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Foreword

Essex Rail Strategy – 2006-2011 and Beyond



'I cannot think of a higher priority for the County Council than for it to strive to achieve a first class highways and transportation system for all who live in, work in or visit the county of Essex. The challenges in front of us are enormous. Over 130,000 new homes are being proposed for Essex and its borders with surrounding authorities, the travel needs of which will have a direct impact on the transport network in Essex. All aspects of passenger transport will play a key role in delivering this vision.

The County Council has therefore produced three daughter strategies to support the Local Transport Plan, focusing on how passenger transport will contribute towards a fully integrated transport network. The Road Passenger Transport, Bus Information and Rail Strategies outline the ways in which we intend to improve the lives of Essex people by addressing traffic growth, road congestion and improving public transport. They contain measures aimed at improving options for travel and access to services to develop a more effective transport network.

To produce the strategies the County Council has consulted widely at regional, district and parish level, with key service providers, a wide range of user groups and the general public so that collectively they represent a tangible commitment by Essex County Council to make our County a better place to live and work and to support a decent public transport network.

I am committed to delivering a transport system that meets the challenges we face in Essex and look forward to working in partnership with stakeholders to bring about the transformation we now need.'

Councillor Rodney L. Bass
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation

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Executive Summary

This is a time of great change and opportunity for the rail industry. It is currently being restructured to reduce costs and complexity, ensure that there is clear accountability for safety and performance and bring the strategic responsibility for rail closer back to Central Government. However, balanced with this is recognition of the need to consider rail from a regional perspective alongside other transport modes and wider local planning considerations.

At the heart of this strategy are four specific rail objectives that Essex County Council has developed to meet the high level strategic objectives of its 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan as a whole. These specific rail objectives are as follows:

RO1 – To promote and develop rail as part of an integrated public transport system that will attract new and retain existing passengers and freight from less sustainable transport modes.

RO2 – To provide a high-class, seamless whole journey experience, from the moment that people or goods start their journeys until they reach their final destinations.

RO3 – To develop the accessibility of the rail system to all users, with a particular emphasis on disabled people and people in remote locations and identified regeneration areas.

RO4 – To ensure the long term security, future and development of the Essex rail network.

These objectives will be achieved through a combination of national and regional schemes, such as Crossrail, works implemented by third party developers in parallel with residential or industrial construction and works to be delivered directly as part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan.

The delivery programme for the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan will include feasibility work to explore options for new major schemes and the delivery of both larger projects and smaller improvements aimed at delivering more immediate, local benefits. All of this work will be focussed on promoting and improving the accessibility of rail travel as part of an integrated transport network.

The feasibility work will address both known and predicted future capacity and accessibility issues and will investigate concepts such as the provision of a connection between the c2c and 'one' Great Eastern rail lines. Some of these proposals may be delivered, together with other projects such as a new pedestrian and cycle footbridge at Braintree Freeport station, within the timescale of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan.

The smaller projects to be delivered as part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan have been divided into five programmes:

Interchange Improvement Programme

The Interchange Enhancement Programme will enhance the quality of passengers' journeys by improving the interchange facilities between bus, rail and other transport modes at a number of rail stations. Schemes will primarily focus on the provision of high quality and easy-to-use passenger information and infrastructure enhancements.

Crime Reduction Programme

Key factors in both attracting new passengers and retaining existing passengers are the levels of perceived and actual security: passengers will not select rail as their preferred transport mode if they do not feel safe. The Crime Reduction Programme will focus on improving both actual and perceived security levels through the implementation of soft measures and infrastructure enhancements, for example working with the local community to regenerate and reuse station buildings to provide a presence on stations where they would otherwise be unmanned.

Minor Stations Enhanced Transport Improvement Programme

The Essex branch lines play a vital role in maintaining the accessibility of the communities that they serve, in addition to being an important part of their heritage and culture. This Programme will deliver projects aimed at promoting and increasing the use of these lines, in particular those included within the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership in which Essex County Council is a partner. These projects will include both physical improvements and soft measures, such as the operation of special events trains and an intensive marketing and promotion programme.

Passenger Information Programme

A key step in attracting and retaining passengers from less sustainable travel modes must be to raise awareness of rail travel and make available accurate information on services and facilities in a manner that is accessible and in a format that is easy to understand. Under the Passenger Information Programme, Essex County Council will work in partnership with the rail operators to implement a programme of soft measures and physical improvements to raise awareness of, promote and provide information on rail travel opportunities, for example providing real-time passenger information on bus and rail services at stations.

Accessibility Programme

The Accessibility Programme will focus on improving the accessibility of the rail network to all users, including disabled people and people who live or work in remote locations or do not have access to a car. It will include physical measures that will generally be delivered alongside other works and soft measures such as marketing initiatives aimed at raising awareness of travel opportunities for disabled and socially disadvantaged people.

The Accessibility and Passenger Information Programmes are not identified in the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan as separate budget items, but will in fact be delivered in parallel with the other three programmes. However, they have been addressed individually in this strategy in light of their importance and to ensure that the resulting initiatives are approached in a consistent and integrated manner within the other programmes.

