



**South East Essex Green Party**  
35 Torquay Drive, Leigh-on-Sea,  
Essex, SS9 1SD

5 February 2025

David Burton-Sampson, MP  
By email

Re: Heathrow Third Runway and Lower Thames Crossing

Dear David,

We are writing to express our strong opposition to Labour's plans to push ahead with the third runway at Heathrow Airport and the Lower Thames Crossing. Both projects will have significant and lasting environmental consequences, releasing vast amounts of carbon dioxide and other pollutants into the atmosphere for generations to come.

It is simply unsustainable to pursue unlimited economic growth on a finite planet. The UK has experienced minimal GDP growth for years, yet GDP remains the dominant measure of national success. This outdated metric fails to reflect the reality faced by many: declining living standards, worsening public health, and the long-term damage caused by years of cuts to public services.

The proposed third runway at Heathrow offers no meaningful benefits to the public. Instead, it threatens to undo much of the progress made in reducing emissions over the past decade. Since the pandemic, business travel has declined as companies increasingly rely on virtual meetings. Any increase in air traffic at Heathrow will likely be driven by leisure travel, meaning more UK residents spending money abroad rather than supporting the domestic economy. Given aviation's heavy carbon footprint, the government should be discouraging unnecessary flights, not facilitating them.

The Lower Thames Crossing is another deeply flawed project. Costing billions - almost certainly exceeding budget - it will carve through the south of Essex while delivering, at best, a 20% reduction in congestion at the Dartford Crossing. Past experience shows that expanding road infrastructure only induces more traffic. Instead of encouraging more car journeys, investment should focus on sustainable alternatives. A direct rail link between Essex and Kent, for example, would provide a far better long-term solution, reducing the need for London-bound detours and encouraging public transport use.

Ultimately, these expansive proposals run counter to the UK's Net Zero commitments, and your own pledges made in 2024, to champion an environmentally sustainable future. The projects will increase emissions both during construction and through continued use, destroy local communities, and fail to address the root causes of economic and transport inefficiencies. We urge you to oppose these projects and advocate for sustainable alternatives that truly benefit people and the planet.

Yours sincerely,

**Cllr Richard Longstaff, Councillor for Leigh Ward**

**Cllr Stuart Allen, Councillor for Leigh Ward**

**Tilly Hogrebe, 2024 Candidate for Southend West & Leigh**

And the South East Essex Green Party Executive:

James Vessey-Miller, Fiona Clapperton, Peter Walker, Vida Guildford, Simon Gittus, Lauren Ekins, RJ Larmouth, Eva Mansfield, Sarah-Ann Patel, and AJ Sutherland