Summary: To bring Members up to date on the issues previously identified in the consultation drafts and to offer a potential response to the Secretary of State.

For Decision

1. **Introduction**

1.1. Members will recall that in June of last year a consultation draft of the Regional Transport Strategy was considered by Cabinet. A copy of that report and the suggested response are attached for Members information and for continuity in respect of the issues to be addressed.

1.2. The responses agreed at that time were submitted to the South East of England Regional Assembly (SEERA) which has considered all representations received and amended the document in the light of those representations.

1.3. Responsibility for finalising the Regional Transport Strategy now lies with the Secretary of State who intends to appoint an Independent Panel to help him in this process. Views on the draft strategy are required to be submitted by the 17 April 2003.

2. **Financial Implications**

2.1. **None at this stage.**

3. **Background Information**

   **The Revised Strategy**

3.1. Members will recall that there was general support from the Council to the strategic approach identified in the earlier draft.

3.2. The Council had three principal concerns in respect of the earlier version:

   i) the total absence from the earlier document of any mention, let alone strategy for the Port of Ramsgate;

   ii) the lack of support within the document for the development of London Manston Airport; and

   iii) the lack of clarity concerning the extension of Channel Tunnel Rail Link Domestic Services through into East Kent and in particular to Ramsgate, such as to reduce the perception of isolation by public transport that the existing poor service creates. (Members attention is specifically drawn to paragraphs 1.20 – 1.28 in the original submission to avoid duplication in this report.)
3.3. Whilst there were, of course, other issues these were the principal matters which the Council wished SEERA to take on board.

3.4. Specifically in relation to these three issues the Regional Strategy has been amended as follows:

**Port of Ramsgate**

3.5. In respect of port development, Ramsgate is now recognised within the document and there are some key statements in the supporting document, which are relevant to the Council’s aspirations for the port.

“The best use should be made of existing facilities and the planning system should recognise that port infrastructure that is under utilised at present may have uses in the future”, and

“Port proposals that assist the regeneration of local communities should be particularly favoured.”

3.6. Obviously within the Region the Ports of Dover, the Channel Tunnel and Portsmouth feature most strongly in terms of the South East regional aspirations of a gateway. However, the following statement is important and is a recognition of Ramsgate’s potential role:

“Although the potential of ro-ro operations based at Newhaven and Ramsgate is more limited, they have a regional significance that should be recognised by Local Authorities and to delivery agencies in determining their investment priorities.”

3.7. Clearly this is a much improved position from the previous strategy and does much to support the Council’s aspirations in terms of making the best use of Ramsgate Port and of making sure that the investment that has already been undertaken in the development of the port, and particularly of the port access road, is not overlooked in terms of future investment decisions.

**London Manston Airport**

3.8. In the consultation draft the only reference to Manston was as follows:

“Development of specialist air services at Manston Airport could help regeneration in Thanet. The airport’s current owners have outline the proposals for the future of the airport. The Regional Assembly will consider the regional implications of this proposal, in particular the capacity of the transport system to support the development of the airport. The proposals will need to be reviewed in the light of the proposals that emerge from SERAS.”

3.9. The amended document repeats exactly the statement referred to above, but in addition has a short sentence in advance of the earlier statement which reads:

“Realising the potential of Manston Airport to develop niche services as a gateway of regional significance could help regeneration of the local community in the Thanet area.”

3.10. Members will recall the Council expressed concern that there was insufficient support for the Manston proposals in the earlier draft consultation. Despite the amending additional sentence, I would suggest that it is still the view of the Council that there is insufficient support within the document to the development of Manston. Clearly, with the SERAS
study likely to extend beyond the autumn in view of the reconsideration of Gatwick, it was undoubtedly difficult for the Regional Assembly to take a clear position in the consultation draft – despite much more vigorous support in the document for the development of Southampton Airport. All of this was complicated further by the proposals for the development of Cliffe contained in the SERAS document. However, as the Regional Assembly has clearly stated its opposition to the development of Cliffe, I see absolutely no reason why their support for further development of London Manston should not be more forthcoming.