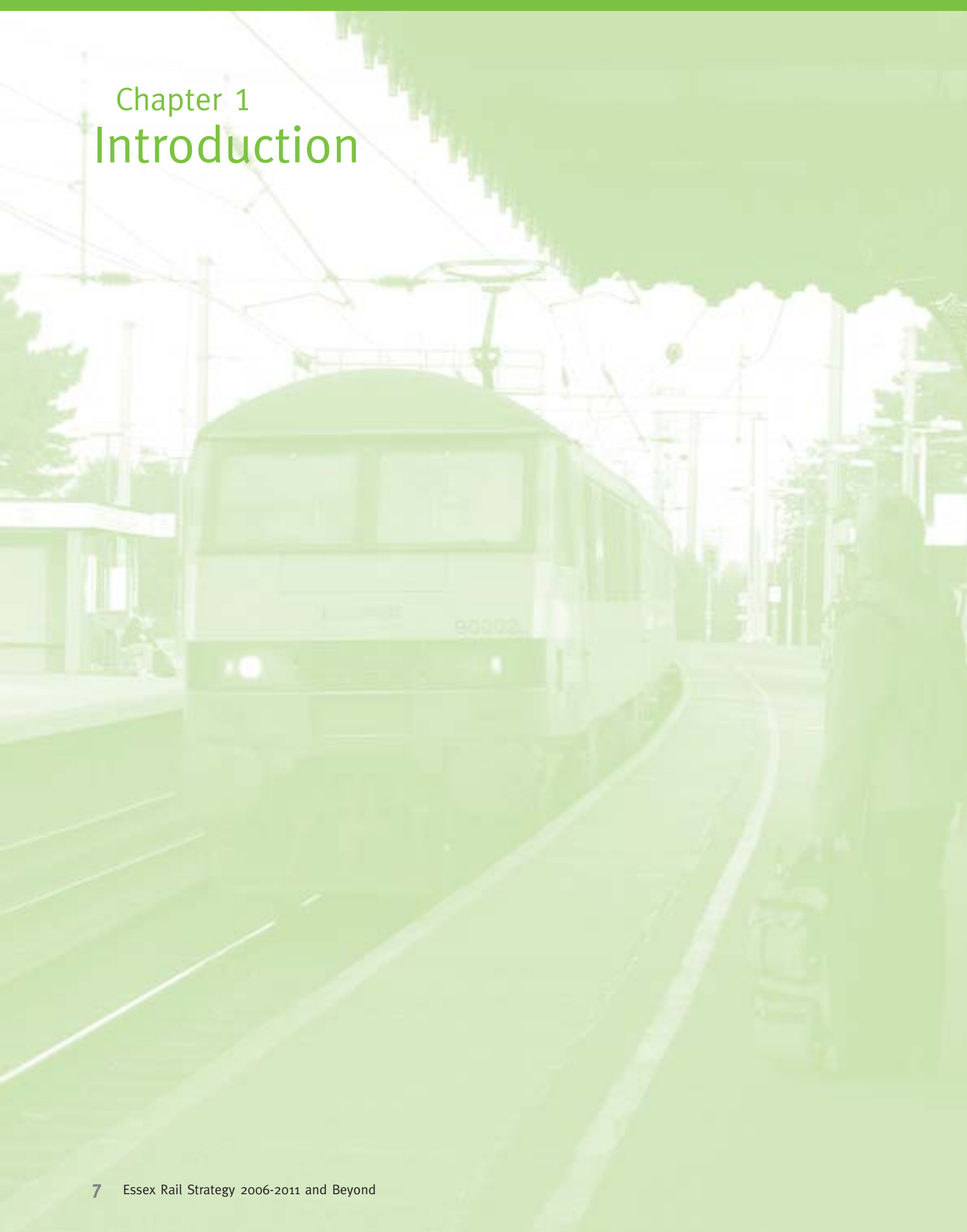
In addition to its contribution to wider Local Transport Plan performance measures, the success of the delivery programme, particularly the five programmes of smaller improvements, will be measured by a local performance indicator that has specifically been devised to measure the local impact of the improvements and initiatives:

RLPI1 – Number of passengers travelling to identified rail stations by modes other than the private car.

As with passenger rail, responsibility for setting the strategic direction for rail freight lies with Central Government. However, Essex County Council will consider rail freight alongside road haulage in promoting an integrated and sustainable approach to distribution across the County. The strategic vision and direction for freight is set out in Essex County Council's Sustainable Distribution Strategy that has been developed as part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan.

This is an exciting time for rail, and over the life of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, Essex County Council will work with its stakeholders to develop a long-term strategic rail plan for the County. This will deliver the rail passenger and freight services and facilities needed to support the growth, prosperity and preservation of Essex for future generations.

