

Comments made in response to submissions made at deadline one;
19th January 2019.

Summary

I am seeking Examining Authority clarification on:-

- 1) Whether biased opinion surveys are classed as credible evidence.
- 2) Acknowledgement, recognition or clarification that the unrepresented silent majority of Thanet (who do not support RSP) are not supported by either of the local MPs in respect of this DCO.
- 3) Whether the application is now officially at risk given the failure of the applicant to submit critical financial information in accordance with the relevant deadlines so far.

In detail

Having submitted my original concerns based on evidence and viability which are now lodged for the record at deadline one, I now wish to share further feedback in respect of other submissions also made at deadline one, in particular some of the evidence proposed at the open floor evening hearing that I attended.

1) Survey bias

I would like to challenge the statistical relevance of the opinion polls shared in support of the airport on the basis they are biased because they were commissioned by organisations or persons that support Manston Airport. For example, a poll conducted by The Save Manston Airport Association is unlikely to generate an outcome other than support. A poll by local airport supporting councillors on their Facebook account (Paul Messenger) is unlikely to generate an outcome that is contrary to the collective views of his social media followers. I do not think this level of local survey bias should be considered relevant evidence. It is evidence of opinion of supporters. Source <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR020002/TR020002-002922-SMA%20-%20Final%20combined%20SMA%20docs.pdf>

In contrast, the only professionally commissioned poll in the last decade shows 89% of residents under the flight path oppose night flights.

https://democracy.thanet.gov.uk/documents/s24247/Airport%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Report_1.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0nu--TylwBKCPGfSjnVHHrf4p_c2EkUewqmdOI_fUVOhmqspEYidDSH24

https://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/79206049?access_key=key-28u5uep3z9l0qd2h090u

2) Lack of democratic representation for those opposed to Manston

I wish to state my concerns about the assumptions on the part of the MPs for Thanet South and North, and the lack of democratic representation for those who do not support the airport.

It was suggested by Roger Gale MP at the hearing that both he and the MP for Thanet South Craig Mackinlay have a mandate by Thanet residents in support of their continued efforts to reinstate aviation at Manston. I dispute this assumption on his part and find no evidence to support this suggestion.

In contrast, I am entitled for my MP to represent my views, whether they are the same or different and yet I am not supported in this respect by either MP for Thanet. According to [REDACTED] MP (Con) the role of an MP is as follows: "the job of an MP is to represent the people of his or her constituency in Parliament, whether or not they voted for him or her. There is one MP for each constituency, so even if you voted for one of the other candidates and you disagree with the views of your MP's party, your MP is still there to help you with all matters for which Parliament or central government is responsible."

<https://www.timloughton.com/how-parliament-works-part-6-role-mp>

Not only do the MPs for Thanet South and North fail to represent the views of the 89% of Thanet residents who oppose night flights (see TDC survey outcome referenced above) I suggest there are further conflicts of interest which result in more failures to represent the concerned majority of Thanet residents. [REDACTED] is Chair of the All Party Group for General Aviation, a group with the mission of increasing aviation activity.

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmllparty/170928/general-aviation.htm>

Craig Mackinlay owns an airline based at Manston.

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/thanet/news/south-thanet-mp-craig-mackinlay-apologises-after-failing-to-register-business-interest-184693/>

It is my sinking conclusion that having heard at least one of our MPs speak in person that they continue to fail to represent the views of residents who oppose the reinstatement of aviation for a cargo hub. If you write to [REDACTED] with your concerns, he writes back confirming his 'strong support' for Manston.

Therefore, I wish to make it known to the Examining Authority that they should not take the support of both MPs for Thanet as carte blanche airport representation on behalf of all of Thanet. As a mere resident and someone not in high office, I feel vulnerable to this lack of representation. I feel that my MPs are not hearing or responding to the significant concerns of the many. I feel I have no voice and yet those in power are suggesting they speak on my behalf. They do not.

I see little point in outlining my concerns in respect of the swing voting of Thanet District Council in the last decade. Power swaps sides based on aviation nostalgia and at a local level our ability to engage with a Council who is clear, consistent and transparent in respect of Manston is absurdly unachievable.

3) Failure by the applicant to comply with laid down deadlines.

I also wish to lodge a query about the apparent failure to comply with the deadline set by the Examining Authority in relation to further financial assurances, as laid down numerous times over the last 6 months, culminating in the response published on 25 January 2019. I also wish to dispute that these queries have arisen as a consequence of the open floor hearings, as the desultory response from the applicant appears to suggest.

I understand these are formal questions asked of the applicant, with clear deadlines laid down in order to comply with the examination timetable. How is it ok for the applicant to dictate to PINS when they'll be able to respond? Nobody else gets this flexible luxury. It is wholly unacceptable for an application alleging they have the national interest of the UK at stake, to shroud the finances in years of delayed detail and obfuscation.

It is clear to me, a lay person, that this information is years overdue. Evidence for this includes the failure of previous incarnations of the applicant to achieve CPO status through two different administrations of Thanet District Council. Would this not have been a clear indication to RSP that they ought to sort out their funding vehicle? How would failure at District Council (twice) on matters of financial diligence be reason to continue demonstrating such disrespect in relation to HM Government and the residents of east Kent some years later? Just what is going on here?

Given the applicant has had many years to comply with this crucial evidence, I suggest it is entirely unacceptable that they have failed to meet this latest deadline set by the ExA. How can it be that an entity hidden offshore is allowed to get this far, and to be afforded the very serious attention of this examination process? I find it bizarre this critical hurdle would appear to be repeatedly missed.

Please do note my concerns for the record. It seems unreasonable for the applicant to continue to fail to meet the guidelines set down without consequence. It would seem to me that what appears to be a just-in-time methodology adopted by the applicant is spurious at very least.

Perhaps you could confirm what the ExA intends to do in respect of this latest apparent failure to supply information on the correct date by the applicant. RSP appears to be well funded enough to employ an army planning lawyers attempting to justify this absurd application and failing to hit this key deadline, whilst we the local silent majority, still manage to comply with the timelines as

we wade through thousands and thousands of pages of unclear content in this application and doing so in our own, unpaid, time.

Given that PINS has confirmed the funding statement poses a significant financial risk to the application, it would appear to me that the application is now officially at risk. I would therefore be interested in hearing your response.

In conclusion, I am summarising my concerns as follows and would seek Examining Authority clarification on:-

- 1) Whether biased opinion surveys are classed as credible evidence.
- 2) Acknowledgement, recognition or clarification that the unrepresented silent majority of Thanet (who do not support RSP) are not supported by either of the local MPs in respect of this DCO.
- 3) Whether the application is now officially at risk given the failure of the applicant to submit critical financial information in accordance with the relevant deadlines so far.

Thank you for allowing me to raise my concerns through this public examination. I am available to speak to either of the MPs for Thanet should they wish to explore my concerns in a more detailed discussion.

I also wish to reserve my right to submit further commentary by way of written representation in respect of the reasons why I disagree with the application made by RSP by February 16th 2019.