3.11. I, therefore, suggest that the Secretary of State be advised through the panel that the Council fully supports further development of London Manston Airport and seeks more positive support to development of the airport in view of its regenerative potential for this deprived area. In addition, if the airport is to achieve its potential, Government support is required to improve rail access and this is a matter directly related to item three below.

CTRL Domestics

3.12. Members will recall that the third issue drawn to the attention of the Regional Assembly was the issue of domestic services on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link when it becomes available in 2007. The consultation draft document back in June 2002 was a little ambiguous in relation to the regeneration benefits that would arise from a better rail service to East Kent and particularly to Thanet.

3.13. Whilst no major changes have been made to the text there has been a slight adjustment of emphasis such that the relevant paragraph (6.98) now refers to the Assembly working closely with the SRA and local stakeholders “to ensure that the pattern of domestic services gives priority to supporting the focus of regeneration and renewal within this sub region”.

3.14. It is gratifying that the words underlined have been added which gives a clear indication of a shift in emphasis towards a prioritisation where regeneration can be achieved as a result of improved rail services such as in Thanet.

3.15. Unfortunately, and it may simply be that the SRA consultation document did not coincide with the publication of the draft strategy, no mention is made within the Transport Strategy Document of the need to extend the core services identified within the SRA consultation document to include bringing domestic services through to Ramsgate and the potential regenerative effects that fast strategic rail services would have to Thanet, and indeed the whole of East Kent.

3.16. It is, therefore, recommended that in responding to the draft Transportation Strategy Document the Council should make it clear that whilst it is, of course, the view of this Council that CTRL domestics should be brought to Ramsgate through Ashford and Canterbury. It is also the collective view of Kent County Council and all of the Districts in Kent that this option should be supported.

3.17. Given the clear statement in the Draft Regional Strategy in relation to the priority afforded to the regeneration benefits of CTRL domestics, it is proposed that the panel be advised of the case which the Council is making to the SRA for the selection of what is known as Option 6 for the future operation of CTRL Domestics and to seek support from the panel to that option.

4. Recommendation

4.1. Members are invited to make the Panel Secretary aware of the three principal areas of concern which the Council has in respect of the Draft Regional Strategy and Members are invited to submit to the Panel a copy of this report, the Council’s
previous views on the consultation draft and the formal views of the Council in relation to the SRA proposals for Channel Tunnel Rail Link Domestic Services in Kent.

5. **Decision Making Process**

5.1. This is a key decision which is included in the Council’s Forward Plan.

6. **Background Documents**


**Contact Officer: Mr R T Herron, Director of Planning Services, Ext 7005**
By: Director of Planning Services

Main Portfolio Area: Strategic Planning and Highways

To: Cabinet – 15 August 2002

Subject: SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY – REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY – CONSULTATION DRAFT – JUNE 2002

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To advise Members of the issues and potential responses to the consultation document.

For Decision

7. Introduction

7.1. The Secretary of State approved the current Regional Planning Guidance (RPG9) in March 2001. The Guidance included an initial Regional Transport Strategy, but was unable at that stage to reflect current Government advice. The Secretary of State has, therefore, asked the South East of England Regional Assembly (SEERA) to undertake an early review of the transport elements of the guidance. The new draft guidance consultation document looks at the period between now and 2016 and beyond.

7.2. It should be noted by Members that this consultation document follows on from the publication of the consultation document on the Regional Economic Strategy and for obvious reasons is very closely related to that document. The consultation period on the Transport Strategy runs until September 2002. Responses made to SEERA will be considered and a final copy of the Strategy will be deposited with the Secretary of State before the end of the year.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. None at this stage.

9. The Strategy

9.1. All Members have previously been sent a copy of the ‘Synopsis Document’ which sets out the background to the approach being adopted by the Regional Assembly, the key issues and the Strategy being advocated. It is not, therefore, anticipated to be necessary to repeat these elements within this report, although Members may wish to refresh their memories by reference to the synopsis document. However, at Annex 2 to this report is set out the key proposals contained within the Strategy for Members’ further information.