Chapter 1 Introduction



Introduction

- 1.1 Since the privatisation of the rail industry in the mid-1990's, the use of rail for transporting passengers and goods has grown across the UK: the increase in passenger traffic alone was 12% over the five year period to 2003-04 (measured in number of passenger kilometres) (source: "National Rail Trends Yearbook 2004-05", published by the Strategic Rail Authority). Meeting this continually increasing demand is a considerable but exciting challenge for all those with a stake in the future of Essex. Following the publication of Central Government's White Paper "The Future of Rail" in July 2004, the rail industry is currently being restructured. The objective is to reduce costs and organisational complexity, ensure clear accountability for safety and performance and bring the strategic responsibility for rail closer back to Central Government. However, coupled with this is recognition of the fact that Central Government and national bodies can sometimes be remote from local issues and of the need to consider rail from a regional perspective alongside other transport modes and wider local planning considerations.
- 1.2 In the new industry structure, responsibility for setting performance targets and strategic direction is moving from the Strategic Rail Authority to the Department for Transport, with the Office of the Rail Regulator providing independent financial, safety and performance regulatory control. Accountability for operating, maintaining and improving the network, including the timetable planning, lies in the public sector with Network Rail, with its delivery managed through an agreement with the Central Government. Private sector passenger and freight train operating companies and rolling stock companies will continue to provide and operate the trains and manage the stations, with the exception of some of the largest stations which are managed by Network Rail.
- 1.3 A new era is emerging for rail, and Essex County Council must ensure that the Essex rail network continues to develop as part of a sustainable, integrated passenger and freight transport system that meets the needs of both residents and businesses. This will only be achieved by providing a high-class, seamless whole journey experience from when passengers and goods start their journeys until they reach their final destinations. This strategy sets the foundations for securing this vision and will form the basis of future work to develop a strategic rail plan for Essex.



Chapter 2
The Essex Rail Network

The Essex Rail Network

- 2.1 The existing Essex rail network is illustrated in Appendix A and is primarily radial from London, with no direct east-west or north-south link. Passenger services are provided by private sector operators, under franchises agreed with the Strategic Rail Authority and the Department for Transport. Details of these franchises are given in Appendix B.
- 2.2 Together with a number of other public and private sector partners, in 1997 Essex County Council established the Essex Community Rail Partnership to both promote and increase the passenger and freight traffic along three of the County's branch lines. In 2002, the Partnership expanded to include the Marks Tey – Sudbury line and was renamed the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership. Through a programme of community-based transportation, economic and regeneration projects, the intention is to increase the economic, social and environmental welfare of the local communities. An example of this would be to attract tourists to the region, thus ensuring the long term sustainability of the branch lines. The four lines included within the Partnership are highlighted on a map in Appendix A.
- 2.3 Essex has a number of rail freight facilities. Although freight is carried on a large proportion of the County's rail network, sections of the Great Eastern line are of particular international strategic significance and are designated as a Trans-European Network line.
- 2.4 In addition to the mainline rail network, the London Underground Limited Central Line operates into Essex to Epping from West London. It originally extended to Ongar via North Weald, but this section of the line was closed in 1994 and sold to a private operator who wished to bring it back into use as a commuter service. However, due to difficulties in connecting back into Epping Station, this service did not commence within the time frame set by the contract of sale and an agreement is currently being negotiated for the line to be sold to Essex County Council, who will then lease it to a heritage railway company.

A photograph of a woman walking away from the camera on a train platform. She is wearing a white long-sleeved top, dark trousers, and a shoulder bag. To her left is a train with the word 'Anglia' written on its side in a large, white, cursive font. The platform has yellow tactile paving. In the background, another person is walking away, and the train tracks and overhead power lines are visible under a clear sky.

Chapter 3 Strategy Drivers and Objectives

Strategy Drivers and Objectives

- 3.1 In developing a rail strategy for Essex, a fine balance must be achieved between satisfying local needs and achieving the national agenda for rail. At a local level, the targets and objectives for rail are set through the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, and the strategy drivers and objectives must therefore be the same. These are:
- Tackling congestion
 - Delivering accessibility
 - Creating safer roads
 - Promoting better air quality
 - Enhancing maintenance
- In addition, the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan has two general aims:
- Improving quality of life
 - Strengthening the economy of Essex
- 3.2 Rail offers proven environmental benefits over other transport modes in terms of pollution, energy consumption and land use. However, these advantages are not reflected in the perceived direct cost of transport to the individual and rail only represents a small proportion of overall transport. A key objective of this strategy is therefore to promote and enable the transfer of passengers and freight to rail from less sustainable transport modes.
- 3.3 Extensive regeneration is planned for Essex, with in excess of 130,000 new homes proposed for Essex and its borders with neighbouring counties by 2021. Both the Thames Gateway in the south of the County and the Stansted – M11– Cambridge corridor to the west are nationally identified regeneration areas. Furthermore, a number of private and public sector organisations, including Essex County Council, have gathered to form the Haven Gateway Partnership to drive the regeneration of northeast Essex. Felixstowe port is being expanded, proposals for two new ports at Bathside Bay in Harwich and Shellhaven in Thurrock are currently at planning stage and there are plans to extend Stansted Airport. Together with the growth that the 2012 London Olympics will bring, this development will significantly increase the number of passenger and freight movements, making it all the more important to attract freight and passengers to more sustainable travel modes.
- 3.4 Under the Road Traffic Reduction Act, 1997, Essex must set targets to reduce road traffic levels and the rate of road traffic growth. An excellent rail service and an integrated public transport system will be an essential factor in delivering this



vision by attracting car owners away from using their own vehicles, especially people with regular trip patterns, e.g. to work or school. Similarly, increasing the proportion of freight carried by rail will reduce the level of freight carried by road.

