

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **THAMES REACH AIRPORT: AN INTEGRATED HUB-AIRPORT SOLUTION FOR THE SOUTHEAST**

#### Why is this winning solution being played-down?

Analysis by civil servants working on airport expansion options for the southeast, due to be published later this year in the Air Transport White Paper, show that Thames Reach is well ahead in economic, environmental and strategic planning terms. Yet it is at risk of being ignored because the vested interests of Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted do not want the competition. If Thames Reach is played-down billions of pounds worth of wider economic benefits for the Thames Gateway and the future growth of London will be lost.

Straightforward comparisons between Thames Reach and new runways at Heathrow, Gatwick or Stansted are startling: -

- Aircraft take-off and land over the Thames Estuary, not over people's homes.
- Low-grade, flood-risk land is used, rather than prime countryside or Green Belt land.
- 20 homes and no listed buildings are lost rather than several hundred homes and a score of listed buildings.
- Less than 15,000 people affected by noise, rather than over 300,000.
- No one suffers excessive air pollution, compared with over 30,000 people.
- Not just an aviation solution - also far reaching strategic integration benefits, e.g. AirRail and Thames Gateway regeneration.

With the potential to operate 24-hours a day 7-days a week, Thames Reach will provide the required capacity with greater economic benefits while enabling night flights at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted to become a thing of the past. In addition there are the very substantial wider benefits arising from the alliance of Thames Reach Airport with the Lower Thames Tunnel and other infrastructure improvements to the Thames Gateway. The airport integrated with the tunnel creates Europe's leading transport hub and transforms the historic, radial infrastructure north and south of the Thames into an orbital and circulatory system; a well-connected and unified Thames Gateway metropolis. With the value of these wider benefits included in the overall economic assessment Thames Reach becomes unassailable.

## 1. Key advantages

- **The best aviation solution.** A single-site, purpose-designed, new-build airport, allied with the Lower Thames Tunnel to create Europe's leading integrated transport hub.
- **The most integrated solution.** An integrated solution for the wider transport infrastructure of the southeast and the future growth of London.
- **Best for jobs and housing.** An integrated employment and housing solution for the Thames Gateway area.
- **Best value for money.** A higher net economic output than any other SERAS package, from the combined aviation and wider strategic planning benefits.
- **Least impact.** The lowest environmental impact per passenger owing to the estuary location, compact design, rail-led infrastructure and sustainable operation.
- **Lowest Cost.** The lowest cost per passenger owing to cross-funding of the surface access, phased new-build construction and efficient operation.
- **Safest.** A lower security risk than other options owing to new-build, purpose-designed security provisions and over-flying of the Thames Estuary.
- **Most feasible.** A readily implementable proposal within the scope and realm of the SERAS/Cliffe consultations.

## 2. Current situation

- A private sector initiative from a group of consultants with the capability to fund and implement the proposals subject to Government support in the white paper.
- DfT is preparing a report for Ministers based on the reference documentation listed below.
- DfT may not include the wider economic benefits arising from the Lower Thames Tunnel and other infrastructure improvements, as they cannot be calculated from the SERAS computer models.

## 3. Reference documents

- SERAS Assessment Submission 30/06/2003 - [www.bluebase.com/airnews.htm](http://www.bluebase.com/airnews.htm)
- EC Harris revised Cost Plan Sept. 2003 – on request
- Halcrow Technical Note of 13/10/2003 – on request
- Bluebase review of net economic benefits 16/10/2003 – on request
- Bluebase website with airport description:- [www.bluebase.com/airport](http://www.bluebase.com/airport)
- For further information and documentation please contact Mark Willingale at BLUEBASE on +44 20 7253 8284