

Written Submission by KENT NEEDS MANSTON AIRPORT
to Deadline 8 re. Socio-Economic Factors
(specifically benefits through RiverOak's Provisions for Education & Training)

KENT NEEDS MANSTON AIRPORT well understands that after the Manston Airport National Strategic Infrastructure Project is consented, RiverOak Strategic Partners Ltd. will provide support for a wide range of skillset training and certification as part of RiverOak's commitment to hire local workers. In the past Mr. Tony Freudmann has indicated to local supporters and business people that RiverOak not only believes that it would be right to widen opportunities for local people but to pay trainees for their time. KENT NEEDS MANSTON AIRPORT supports that approach.

All of those trained will no doubt be expected to accept suitable jobs offered to them at Manston Airport if they pass their training courses and achieve certification. That may well be an obligation that they accept before such training is offered to them. That benefits the company and the trainees. Nevertheless, clearly more people will be trained than the number that may be required by RiverOak at Manston: the company will naturally wish to take the very best of those, and that means they will train a considerably larger intake and promote a positive and aspirational socio-economic environment.

That's not to say that others who complete the same courses and certification won't also benefit. They will have obtained highly marketable knowledge, skills and certification that they would not have attained but for the consented Airport DCO. They will be able to go out into a truly national and global market and be able to apply for jobs elsewhere with the benefit of skillsets acquired in Thanet thanks to RiverOak. They will have a vested interest in spreading the word about the excellence of that training and the exemplar standing of it. That, too, will impact on Manston's standing and attractiveness, its reputation within the sector, and those whose needs these certificated personnel may benefit elsewhere. That can only be provided if the training offered meets high standards.

Equally importantly, RiverOak's commitment to offer education and training to considerable numbers of young people and others from Thanet and East Kent will raise the aspirations of many who feel that they have no hope of gaining a worthwhile career in Thanet either because up to now there are known to have been very considerable shortages of decent jobs and career paths locally, or because hitherto the cost of professional or vocational training has been understood to be well beyond the financial means of most local people even if found to be willing to apply themselves to it.

For all of these people, the investment RiverOak is offering through legally binding DCO commitments to the local community will be beneficial socio-economically in terms of direct jobs at the airport and also result in further indirect, induced and catalytic employment across Kent, the Southeast, the country as a whole and even overseas.

It would be interesting to know if Miss Louise Congdon, who has sought to disparage acknowledged experts upon whom RiverOak have relied for advice, has factored into her own figures RiverOak's offer and future delivery of training and education, arranged and paid for by RiverOak as part of its DCO obligations, correcting her own top down figures through a bottom up analysis of the growth in jobs and extent of other beneficial impacts attributable and due to RiverOak's plans for the regeneration of the airport. We who support the compulsory acquisition, re-opening and expansion of the airport certainly regard all of that as greatly positive.

Submitted by Dr. R. John Pritchard on behalf of KENT NEEDS MANSTON AIRPORT, a corporate member of the Thanet & East Kent Chamber and Dover Chamber of Commerce, devoted to the promotion of Education, Training and Jobs through the regeneration of Manston Airport.