3.5 Accessibility to rail services is particularly important for disabled people and people in remote locations or who do not have access to a car. At present, a number of stations have very limited accessibility and passengers are required to pre-arrange railway staff assistance when wishing to use the train. This strategy therefore seeks to improve the accessibility of the rail network to all users.

3.6 At National level, the Government's Ten Year Transport plan sets targets to increase both passenger and freight rail use by 2010 and notes that it will monitor the share of different modes for passenger and freight transport. These targets can only be achieved by Essex and other Local Authorities working in partnership with all other stakeholders, including operators, rail user groups, Network Rail, the Department for Transport and the Office of the Rail Regulator, and with the provision of adequate funding.

3.7 Based on these national and local drivers, Essex County Council has therefore set the following specific Rail Objectives (RO):

RO₁ – To promote and develop rail as part of an integrated public transport system that will attract new and retain existing passengers and freight from less sustainable transport modes.

RO₂ – To provide a high-class, seamless whole journey experience, from the moment that people or goods start their journeys until they reach their final destinations.

RO₃ – To develop the accessibility of the rail system to all users, with a particular emphasis on disabled people and people in remote locations and identified regeneration areas.

RO₄ – To ensure the long term security, future and development of the Essex rail network.





Chapter 4
The Delivery Framework for
Passenger Rail

The Delivery Framework for Passenger Rail

Strategic Network Improvements

- 4.1 The expected regeneration of large areas of Essex and the construction of over 130,000 new homes in Essex and its borders with neighbouring counties will drive the locations where capacity improvements will be needed to the County's rail network. Under the new industry structure, planning responsibility for the national rail network lies with the Department for Transport.
- 4.2 The capacity of the existing system is already stretched in many places, a situation which will become even more critical with the level of growth planned for the County, and Essex County Council will work in partnership with Central Government and the rail industry to explore potential solutions. For example, the North Thameside rail loop (Pitsea – Grays – Dagenham – Barking) on the c2c line will play a key role in the regeneration of the Thames Gateway and will require significant additional capacity. To help meet the expected increase in demand, funding is currently being sought from Central Government's Community Infrastructure Fund to extend the stations on this loop so that they are able to accommodate 12 car trains. The proposal has passed the initial stage of the competition and is to undergo further appraisal. If funding is secured, works would be complete by Summer 2008.
- 4.3 The radial nature of the Essex rail network presents a significant barrier to travel to passengers wishing to travel between the north and south or between the east and west of the County and to efficient freight movements. Under the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, Essex County Council will work in partnership with the rail industry to explore means of addressing this, such as a connection between the c2c line at Benfleet and the 'one' Great Eastern line at Wickford and a Gravesend-Tilbury Rail Crossing.
- 4.4 A number of strategic projects and proposals are currently being developed at national or regional level that will impact on Essex. Of these, one proposal that will have a particularly significant impact is Crossrail. This scheme will provide a new direct metro link from Shenfield in Essex and Ebbsfleet in Kent through Central London to Heathrow and Maidenhead. In Essex, the route will operate along the existing Great Eastern line, with the stations and infrastructure upgraded to provide the required capacity and a high quality journey experience. The proposed bill is currently being progressed through the Parliamentary Process. Whilst Essex County Council supports the principle of providing additional rail capacity across London and is not submitting its own petition, it



is supporting petitions submitted by other parties on certain issues and will use other Parliamentary processes to influence the Bill.

- 4.5 An alternative proposal to Crossrail, known as Superlink, was developed in late 2004 by a private consortium. This would still meet the same objective of a direct link between the areas east and west of London, but would significantly extend the region served, reaching as far as Ipswich and Southend. If it is to be considered, this proposal will need to be considered by Parliament as part of its deliberations on Crossrail.
- 4.6 Another project that will have a significant impact on Essex will be the expansion of Stansted Airport. Stansted is currently the fourth busiest airport in the UK, and BAA is seeking consent to increase its capacity to 35 million passengers per annum by making greater use of the existing runway. However, BAA is also proposing to submit a planning application in 2006 to construct a second runway that would eventually enable it to grow to 80 million passengers per annum. If this planned growth proceeds, Essex County Council will work with BAA to ensure that the resulting increase in staff and passengers does not cause congestion on the surrounding road network by promoting the use of public transport for journeys to and from the airport. Rail would form a key element in such a strategy, and Essex County Council would negotiate a package of rail improvements with BAA, including exploring the potential for additional rail capacity.
- 4.7 Other developments are funded through third party investment in parallel with residential or industrial construction. For example, there are currently plans to construct new stations in north-east Chelmsford and at Southend Airport funded through third party sources. Essex County Council supports both of these schemes and must ensure that it continues to secure such funding.
- 4.8 For the portion of the London Underground Ltd. Central Line that is located in Essex, improvements will be delivered through the thirty-year Public Private Partnership that has been established between Transport for London and Metronet, a private consortium. Amongst other enhancements, this Partnership will deliver a programme of modernisation and refurbishment at all stations.
- 4.9 Over the life of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, Essex County Council will work closely with Central Government, its agencies, other Local Authorities, the rail industry and other stakeholders to develop a long-term strategic rail plan that will deliver the best solutions for Essex.

