

The Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol BS1 6PN

15 February 2019

Ref: 20014405

Dear Sir/ Madam

Re: Application by RiverOak Strategic Partners for an Order Granting Development Consent for the upgrade and re-opening of Manston Airport: Representation by Ramsgate Neighbourhood Plan Group

Ramsgate Neighbourhood Plan Group is a group of volunteers, all local residents, reporting to a steering group set up by Ramsgate Town Council. We are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole of Ramsgate that would be subordinate to, but complement, Strategic Policies in Thanet District Council's current draft Local Plan. The proposed development at the former Manston airport site is outside our area but would have a significant impact on it.

As a group, we are aware of the infrastructure needs of the wider community and are concerned that political influence was brought to bear on the drafting of TDC's Local Plan with the result that proposals by Stonehill Park, the owners of the Manston site, could not be considered on their own merits and houses that might have been allocated to the site were redistributed across Thanet - without the supporting infrastructure that would have been provided by Stonehill Park. RSP's scheme has little regard for infrastructure other than that needed to service the commercial operation of a cargo hub and, possible, passenger airport. This disregard for infrastructure is also evident in their discussion of links to the national road and rail network.

The ExA has questioned the impact of airport employees coming from outside the area but has not questioned the potential impact of an operational cargo hub/airport on an already overburdened local health service and essential emergency services. For example, Kent and Medway NHS has decided to situate hyper-acute stroke services in just three locations, Ashford with a one-hour journey time will be the nearest to Thanet. This decision does not take account of delays that would be caused by increased traffic generated by a re-opened airport.

RNPG is concerned that our Neighbourhood Plan takes proper account of the economic, social, and environmental impact of development, whether new build or conversion. We are also concerned to protect our existing conservation areas and historic fabric. As a member of Ramsgate Coastal Community Team, we share RCCT's concerns about the damage RSP's scheme would do to the health and well-being of our community and the impact it would have on our already fragile economy and on the fabric of our town.

In 2017, Ramsgate Town Council commissioned an independent Commonplace survey on behalf of RNPG. We wanted to know what people liked or didn't like about Ramsgate. While the survey did not include questions relating to Manston, a free text option encouraged some respondents to take advantage of the survey's anonymity and express strongly held views about the potential redevelopment of the site: opposition outweighed support – contrary to the impression fostered by airport supporters. Even an edited version of the survey was too large to send as an attachment but the full document is available to the public via



Yours sincerely

Jenny Dawes
Co-ordinator, Ramsgate Neighbourhood Plan Group.