

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Manston Airport](#)
Subject: Summary of Oral Submission made on 11th Jan 19
Date: 14 January 2019 20:02:15
Importance: High

Sirs,

As a registered interested party, I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this submission and my question to the Examining Board, herein.

STATEMENT TO SUPPORT ORAL SUBMISSION AT HEARING ON FRIDAY 11 JAN 19

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FROM GRAHAME BIRCHALL – RESIDENT
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At the hearing today, I added the following points to the written submission I made to PINS before Xmas. The aim of my comments today, were to achieve emphasis, and further justify my request to PINS made on Wednesday, at the preliminary meeting. I have also included below some new material that I did not have time to say today. The words in italics, below, are those I did not have time to develop or speak at the hearing.

I started by reminding the panel that I lived in Ramsgate since 2012, which is one year before the airport closed and I speak for myself, as an interested resident. I am not a member of any of the august organisations involved in opposing the DCO. I also stated that if the airport was to re-open **as before**, I would have no complaint, but as a 24/7 cargo hub, I am very much against.

My main observation, at this stage, from talking to hundreds of fellow residents, over the last 12 months, is the very poor level of knowledge and understanding of what RSP is planning and what a successful DCO would do to the town of Ramsgate. I maintain this level of ignorance has not come about by accident or through lack of interest. Not at all.

The evidence shows that it has come about by a **deliberate strategy** pursued by RSP and their senior political advisers and exclusive supporters ie. our two Thanets MPs. I do not believe this constitutes “mere assertion”, as suggested by the Chairman, today, as each of the component parts below, are all in the public domain, and can be readily proven. (If it walks and talks like a duck.....) I reminded the Board that this RSP strategy comprises the following components. The strategy sets out to:

- provide totally inadequate consultation – *only **one** consultation session, of a few hours, in Ramsgate, a town of 40,000 people, with thousands living under the flight path who are easily identifiable, but were NOT invited.*
- perpetuate irrelevant past experience – *in particular a reluctance to be honest or show the difference between the frequency of flights pre DCO, and post DCO.*
- conflate the airport issue with that of the need for housing in Thanet. *I have spoken to hundreds of residents who tell me they prefer an airport to housing. This means there are probably thousands who believe the same. No-one from RSP, or TDC, or our two MPs have ever tried to correct mis-apprehension. ie. They will get an airport **and** the same high level amount of housing.*
- supply misleading information on aircraft operations – *in particular the high frequency of flights and truth about the very heavy, low flying Super Jumbos freighters that are the dirtiest, noisiest aircraft in aviation.*
- tell lies about the need for night flights. *Discussed later.*
- vastly exaggerate assessments of jobs created in Thanet. *The number of jobs claimed to be created locally (30,000) is farcical and very misleading. Even if it creates 100 jobs, how many of those new workers will decide to live in Ramsgate. None ! No one would choose to*

actually to live under such a 'horror' of a flight path.

- provide a cloak off respectability of the RSP position by senior public figures and politicians.
- put 'party politics' ahead of community needs and legal advice. *If any evidence is needed here, you need only consider why Ramsgate Town Council cannot present a unified position against the biggest existential threat to their own town. Party politics at work !*
- use local planning procedures to the advantage of private commercial investors. *The TDC decision to place the airport site outside the Local Plan, was celebrated publicly by one MP who said that it made sure the airport plans will now be "more sustainable" ie. the price of land will be kept low. This is critically important to RSP, the private company he supports, who will now enjoy a lower price to acquire the land in the CPO.*
- disregard and falsely minimize the health hazards of noise and pollution. *There can be no doubt about this. I will provide more evidence in subsequent submissions.*

Sadly, I did not have time to emphasize the following important observation:

It is extraordinary to see how the district council's independent legal advice on the financial viability of RSP, and its unsuitability as a CPO partner, has been trounced publicly by both Thanet MPs when adopting their pro airport stance. Moreover, their advice to the public is to ignore the advice of TDC's senior legal officers, in favour of believing the word of RSP, whose lead team includes members with very dubious character references.