The 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan

- 4.10 The delivery programme for rail under the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan will include feasibility work to explore options for new major schemes and the delivery of both larger projects and smaller improvements aimed at delivering more immediate, local benefits. All of this work will be focussed on promoting and improving the accessibility of rail travel as part of an integrated transport network.
- 4.11 The feasibility work will address both known and predicted future capacity and accessibility issues and will investigate concepts such as:
- The provision of a Gravesend-Tilbury rail crossing to enable passengers and freight to travel to Europe and the South-East without having to travel via the congested London network
 - The provision of a direct connection between the c2c line at Benfleet and the 'one' Great Eastern line at Wickford
 - The provision of a chord at Shenfield to improve connectivity between the Thames Gateway and the rest of the Eastern region
 - Double tracking the Ockendon line to support the regeneration and growth of the Thames Gateway
 - The provision of a passing loop at Cressing to facilitate an increase in the train service frequency on the Braintree Branch line
 - The development of an A133 action plan for the Colchester area that will seek to manage congestion and increase capacity through a package of integrated transport measures, such as Park and Rail along the Clacton line and the enhancement of Marks Tey as an interchange
 - Improvements to Colchester Town station
 - The redevelopment of Hythe station at either its existing location or a new one to improve accessibility to and from East Anglia and Essex University
- 4.12 The major / larger projects that will be delivered within the timescales of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan will include both some of the proposals listed above and projects such as a new pedestrian and cycle footbridge at Braintree Freeport station.



4.13 The smaller projects that will be delivered as part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan have been divided into five programmes:

Work Programme	Objective				Local Performance Indicator
	RO1	RO2	RO3	RO4	RLPI1
Interchange Improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Crime Reduction	✓	✓		✓	✓
Minor Stations Enhanced Transport Improvements (CRP Lines)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Passenger Information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accessibility Improvements to the Rail Network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.14 The Accessibility and Passenger Information Programmes are not identified in the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan as separate budget items, but will in fact be delivered in parallel with the other three programmes. However, they have been addressed individually in this strategy in light of their importance and to ensure that the resulting initiatives are approached in a consistent and integrated manner within the other programmes.

Interchange Enhancements

4.15 A key factor in attracting people away from their private cars is persuading them that the same journey by public transport would be fast, comfortable and seamless. The quality and efficiency of their transfers between transport modes or between different services of the same mode will have a fundamental impact on their perception of their overall journey experience. Under the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, Essex County Council will seek to improve the interchange facilities between bus, rail and other transport modes at a number of rail stations. These schemes may include features such as:

- The provision of real-time passenger information to enable passengers to make informed decisions about their onward journeys
- Improved promotion and marketing of the travel options open to passengers
- The provision of improved access routes and infrastructure from one transport mode to the next, for example through the provision of footbridges
- Improving the accessibility of the interchanges, for example through the provision of raised kerbs at bus stops and level access routes between transport modes
- Improving the ambience of stations and the level of facilities provided
- Improving directional and other signage to make transfers as easy as possible

- Working with bus and rail operators to ensure that timetables are aligned wherever possible to minimise the waiting time between connections
- The provision of cycle and powered two-wheeler parking

4.16 Stations will be selected for inclusion in this programme based on:

- The frequency of rail and bus services serving the station
- The degree of congestion on the surrounding road network
- The existing and future predicted trend in passenger numbers
- Their geographical strategic significance as a transport hub, for example whether they are located within or close to a Regional Interchange Centre or if they are the primary transport link for a rural community
- Their existing facilities and level of accessibility

Crime Reduction

4.17 Essex falls within the London North region of the British Transport Police. According to the British Transport Police Statistical Bulletin 2003/04, the number of reported notifiable rail crimes in the London North region rose by 4.1% between 2002-03 and 2003-04, with a corresponding rise of 18.5% in violent crime. The corresponding figures for the whole of England and Wales are 2.8% and 10.9% respectively, although it should be noted that the figures include London and hence may be higher than if Essex was considered alone.

4.18 Equally as important as actual safety is perceived security: passengers will not select rail as their preferred transport mode if they do not feel safe. According to “Perceptions of Personal Security and Concerns about Public Crime and Public Transport”, a fact sheet published by the Department for Transport in 2004, some 60% of women and 25% of men feel unsafe waiting at railway stations. This fact sheet also states that the most reassuring features for passengers whilst waiting for a train are:

- Presence of staff: this can be helped by staff wearing distinctive uniforms and being visible out in the public areas of stations
- Good lighting
- Use of CCTV: this should include the use of publicity to highlight the presence of the CCTV system to reassure passengers and deter potential criminals

4.19 Another factor that the fact sheet states may also increase the level of perceived security is the provision of good quality information to help passengers plan safe journeys, for example making available information on service disruptions and the provision of help points on stations.



