

South Essex Tories slam 'Boris airport' plans



London Mayor Boris Johnson championed the Estuary airport

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Tory MPs hit out at one of their own after Boris Johnson's plans for a Thames estuary airport were sunk in a new report.

South Essex MPs are delighted the Airports Commission, chaired by Sir Howard Davies, has dismissed proposals from the London Mayor to build a new four-runway airport to improve the country's airport capacity.

There were fears a new airport could cause severe damage to wildlife, completely alter the landscape of south Essex and have serious consequences for the continued success of [Southend Airport](#).

Welcoming the commission's report, MP [Mark Francois](#), who represents [Wickford](#) and [Rayleigh](#), said: "We have played our part in south Essex in helping to boost aviation, for instance via the new investment at Southend Airport, but what was proposed here was on a vastly different scale, ruinously expensive and bad for the environment.

“I hope this announcement will put paid to this idea once and for all.”

Stephen Metcalfe, who represents South [Basildon](#) and East [Thurrock](#), said: “I’m very pleased Sir Howard has seen and recognised what we’ve all been saying – that this is too expensive, the impact on the environment will be too great, and it won’t solve the problems we have now.

“I’m pleased we have been vindicated.”

The estuary airport would have been located on the Isle of Grain, in Kent, and could have cost up to £90billion to build.

Sir Howard Davies said the plan, devised by Lord Foster, would have led to “huge economic disruption”.

Ron Woodley, Independent leader of Southend council, said: “Everyone in the world, apart from the Mayor of London, recognised that the so-called ‘Boris Island’ was not a suitable place for an airport.”

PROMOTED STORIES

Essex County Council, which has championed investment into Stanstead Airport as an alternative, was also quick to praise the commission’s decision.

David Finch, Tory leader of the council, said: “I am pleased that Sir Howard Davies has finally ruled out the “Boris Island”

plan, which has always been pie in the sky.”

But Mr Johnson slammed his critics, saying: “In one myopic stroke the Airports Commission has set the debate back by half a century and consigned their work to the long list of vertically filed reports on aviation expansion gathering dust on a shelf in Whitehall.”