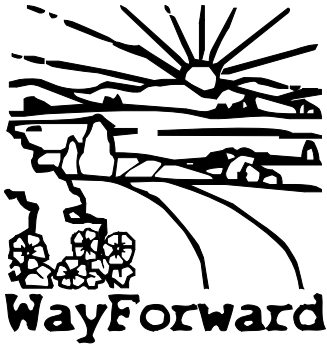


## **“WAY FORWARD” submission to PINS**



“Way Forward” are a group comprising of residents living in the Hamlet of Way just outside Minster. Our interest lies in the fact that our properties lie between 250 to 800 metres south of the Manston runway. We have 27 members and the area includes four listed Grade II properties, plus a Grade II\* property.

Comments on some of our listed houses by RSP are that “Modern background noise is likely to be limited and assets may be sensitive to changes in background noise.” As this is a particularly tranquil area, with birdsong being the main background noise, RSP significantly underestimates the scale of change we will experience.

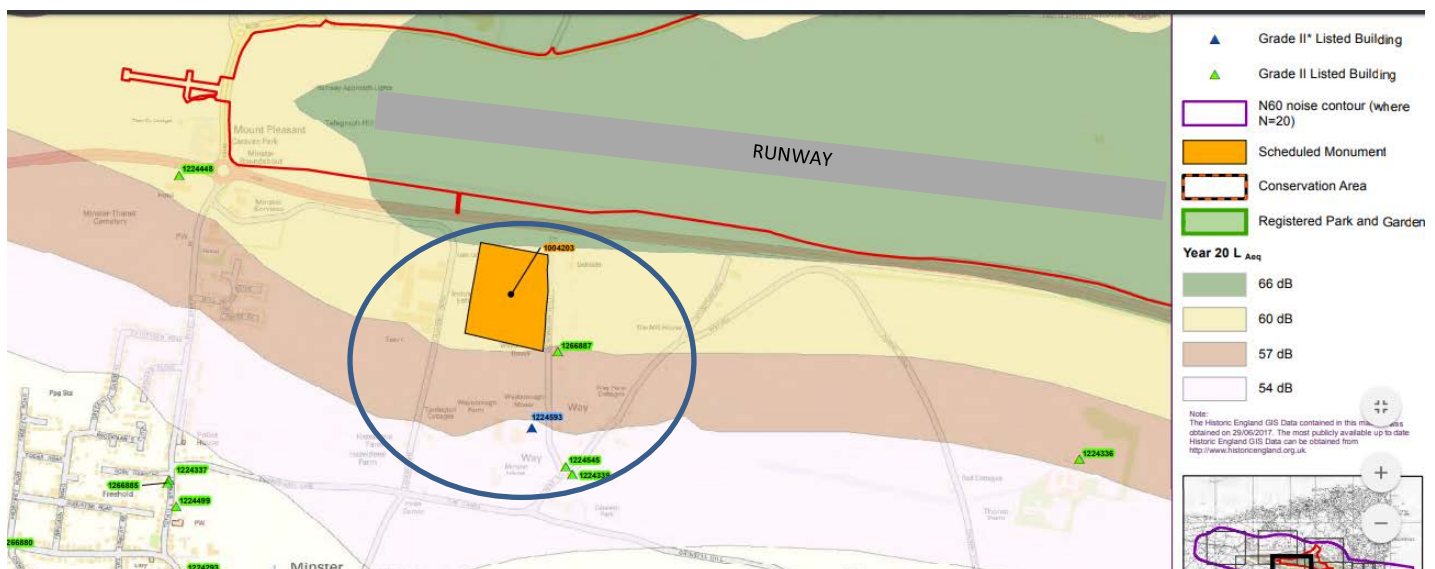
Before Manston Airport began as a private enterprise some 20 years ago, it was little more than a provincial airport. There were few scheduled daytime flights and unplanned night flights were rare. Even so, this provoked some disturbance for members of our community. When more regular flights began, such as those by EUjet in 2004, the disturbances increased, particularly the early morning movements. There were often unscheduled night-time flights which did cause sleep problems. Located so close to the runway, residents of Way are only too aware of all aircraft movements: taking off, landing and taxiing.