- 4.20 The Secure Stations Scheme is an accreditation scheme that operates across England, Wales and Scotland and recognises set standards of good practice in rail station, staff and passenger security. c2c is recognised as an example of good practice in this field and is implementing a number of security improvement measures, such as security patrols in station car parks, at stations and on mobile patrol and the installation of help points on all platforms. ‘one’ railway also has a commitment to install passenger help points at all stations.
- 4.21 As part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, Essex County Council will work with the rail industry to deliver a programme of improvements and soft measures aimed at improving both actual and perceived safety levels. This programme will include measures such as:
- Installing closed-circuit television systems to improve rail safety at stations, particularly remote and / or unmanned stations
 - Improving the lighting and facilities at stations, for example the provision of additional help points
 - Working with the rail operators to increase the number of stations in Essex accredited under the Secure Stations Scheme
 - Working with the community to undertake projects to encourage the regeneration and reuse of station buildings to help provide a presence on stations, particularly where they would otherwise be unmanned
 - Working with the Police and the local community to encourage community ownership of stations, for example through the Adopt-a-Station scheme, whereby members of the public adopt a station and make it more welcoming
 - Working with the District and Borough Councils through the land use planning process to encourage complementary retail activity within and around stations and interchanges



Minor Stations Enhanced Transport Improvements

4.22 The Essex branch lines play a vital role in maintaining the accessibility of the communities that they serve, in addition to being an important part of their heritage and culture. A programme of projects aimed at promoting and increasing the use of the branch lines in Essex, in particular those included within the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership, will be developed and implemented as part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan. These projects will be delivered in partnership with the local community and the other partners in the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership. Their exact nature will vary, but will include:

- Intensive marketing and promotion of the lines through a variety of media
- Improvements to the ambience and facilities at stations
- Improvements to the accessibility of stations
- The regeneration and reuse of station buildings
- Development projects and initiatives to promote local tourism and business, such as cycle-hire schemes and the operation of special event trains
- Visiting local schools to promote rail safety
- The implementation of the Adopt-a-Station scheme

4.23 Along the lines included within the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership, strategic direction will be provided through the Partnership's Steering Group, which includes representatives from each of the partners. At local level, coordination and project delivery will be provided through the Lineside Action Groups which exist for three of the lines and include representatives from the partners, the local community and local businesses.



Passenger Information

- 4.24 A key step in attracting and retaining passengers from less sustainable travel modes must be to raise awareness of rail travel and make available accurate information on services and facilities. This information must be presented in a manner that is easy to understand and in a variety of different media to appeal to different sectors of the population. For example, some people may prefer to access information electronically on the internet or via their mobile phone, whilst others may prefer to phone a travel information service or to receive information in hard copy.
- 4.25 Essex County Council will work with the rail operators to implement a programme of measures to raise awareness of, promote and provide information on rail travel opportunities. This may include measures such as:
- Improving the directional signage to stations to both provide travel information to passengers and to raise the profile of the rail service in people's minds
 - Improving the directional and other signage at stations
 - Providing real-time passenger information on bus and rail services at stations
 - Developing marketing initiatives to promote rail travel
 - The provision of a concessionary fares scheme for disabled people, senior citizens and young people to aid social mobility
 - Continuing to provide and develop an integrated travel information service for Essex, for example, through the bus and rail timetable books published by Essex County Council and the Traveline telephone-based and internet-based journey planners

Accessibility Improvements to the Rail Network

- 4.26 Under the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, a range of measures will be implemented to improve the accessibility of the rail network to all users. This will include not only disabled people, but also those who live or work in remote locations or who do not have access to a car.
- 4.27 The principal legislation relating to the accessibility of the rail network to disabled passengers is the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995. Under section 9 of the Disability Discrimination Act, which relates to access to goods and services, infrastructure owners must ensure that premises open to the public can be used by disabled people, unless there is a reasonable cause for exemption that meets strict criteria laid out within the legislation. Rail stations fall within this section of the Disability Discrimination Act and therefore reasonable efforts must be made to ensure that stations are accessible to all users.



- 4.28 In addition, daughter legislation to the Disability Discrimination Act, the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (Amended), 2000, place specific requirements on trains entering service after 31 December 1998 to ensure that they are accessible to and comfortable for use by disabled passengers. The requirements address issues such as the carriage door and step arrangements, seating, handrails and the provision of toilets.
- 4.29 Physical improvements to the rail network will primarily be focused on improving facilities and access at stations, including routes to stations. These will generally be delivered alongside other works and may include projects such as:
- The replacement of steps with level access routes, for example by installing ramps
 - The provision of accessible toilets, ticket office counters and ticket machines
 - Contrast colouring of handrails and steps
 - The provision of induction loops to ticket offices
 - Colour contrasted handrails and steps
 - Ensuring that access routes to stations are safe, convenient and accessible
- 4.30 Through the land-use planning process, Essex County Council will also seek to ensure that schemes funded and implemented by third parties include suitable provisions to improve the accessibility of the rail network.
- 4.31 In addition, Essex County Council will work with the rail operators to implement a number of soft measures aimed at improving the ease of rail travel. These will include measures such as:
- Making service and other information available in a range of formats, including audible and large print
 - Ensuring that suitable information on facilities is available to enable passengers to plan their journeys in advance
 - Marketing initiatives aimed at raising awareness of travel opportunities for disabled and socially disadvantaged passengers
 - The provision of concessionary fares for disabled people, senior citizens and young people
 - Working with the train operators to find innovative solutions to accessibility problems where the infrastructure is not suitable or cannot reasonably be adapted, for example, by providing alternative means of travel to a more accessible station

A photograph of a person standing next to a train carriage, viewed through an orange-tinted overlay. The person is wearing a dark jacket and is looking towards the train. The train carriage has several windows and a door. The background is bright and hazy.