9.2. The Strategy proposed is one of “invest and manage”. That is the investment in new infrastructure, particularly that related to public transport, but also some additional road proposals, in combination with “mobility management” – actions which will encourage/persuade more sustainable travel including the possibility of road charges and greater controls on car parking. The argument being advanced is that other possible strategies ranging from ‘doing nothing’ to ‘reduction in demand’ through regulation have been rejected.
in favour of a combination approach which is considered more likely to achieve the step change in demand required.

10. **Principal Issues**

10.1. The principal issues, which Members need to be aware of, relate not so much to the general thrust of the strategy being proposed, but more, perhaps, to the failure of the authors to recognise:

(a) that East Kent, and particularly Thanet, is a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration (PAER), and therefore should also be a priority area for transport investment – particularly public transport investment – to overcome the traditional view of the area as peripheral to the core M4/M25/London economy; and

(b) that key transport schemes, of relevance to the economic regeneration of East Kent, have been overlooked in the prioritisation of projects to be supported and facilitated through the strategy. A striking example of that position is the omission of rail improvements between Ashford and the coastal towns, which would improve journey times (that is, in addition to the support for domestic services on the CTRL). These improvements require substantial infrastructure investments which could do much to improve the competitive position of the area, and should therefore be a key priority project within the strategy.

10.2. Alarmingly, there seems little recognition of either the investment which has already been undertaken in road access to Ramsgate New Port, or of the potential for Ramsgate Port to provide an opportunity for growth in short sea shipping and cross-channel access. Despite handling 100,000 freight units last year, Ramsgate Port is not even mentioned on the strategic map contained within the strategy.

10.3. Equally, the reference to London Manston is somewhat muted and, whilst the strategy awaits the outcome of the South East Regional Airport Study, it could be more supportive of the Council view in wishing to see substantial growth in the use of London Manston to meet the potential that exists.

10.4. The final issue, which Members should be aware of, is the relationship between the various regional strategies and consultation papers that are currently being considered. It is imperative that no one strategy should be seen in isolation from the others – joined up actions, in mutual support of the overall Regional Strategy, should be a requirement. In terms of economic regeneration, Thanet/East Kent is a priority area, as stated above. It should therefore be incumbent on the authors of the Transport Strategy to indicate the same priority for expenditure on transportation projects as should flow from the recognition of Thanet/East Kent as a priority area for economic regeneration. The local community seeks political assurance from Government, through this strategy, that it is not considered either peripheral to, or disassociated from, the otherwise relatively prosperous economy of the South East, if regeneration is to be addressed, and the local cycle of benefit dependency is to be broken. Given that position the Strategy is particularly light on priority Transport Actions for the regeneration of East Kent.

11. **Recommendation**

11.1. (a) Overall, Members are recommended to support the general principles on which the Strategy is based, which appears to strike the appropriate balance between investment in new public transport infrastructure and in reducing demand. It is also to be welcomed that one of the priorities for assessment will be the East Kent Priority Area for Economic Regeneration. However, it is unfortunate that
the three key projects identified which could do most to address the economic position of Thanet, namely improved rail services to the coast, greater use of the port of Ramsgate to develop capacity across the channel, and the development of Manston Airport, seem to be somewhat underplayed in terms of the identification of key projects.

Members are invited to support the general thrust of the strategy, but to specifically draw to the attention of the Regional Assembly the disappointment felt locally in the failure to identify these priorities.

(b) Members are invited to submit the attached suggested response on TDC’s comments on the Regional Transport Strategy.

12. **Decision Making Process**

12.1. This is a key decision which is included in the Council’s Forward Plan.

13. **Background Documents**


**Contact Officer:** Mr R T Herron, Director of Planning Services, Ext 7005
SUGGESTED COUNCIL RESPONSE TO STRATEGY

The Strategic Approach

1.1. It is considered that the approach of “invest and manage” is the appropriate one for the Council to support. The Strategy makes the case that whilst the economy of the South East is growing rapidly, the transport system is failing badly and could hinder further economic growth in the South East and, therefore, the whole UK economy. Car usage, particularly for longer journeys, has grown exponentially in recent years. It is not possible to road build our way out of the transport problem. A balance has to be achieved between new investment in roads, reducing the demands for travel, particularly long distance travel by car and lorry and the development of a more sophisticated and reliable public transport system. This can only be achieved by a combination of regulation to dampen down demand and investment, particularly in public transport. The Council is invited, therefore, to support the general thrust and strategic approach implied in “invest and manage”.

