

To: PINS

From: Homeowners Against Manston

My ref: 20013942

I started the Facebook group Homeowners Against Manston Cargo Hub in September, as a response to the great and growing concern in Ramsgate at RSP's proposal to open a 24/7 cargo hub at Manston. Within a few days, 55 people had joined to express their fears over 'the significant adverse effect' (as RSP state in their DCO application) it would have on their homes, health and happiness.

People are drawn to Ramsgate and the surrounding area because of the beaches, the clean air and quality of light, which override the more challenging aspects of a neglected town centre. We are not spoilt 'NIMBYs' trying to protect an illusion of paradise. We have worked hard to buy somewhere to raise a family, or a live-work space, or a sanctuary in retirement. Our homes are now at risk from the damage and potential danger of large-scale freight hub seeking a 83,200 annual ATM capacity.

In response to this genuine fear being expressed, S Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay in letter dated 24/9/2018, said: 'There can be no one who has moved to the area unaware there was an operational airport or an airport that had a likelihood of reopening'.

Reality is that NO ONE in the history of Thanet ever bought property near a 24/7 cargo hub.

Manston Airport closed in May 2014. Anyone moving to the area after that date bought property near a small, disused, bankrupt air field.

There is a myth that it will somehow reopen in its old form, principally offering a passenger flights, but as that has been proven not to be commercially viable, RSP are proposing 19 cargo stands and limitless night flights.

RSP admit their plans would have a 'significant adverse effect' on Ramsgate and the villages. By year 2, at least 11,356 homes would experience 80 decibels [para 12.7.55, 28th bundle] and the consequent detrimental effect on physical and mental health due to disturbed sleep, as well as the risk to roofs, tiles and windows.

There is no mention from RSP of compensation for the many grade-2 listed houses (more than anywhere else in the country), which would be unable to fit double or triple glazing. Homeowners cannot be expected to suffer this, nor to pick up the bill for their lives being made a misery by noise pollution. In short, RSP should be made to consider compensation or the purchase of homes under the flight path which will lose their value through no fault of their owners.

In the past few years, Ramsgate has seen an upsurge in new residents, attracted by its coastal location, beautiful (if dilapidated) properties and high-speed rail link. They may have to travel away to earn money, but they return to spend it in Thanet.

The result is a much-needed regeneration of property and boost to the local economy. Cargo planes coming in to land day and night will put a stop to anyone wanting to move here and those in a position to do so will move away, calling a tragic halt to the area's growth and renewal.

A 24/7 cargo hub would be severely detrimental to the value of property. People who have invested heavily in homes here risk negative equity and loss of pension plans, with no recompense. When Manston was operational pre-2014, residents on the flight path suffered damage to their roofs, tiles and chimneys. When I sought the opinion of a leading insurer, I was told it was impossible to assess risk until the cargo hub opened, but once it did and several claims were made, there was a strong possibility that they would not be able to offer buildings insurance, which would render properties unsellable.

Many are self-employed and work from their homes - a cargo hub would destroy the ability to do that. Making calls, holding online conferences, teaching, counselling, writing or creating art, would be impossible with that level of noise overhead, as well as the lack of concentration that is the inevitable consequence of broken sleep.

Gardens would be blighted by the noise, smell and dirt of aviation and the bird population, which has increased significantly since the closure of Manston, would disappear.