Chapter 5 Rail Freight

Rail Freight

- 5.1 As with passenger rail, responsibility for setting the strategic direction for rail freight lies with Central Government. However, Essex County Council must consider rail freight alongside road haulage in promoting an integrated and sustainable approach to distribution across the County. To address such issues, Essex County Council has developed a Sustainable Distribution Strategy as part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan.
- 5.2 Between 1998 and 2003, the amount of freight hauled by road remained relatively static, although it had achieved large step change increases in the late 1980's and early 1990's. In comparison, rail freight achieved a growth of 9% (measured in tonne kilometres) over the same period (source: "Transport Statistics Great Britain 2005", published by National Statistics). This must be considered in the context of a corresponding rise in the UK Gross Domestic Product of almost 14% (source: "Transport Statistics Bulletin – Transport of Goods by Road in Great Britain: 2003", published by National Statistics), and the fact that in 2003, the amount of freight carried by rail was only 12% of that carried by road (source: "Transport Statistics Great Britain 2005", published by National Statistics). Stansted Airport already has one of the largest levels of freight movements of all UK airports, and this will undoubtedly increase if the proposed expansion of the Airport proceeds. Similarly, if the proposed port developments at Shellhaven, Felixstowe and Bathside Bay proceed, they will also generate a significant increase in freight traffic in Essex.
- 5.3 The decision of each distributor as to which mode to select to transport its goods will be based on a number of factors, such as cost, the length of haul, the speed of the journey and the location of the origin and destination points. Rail offers a number of benefits, including a predictable journey time, high payload capacity and good load security. In addition, by selecting rail as their preferred mode, distributors can reduce their exposure to legislation concerning drivers' hours and cost rises due to fuel price variances.
- 5.4 However, one key benefit that road freight has over rail is its potential to offer a "door-to-door" service with a highly flexible routing capability, whereas routings for rail freight are limited by the alignment of the track and the location of loading and docking facilities. This can be countered to a large degree through the application of careful land-use planning, for example by locating industrial parks close to rail freight terminals. Essex County Council will play an active role in promoting such linkages to planning authorities, developers and distributors. It will also seek to protect future potential strategic rail freight sites from alternative development.
- 5.4 Essex County Council must play a central role in encouraging distributors to switch to more sustainable transport modes and must explore opportunities for initiatives, particularly in the identified regeneration areas of the Thames Gateway, the Haven Gateway and the Stansted – M11 – Cambridge corridor. For example, Essex County Council is a partner in the Haven Gateway Partnership, which is actively promoting improvements to the Felixstowe to Nuneaton freight corridor.

A purple-tinted photograph of a train on tracks with overhead power lines. The train is in the center, moving towards the viewer. The tracks are on the left, and the power lines are on the right. The background is a cloudy sky.

Chapter 6 Performance Indicators and Monitoring

Performance Indicators and Monitoring

- 6.1 One specific local performance indicator has been set for rail as part of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan. This is:
 - RLPI1 – Number of passengers travelling to identified rail stations by modes other than the private car.
- 6.2 This performance indicator is focussed on delivering and measuring improvements at a local level in recognition of the fact that primary control of the rail network rests at national level with Central Government.
- 6.3 Performance improvements will be measured through a programme of passenger surveys at a representative sample of stations before and after improvements are implemented.

Chapter 7 Consultation



Consultation


- 7.1 In developing this strategy, Essex County Council has consulted with the rail industry, political representatives, user groups, and other stakeholders. This has been achieved through a combination of events including a Rail Seminar held in September 2004 and a series of meetings with different stakeholders, in addition to input received through the wider Local Transport Plan consultation process.
- 7.2 Essex County Council will ensure that it provides feedback on progress against this strategy and that it continues to seek the views of its stakeholders throughout the life of the Local Transport Plan through events such as the annual Essex Rail Seminar, the publication of the Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report and various meetings.



Chapter 8
The Way Forward

The Way Forward

- 8.1 This is an exciting time for rail, and over the life of the 2006-2011 Local Transport Plan, Essex County Council will work with its stakeholders to develop a long-term strategic rail plan for the County. This will deliver the rail passenger and freight services and facilities needed to support the growth, prosperity and preservation of Essex for future generations.