1.2. Thanet is an area identified as a Priority Area for Economic Regeneration (PAER). It is also an area that is perceived as being isolated from the main London/M4 core UK economy. Key to any Strategy thinking for the regeneration of Thanet in terms of strategic transport issues is being able to access the core economy – London M4/M25 and the rest of the UK economy more easily than is currently achievable. At present movement to and beyond London, particularly in terms of Thanet as a business location, is considered difficult and London and the M25 are perceived as a barrier between Thanet/Kent and the wider UK economy. (The corollary is that the same M25/London barrier could prove advantageous to a Thanet/Kent location for companies wishing to serve a European Market rather than solely a UK market – however, as yet, such companies are relatively small in number.)

1.3. It is, therefore, imperative that Thanet’s strategic thinking and, therefore, what is anticipated as being desirable from the Regional Guidance, should relate to ways to break down the barriers to travel both to and from London/M25 and through the barrier that London/M25 represents. In that respect, therefore, in strategic terms the Council wishes to support the thinking of SEERA and to support projects such as reducing the bottlenecks on the M25 (which is now considered to be the worst bottleneck in western Europe). Of particular interest to Thanet in that respect is the outcome of the Orbit Study into the future of the M25, where it is essential that local traffic which has been drawn to the M25 is disadvantaged, whilst through traffic, particularly commercial traffic, is encouraged.

1.4. New or improved strategic cross London public transport services are important to Thanet, such as the Thames Link 2000 and the Cross Rail proposals which link to the wider UK economy.

1.5. Of equal importance, if only because it provides an alternative to travel through or around London, is the outcome of the South Coast Multi Modal Study, particularly if it advocates a fast rail service between Ashford/Margate and Southampton, with alternative fast connections between Southampton, the Midlands and South West.

1.6. All of the above are contained within the proposed Strategy and are seen as key projects to be supported by Government and all should in turn be supported by Thanet District Council, as key projects which would facilitate the competitive position of Thanet and Kent in general.
1.7. Of even more strategic importance locally is the availability of Channel Tunnel Rail Link domestic services which will be discussed later in this paper and which effects the ability to achieve faster rail travel time to London from East Kent.

1.8. The Council, therefore, supports to Strategic Cross London/Round London issues identified in the Strategy.

1.9. The Regional Transport Strategy identifies key transport “hubs” within the Region which are considered essential for economic activity and which need to be enhanced to reflect the Region’s national gateway role, as well as delivering the Region’s own needs. The nearest such hub to Thanet is Ashford, which draws together key rail/Channel Tunnel and motorway modes and which is essential to the development of faster rail links, both to London, Southampton and the Channel Tunnel for people residing in Thanet.

1.10. Support is, therefore, given to the concept of hubs within the Regional Transport Network Strategy.

1.11. Attached to this report at Annex 3, Members will find a copy of the map of Key Transport Hubs, Spokes and the Regional Frame which form the essence of the Strategy being advocated and to which Members’ attention is drawn in respect of the following comments.

1.12. In addition to the transport hubs, the Strategy envisages a series of “linked spokes” or key corridors for transport which connect hubs with each other and with other Regions and which are recognised as essential for the regional economy to work effectively. As a principle this is logical and a reasonable extension of the Strategy, however; reference to the map will indicate that the “spoke” which heads towards East Kent, does so in a rather half-hearted manner, finishing up somewhere towards the Wantsum Channel. Members will also notice that whilst ports and airports are intended to be indicated on this map, no reference is made to either Ramsgate or to Manston Airport. These are specific points which I shall return to later. In relation to the extent of the “spoke”, whilst one might interpret the arrowed line of the spoke as being diagrammatic only, for clarity it would help considerably if the arrow extended to both the airport and to the Port of Ramsgate, for the reasons addressed later in this document.