I asked on Wednesday, for the Board's Annex B, 'themes for examination', to be expanded to include the suitability of this private company as a partner in a CPO and the chief benefactor of a successful DCO finding.

I asked for this as a direct response to this DCO being, by the Board's own admission, most "unusual in nature ", in that the applicant is NOT a public body with the public interest at heart, but a private company, whose motives may have nothing to with public interest, at all.

I believe the importance of this request has been heightened since Wednesday, as we see in the national press, today, the case of Seaborne Freight, a company with no ships, no shipping experience and directors with less than honourable backgrounds. The comparison with RSP Ltd is uncanny. A company with no planes, no aviation experience, except a director with a failed history in aviation, and directors with less than honourable backgrounds.

I do not yet know whether this topic has been added to the Annex B, as requested ?

Due to time restrictions, I was unable to voice the following important evidence on my attendance at the Herne Bay consultation:

*The most serious deficiency in RSP's case for the cargo hub, is in its analysis of likely harm to be done to the thriving community of 40,000 people living in Ramsgate. In particular its interpretation and unwillingness to discuss this critical issue with members of the public. At the consultation, one RSP consultant said he "didn't have the facts and figures to hand, but knew that there wouldn't be any negative effect on the residents of Ramsgate by way of noise and air pollution ! " He eventually produced a brochure and a map of the airport site that had a green highlighted mark around the sites perimeter fence. **He explained that the only negative effects from air pollution would be inside this green line.** When asked about particulate matter of 2.5 microns and below, that would emanate from the 17,000 flights annually, only a few hundred feet over Ramsgate, **he tried to assure us that "there would be none "** and that RSP had done its homework, according to the World Health Organisations guidelines. **This is completely unbelievable** especially following recent research in the public domain into the high incidence of medium and long term adverse health effects, some fatal, from pollution and persistent noise, in cities and areas near to airports.*

I will endeavour to provide relevant data to support this statement in more depth before the

deadline. I will not need to accept RSPs offer of help, I will provide my own evidence. I have already seen the 'so called' evidence at Chapter 6 of their application and place in the category of 'deliberately misleading'. Interestingly, the issue of air pollution was also prominent in national news today. It will be interesting to see if the 'cause of death' of the little girl living so close to the South Circular, will be officially recorded as 'air pollution'. It could create a significant precedent, at a time when this Examining Board considers granting a DCO for opening a 24/7 cargo hub so close to a thriving 40,000 strong community.

Lastly, I did not get time to make the following statement:

The net result [of this strategy] is a well developed, condescending attitude amongst the general public of Thanet at large, towards the residents of Ramsgate who they believe, should either put up with intolerable living conditions for the sake of one last ditch attempt to save a popular local icon, or "get out of town". The last comment was made to me, in the presence of witnesses I can call upon, if necessary, by [REDACTED], a director of RSP Ltd.

I concluded my statement today, with a collective wish, that as a resident of Ramsgate, the Examining Board will be able to redress the imbalance deliberately created by RSP and their high level political advisers, here in Thanet and on their 3 invitations to the Terraces in Westminster. Moreover, I will be looking carefully to see whether this Examination has been relegated to that of 'a tick box exercise' to support a pre determined political decision.

As a parting shot, I asked the Board to take back the message to Westminster that they should not make the assumption that just because the political representation here in Thanet, so far, has been positively supine, they would be mistaken to think it will continue that way.

In particular careful note should be made of the adverse public interest which has suddenly been created around the decision to give Seaborne Freight a government contract.

[I detected this last request was not well accepted by the Board, but it is nonetheless relevant, well meant, and critically important to taking the very unusual step of granting a DCO to a private company, some of whose directors have murky backgrounds and ownership of which, is not, in the least bit, transparent.]

My next submission will focus on evidence to support claims that RSP plans will poison the whole town of Ramsgate, bringing with it shortened life spans and early onset of life threatening illnesses to 40,000 residents.

Yours sincerely,

Grahame Birchall.



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