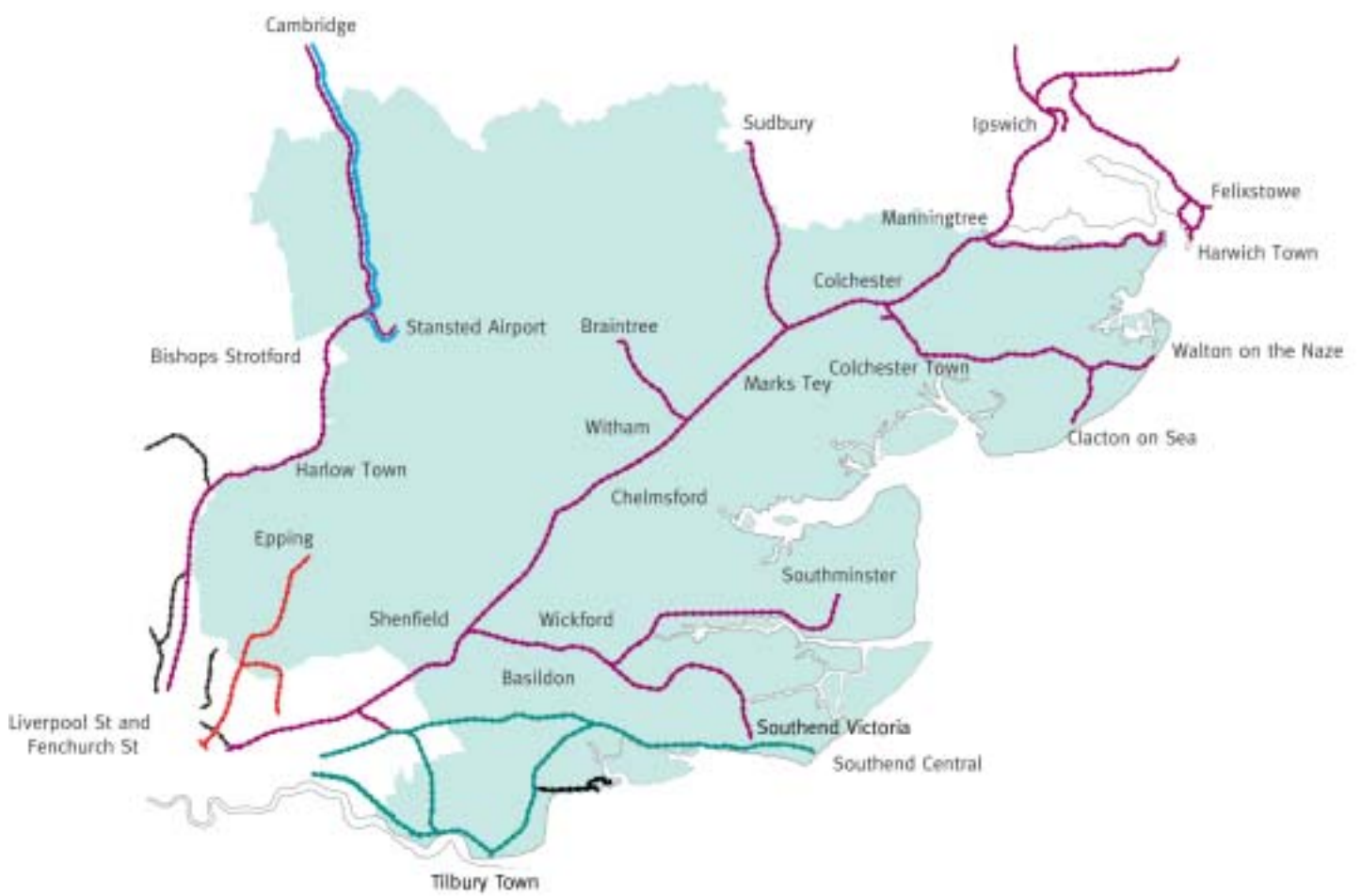


Chapter 9
Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A: Essex Rail Maps

Essex Rail Network



- 'one' Railway
- Central Tains
- c2c
- London Underground Ltd. Central Line



Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership Lines



- Crouch Valley Line
- Mayflower Line
- Sunshine Coast Line
- Gainsborough Line

Appendix B: Current Rail Franchise Agreements in Essex (as at October 2005)

Name of Franchise	Key Routes	Operator	Length of Franchise
'one' railway	<p>'one' routes</p> <p>London – Chelmsford – Colchester – Ipswich – Norwich</p> <p>London – Ipswich and Lowestoft</p> <p>London – Bury St. Edmunds and Peterborough</p> <p>London – Shenfield</p> <p>London – Southend Victoria</p> <p>London – Chelmsford – Colchester – Ipswich, plus branches to Southminster, Braintree, Sudbury, Clacton, Walton and Harwich</p> <p>London – Harlow – Bishops Stortford – Cambridge – Kings Lynn</p> <p>Stansted Express</p> <p>London to Stansted Airport</p>	National Express Group	7 years from April 2004 (With an automatic extension of three years, subject to the achievement of performance and service quality targets set by the Department for Transport)
c2c	London – Benfleet – Southend Central – Shoeburyness via Tilbury or Basildon	National Express Group	15 years to May 2011
Central Trains	Stansted Airport – Cambridge – The Midlands	National Express Group	Extended for a further two years until March 2006



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Published October 2005

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