1.13. Members will also note from the map that what is proposed is investment in a new “regional frame” where transport improvements, (public transport) are proposed to provide better interregional links and reduce reliance on radial routes to London and routes around London.

1.14. Given the comments above, about the barrier that London represents, this approach is to be welcomed in terms of improving the competitiveness, not just of Thanet, but of the whole of Kent.

1.15. In principle, support is given to the strategic principles behind the hub, spoke and regional frame approach.

1.16. Clearly, behind the above strategic principles is the implication of major investment in public transport, substantially in terms of rail investment, but also to bus services and where economic, trams or dedicated bus networks. A number of such projects receive particular mention, however; Members are invited to make the case based on further comment about fast rail services to this area to suggest that those key projects should include improvements to the rail services in East Kent to ensure that East Kent, and Thanet in particular, as a Priority
Area for Economic Regeneration, in need of substantial investment, is not disadvantaged further by a lack of adequate public transport investment.

1.17. **SEERA is invited to include improved fast ‘through’ rail services for East Kent (in addition to domestic services on the CTRL) as a key project for major investment in public transport within the draft list of such projects contained in the Section of the Strategy dealing with ‘Key Proposals’**.

1.18. Members will be pleased to know that one of the key proposals from the Strategy is for phased investment packages reflecting other themes within the Strategy, but focused on the Region’s priority Sub Regions. This would specifically include East Kent, and in particular, because of the economic and deprivation indices, the Thanet area. As indicated, this is a welcome move, as many of the local transport proposals suggested in the Strategy are already contained in the Local Transport Plan and District Transport Plan which have already been agreed by the Council and Kent County Council, but have not proceeded due to lack of funding. These projects could be taken forward, or enhanced, if specific packages of funding were prioritised towards the most deprived areas such as Thanet and the other areas of deprivation in East Kent.

1.19. **The Council welcomes such prioritisation in terms of funding opportunities to achieve local transport solutions, as being an appropriate step in overcoming some of the problems of peripherality and lack of transport infrastructure in the Thanet area.**

1.20. It is disappointing that given the general agreement with the strategic approach contained in the Strategy that so very little is said about the need for specific transportation solutions for East Kent and it is in this area that the Council considers that SEERA should reconsider the identified priorities.

1.21. Those East Kent issues of particular interest to Thanet do need to be drawn out and the Council’s comments made known to SEERA. The first concerns the Port of Ramsgate which, as indicated previously, has been left off the strategic map entirely even though the development of cross channel services has grown rapidly in recent years since the demise of Sally Line when the port handled 3 million passengers and 250,000 freight units. It is perhaps not realised by the authors of the Strategy that since then there has been a substantial rebirth in port operations in the last few years such that by the summer this year there will be 12 freight service sailings a day to Oostende, which last financial year carried almost 100,000 units of freight, an increase of 16% on the previous year and with an increase in ships on the route, is expected to carry 120,000 units in the current financial year with prospects of growth in further years. In addition, the port handled some 100,000 tonnes of aggregates. As Members will know, the Council is actively seeking a second operator and the re-commencement of passenger services in the near future. In the meantime, Ramsgate Port has significant potential to expand to fill the gap in Cross Channel services for freight operation and to achieve significant throughput of freight to continental ports, without substantial investment in costly infrastructure to support further growth.

