria to align more closely with our strategic priorities
- Additional pan-regional projects to reflect rural/coastal – urban connectivity, levelling up and social inclusion
- IDP Scheme details updated
- Develop an approach to establish a regional transport carbon budget
- Greater detail on the Transport East agreed technical programme for next 3 years
- More emphasis on maintaining the existing network
- Commitment to develop regional Key Performance Indicators to measure and evaluate the Strategy
- Updates to tables and maps

3.3 Changes to Integrated Sustainability Appraisal following consultation

The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal has reviewed the Strategy and IDP, testing our approach against environmental, equality and socio-economic outcomes. The ISA has been developed iteratively alongside the Transport Strategy and IDP. In summer 2021, we undertook a scoping consultation with statutory and expert stakeholders to inform the development of the ISA. The ISA was also subject to public consultation alongside the Strategy and IDP.

In making amends to the Transport Strategy and IDP following consultation, we also reviewed the ISA report and made some changes alongside comments from stakeholders and the public. The ISA documents were subsequently updated to reflect consultation comments and changes to the Strategy and IDP.

The ISA and HRA have been split into two volumes; one assessing the Transport Strategy and one the IDP. This reflects that the IDP is expected to be rolled forward and updated on regular basis so the assessment can also be updated periodically.

Key areas changed within this updated ISA:

- Environmental focused changes:
 - Clearer emphasis of threats to biodiversity and need for coordinated approach to deliver biodiversity net gain, so it is integrated with other environmental and social benefit objectives and supports biodiversity recovery.
 - The active contribution to the goals of the Environment Act through the Strategy implementation are more clearly incorporated into the sustainability action plan and monitoring plan
 - Strengthened text on non-exhaust air emissions
- Decarbonisation focused changes:
 - Revised climate change objective to clarify that it covers facilitation of traffic growth in the assessment and overall effects of proposals combined
 - Commitment to develop carbon budgets for the Transport East region added to the sustainability action plan, and monitoring of progress towards meeting carbon target at each update to the IDP

- Equalities and Inclusion focused changes:
 - Additional equalities assessment of the Strategy with further recommendations for implementation included in the sustainability action plan

- Project focused changes:
 - Reference to undertaking Corridor Studies is added to the sustainability action plan including social inclusion studies, natural capital and biodiversity/ environmental net gain and carbon comparison when assessing constraints, potential impacts, and opportunities
 - Assessment of additional high-level approaches to address the need for additional demand management and better reflect approach taken in the updated Strategy
 - Updates to the IDP scheme assessments to separate construction/operational phase impacts more clearly

The ISA will be finalised following the acceptance of the Transport Strategy by the Secretary of State. We will publish an updated draft ISA with the other documents.

4. Next Steps

Following approval of the documents by the Transport East Forum we will seek endorsement from our LTA members with a view to submitting to the Secretary of State for Transport in the autumn.

The updated Strategy and IDP will inform the Transport East Business Plan, our technical work programme and the transport strategies, plans and delivery of our Local Authority partners and national infrastructure agencies such as National Highways, Network Rail and Great British Railways.