RSP has stressed throughout consultations with the public that there are “no plans” for night flights; and only when challenged has admitted that there will be no “scheduled” night flights. As cargo flights are usually chartered, it is true that they are neither planned nor scheduled. But, whatever the qualification, the effects for residents will be the same. RSP has attempted to conceal that its proposals clearly show evidence of night flight planning.

The EU recommendations for noise levels are 55 dB(A) in the daytime and 50 dB(A) at night. Above that level, evidence shows there are health problems associated with an increased incidence of hypertension. Even RSP has made clear that “aircraft noise would increase to a point where there would be a perceived change in the quality of life for occupants of buildings in these communities”. There is substantial evidence about the negative effects of noise and air pollution, particularly upon children and the elderly. In the past we were regularly subjected to the smell and fumes from aircraft which aggravated the asthma suffered by our children and, in terms of the type and number of aircraft which RSP expects to welcome, these effects will be considerably intensified.

To quote the World Health Organization “Environmental noise should be considered not only as a cause of nuisance but also a concern for public health and environmental health”.

### **Sound contours produced by RSP**



**The blue line delineates the area of the residence of the “Way Forward” submission.**

The diagram above shows that according to RSP information, the nearest properties would be subjected to 66dB and the furthest 54dB. We do not believe the contours to be accurate, but even so all Way Forward properties would be above the EU indication of noise pollution levels. This clearly would cause sleep and health problems, in particular for the closest properties.

Compensation from RSP is very limited compared to, for example, what Heathrow propose for their third runway. They have proposed a noise mitigation budget of only £5.6m (£4,000 per household over 63db). According to RSP's information therefore, none of the houses in the Way Forward group would not be eligible for any compensation. With the blight of a nearby Cargo Hub airport dramatically transforming the character of our hamlet, house prices would be bound to fall. Even as uncertainty hovers over the project, homeowners in the area are already experiencing difficulty in attracting buyers.

There are many claims (unsubstantiated) from airport supporters, and the two local Thanet MPs, that over 85% of Thanet residents want the airport back. Not only is this figure unsubstantiated, but support is based upon false claims and myths, e.g. that the airport will provide "30,000 jobs within East Kent and the wider economy", that there exist many other brown field sites just as suitable for housing developments, that the resurrection of the airport will spare Thanet further housing development: "we want an airport not houses!" As a result, instead of utilising the Manston brownfield site, thousands of houses are now being planned for green field sites in the surrounding district, but without the corresponding infrastructure conceived by its owners for the Manston development. The best indication of Thanet residence are the submissions to PINS at the start of the DCO consultation shows clearly local people's actual feelings with 52% against the hub airport and only 46% in favour.

PINs itself has expressed concerns about funding. It should also take into account that Labour rejected RSP's CPO plans when it controlled TDC, followed by UKIP who also rejected RSP as indemnity partners due to a lack of financial information. The fact that despite requests RSP have still (at the time of writing) not shown clear evidence of backers should signal their unsuitability to follow through on a DCO.

PINs should also reflect upon RSP's flawed consultation process, which deliberately scoped out major stakeholders, stifled opportunity for critical enquiry and feedback, and extended its documentation from 3,900 pages for the first application to over 11,000 pages now submitted to PINS. In addition, a number of our members who live within a kilometre of the airport were supposed to have had information from RSP, but received nothing.

Three attempts have been made, over some 15 years, to make Manston a commercial success - all have resulted in heavy financial loss for investors. There have also been six reports by aviation experts as to the viability of Manston as an airport, all reporting that the site is unsuitable. It is therefore clear that any attempt to open the airport would fail, but by then there would be irretrievable damage inflicted upon this historic and beautiful area.

We therefore urge PINS to reject the DCO application by RSP.