1.22. Members locally will know, but the author’s of the Strategy may not know, that vehicular access to the port has been dramatically improved following the construction of the Ramsgate Harbour Approach Road, constructed at a cost of in excess of £30 million, such that the port can be accessed without the attendant problems of negotiating the existing town of Ramsgate, with all of the traffic disruption, and damage to health and environment that occurs in most other ports. Having made that substantial investment and seen the port grow considerably in
recent years, it is the Council’s view that not to recognise the opportunities that are afforded by Ramsgate in the development of cross channel shipping and short sea shipping, for which there is considerable support within the Strategy document (but not related to Ramsgate), would seem not to recognise either the opportunity or to build on the port investment that has already been undertaken. **Members are, therefore, invited to make strong representations to SEERA specifically in relation to the Strategic role of Ramsgate Port, the potential of which appears to have been seriously underestimated in the development of the Strategy.**

1.23. The second local issue relates to the development of London Manston Airport. At the beginning of the Strategy document the authors have indicated that in effect they are saying little about airports, pending the outcome of the South East of England Regional Airport Strategy which is due to be published shortly. However, despite that statement, the Strategy goes on to both identify and lend support to the development of both Southampton and Gatwick Airports.

1.24. In respect of Manston, the only statement is as follows:

“11.67 – Development of specialist air services at Manston Airport could help regeneration in Thanet. The airport’s current owners have outlined the proposals for the future of the airport. The Regional Assembly will consider the regional implications of this proposal, in particular the capacity of the transport system to support the development of the airport. The proposals will need to be reviewed in light of the proposals that emerge from SEERA.”

1.25. In the Council’s view this is a little too much of a fence sitting position and the Council would advocate that the Regional Assembly indicates quite clearly its support for the development of all three airports within the Region, with particular emphasis on growth at both Manston and Southampton, and the economic benefits that would accrue to these deprived areas from further airport development. Irrespective of the long term decisions in respect of the location of airport capacity to cater for growth in the London area, Manston has a role to play if only because it has the existing capacity available now. The Council recognises that Manston will not fulfil the needs of airport growth in the South East, but it can play a significant part in providing an alternative airport operation for both passenger and freight, which would do much to boost the local economy and could be a major incentive to the location of other footloose employment opportunities, who would see advantage in a location close to a substantial airport. Facilitating the public transport infrastructure, in particular fast rail access to Manston, would considerably enhance the potential of the airport, particularly for passenger traffic and allow Manston to play a full role in Government thinking in the future of airport development in the South East, without huge financial cost to the exchequer or the attendant long drawn out environmental lobbying that would be experienced with other potential solutions to the South East airport development problems.

1.26. SEERA are advised that the Council fully supports further development of London Manston Airport and seeks a more positive level of support from SEERA to its future development.

1.27. The final local issue of a strategic nature which has been mentioned previously is related to the achievement of domestic services on the CTRL line when it becomes available in 2007. A much improved rail service between the coastal towns in East Kent (Ramsgate, Margate, etc) and London, is the single most important strategic transport issue for all of the Councils in East Kent and all of the companies contained within those areas (including Manston Airport and companies such as Pfizer). Both economically and socially, East Kent is
disadvantaged by the operation of a rail service which in terms of both quality and journey
time has little improved in the last 50 years. A journey time of approximately one hour from
the East Kent coastal towns to London is achievable, but only if both the CRTL domestic
routes are available and there is sufficient infrastructure investment in improving the Thanet
to Ashford track and signalling systems to enable a fast through service to be provided.
Enquiries of potential inward investors, and local companies who wish to expand their
operation, always yield as a major concern the poor performance of rail services relative to
other parts of the Region. To enable advantage to be taken of domestic services on the
CTRL, a through service by way of Canterbury and Ashford is required. This requires
investment in modern standards of track to increase line speed and the removal of the existing
antiquated signalling system together with the removal of a number of level crossings. It is
only with this level of investment that a level of service, which others in more prosperous
areas take for normal, can be achieved. Members are invited to make known to the
Regional Assembly our view that one of the key public transport projects required
within the Regional Strategy is the availability of a fast rail service from Thanet through
Ashford to London. In terms of the economic and social regeneration of the area and to
enable the area to breakout of the cycle of dependency, this project is key to the
Regional Economic Strategy of helping the most deprived areas, such as Thanet and
East Kent. The community seeks political assurance from Government, that it is not
considered either peripheral to, or disassociated from, the otherwise relatively
prosperous economy of the South East, and demands public transport services to match
the more prosperous parts of the Region. An early decision by Government and the
SRA to support this key project would signal much to the local community and to the
investment market on this issue.

1.28. As indicated above, the Strategy relies not just on development of transport infrastructure,
particularly public transport infrastructure, but also on mobility management. Major
increases in the capacity of the transport system in isolation is argued will do little more than
‘buy’ a few more years of growth. Without a process of mobility management to dampen
down demand, particularly from private car users, the Strategy will not be effective.

1.29. Mobility management is an integrated approach to managing the demand for movement and
hopefully over time to adjust people’s pattern of travel in a way that ultimately gives greater
choice in the mode of travel available for a particular journey.

1.30. The mobility management tools identified are car parking policy, which effectively dampens
down use of the private car by curtailing both the growth in the number of car parking spaces,
but also charging at the appropriate levels to reflect the true cost of the use of the car. The
exceptions to curtailing parking would be at transport hubs or at key facilities such as rail
stations where additional car parking would be provided to facilitate mixed mode travel. In
addition, the Strategy pursues the line envisaged in PPG13, such that new development is
encouraged where public transport is more readily available and where maximum parking
levels associated with new development are restrained. (This will entail action by Planning
Authorities to reduce the parking aspiration of developers.)

1.31. Further tools for mobility management relate to the granting of planning consent only in those
locations which are most accessible to public transport and through the mechanism of travel
planning advice, such as Green Travel Strategies and Plans to facilitate journeys to work other
than by private cars.
1.32. Perhaps one of the most controversial issues related to Mobility Management is the suggestion of road charging – where benefits of a high quality, accessible transport system for road transport users is reflected in the price users pay for use of the infrastructure.

1.33. Members will be aware that there is a proposal before the Mayor of London to introduce workplace parking levies and road user congestion charges and it is entirely feasible that within the period of the strategy this mechanism would be rolled out to other areas, particularly where congestion of major infrastructure is a problem, ie M25/M4.

1.34. In principle, the Council wishes to advise SEERA that it is supportive of the Mobility Management approach, provided recognition is given in terms of its introduction to curbing demand in areas which may be considered to be overheating, ie London and west of London areas. The Council would not wish to see the universal application of such charging, as this would in no way help the existing disadvantaged areas overcome their current problems, particularly as in areas such as Thanet, car ownership is relatively low and public transport use already relatively high - unlike more prosperous parts of the Region.

1.35. One of the themes contained in the strategy relates to the gateway function that the South East Region has in terms of international links through airports and ports. These gateways are both bottlenecks to movement across Europe (and in the case of airports further afield) but also have a disproportionate influence in terms of traffic generation within the Region and particularly within Kent.

1.36. As mentioned previously, it is most unfortunate that neither the Port of Ramsgate nor Manston Airport are identified on the Strategic Plan and SEERA should be reminded of the opportunities that exist to diversify gateway activities through both of these facilities.

1.37. Specific modes of transport are also addressed within the Strategy and as mentioned previously air transport issues will become clearer with the publication and consultation on the South East Regional Airport Strategy.

1.38. Emphasis is laid within the Strategy, however, on the development of water transport which in the case of Kent generally refers to the Channel Ports, including Ramsgate. The European Commission has developed the concept of a network of “Motorways of the Sea”, as part of the rebalancing of the transport system at a European level. Port gateways are, therefore, important pieces of infrastructure for the encouragement of short sea shipping networks and the Regional Assembly has devised a policy of supporting and encouraging short sea shipping connections.

1.39. In that respect the Regional Strategy advocates Development Plans and Local Transport Plans to safeguard wharfs, depots and other sites which are, or could be, critical in developing infrastructure for the movement of freight, particularly by rail or water and to safeguard sites adjacent to railways, ports and rivers for development, particularly for new intermodal facilities, that are likely to maximise the usage of movement of goods by rail and sea.

1.40. Clearly, this policy contained within the Regional Strategy has implications for the Port of Ramsgate, where the Council has been considering just how much land should be retained for port use given the desire within the Ramsgate Renaissance Strategy for other, non port activities to be carried out closer to the Royal Harbour.
1.41. Clearly, it is in both the Council’s interest and the regional interest to ensure that alternative market opportunities exist to the Port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel and clearly Ramsgate, with its already substantial investment in reclaimed port land and specifically constructed road access, offers opportunities that many other ports cannot offer without substantial new investment.

1.42. As stated previously, Members are invited to advise the Regional Assembly of the opportunities that exist in Ramsgate New Port and to carefully consider the implications of future development at the port on the potential of port activities.

1.43. Regional Strategies and Strategic Transport Studies abound at the moment and it is imperative that no one Strategy should be seen in isolation to another. Joined up actions for investment in mutual support of the overall Regional Economic Strategy, are what is required. In that respect, it is disappointing that whilst East Kent, and particularly Thanet, is one of the Priority Area for Economic Regeneration, this is not reflected in the ‘key proposals’ of the Transport Strategy. In fact, key projects for East Kent are decidedly thin, given the priority. A lack of proposals to upgrade rail services in East Kent, the most important issue for all private sector stakeholders, and all Councils in the area, are, by their absence from the Strategy, very disappointing.

1.44. SEERA is, therefore, invited to re-examine the key proposals and priorities for expenditure to support those of the Regional Economic Strategy and to recognise that the key proposals below should have a much higher priority in terms of the regeneration agenda, both for East Kent and the South East Region:

- ‘Through’ fast rail services from the coastal towns of East Kent to London by CTRL, with an early commitment by Government and SRA to achieve.

- Direct support for the development of short sea shipping and cross channel services through the Port of Ramsgate;

- Support for the enhanced development of London Manston Airport through the forthcoming SERAS consultation and in particular for fast rail services to permit Manston to achieve its potential.
Extract from Crisis to Cutting Edge

5. Key Proposals

To deliver this Strategy, the Assembly has set out a policy framework supported by a suite of key proposals. These can be summarised as:

⇒ New or improved strategic cross-London public transport services to assist movement to and through the capital:
   - Thameslink 2000
   - Channel Tunnel Rail Link domestic services
   - Crossrail.

⇒ Focusing on key transport “hubs” in the region which are essential for economic activity and which need to be enhanced to reflect the region’s national gateway role as well as delivering the region’s own needs.

⇒ A set of linked “spokes”, or key corridors, which connect these hubs with each other and with other regions, and are essential for the regional economy to work effectively.

⇒ Investment in a new “regional frame” of appropriate transport improvements, focusing on public transport, in four strategic corridors on the south, west, north and east edges of the region to provide better inter-regional links, and reduce reliance on radial routes to London, and routes around London.

⇒ Major investment in public transport. Although much will need to be spent on the rail system, the Strategy also gives a new emphasis to improvements to bus services and, where densities allow, the development of local mass transit systems such as trams or dedicated bus networks. Key projects will include:
   - Oxford to Milton Keynes East-West link
   - Great Western upgrade – Paddington to Reading
   - Fastrack – Gravesend/Thameside Area
   - Airtrack – Links to Heathrow Airport
   - Fastway – Crawley Area
   - SHRT – South Hampshire Rapid Transit
   - Medway Transit
   - Thames Valley Transit.

⇒ Substantial enhancement of the freight capacity of the railway system, with the development of high quality, strategic routes and new interchange facilities, including schemes such as upgrading the Southampton-West Midlands route.

⇒ Selective investment in the road network by removing key bottlenecks and/or providing relief to heavily polluted and congested interchange facilities, such as J11, M4 and J10, M20.

⇒ A new package of Mobility Management measures, including travel planning, tough parking standards, guidance on accessibility criteria and the possible introduction of traffic charging, in for example parts of the Western Policy Area/Thames Valley.

⇒ Phased investment packages reflecting these themes focused on the region’s priority Sub-Regions, reflecting the emphasis in the overall Strategy and Regional Planning Guidance.

⇒ A strong European dimension, recognising the importance of links with the near continent, and the opportunities to reflect European Commission priorities and their evolving Trans European Network programme.
Map 6.1
Transport Hubs, Spokes and the Regional Frame

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