

Thomas Norton
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Manston DCO Deadline 8

I am totally against the application to build a freight hub at Manston.
I live on the Nethercourt Estate in Ramsgate. I moved here when it was an RAF base.

The plans, if implemented, would be an environmental disaster for me, my family and thousands of other people.

Our lives were blighted before, when the airport was open, by dirty, noisy, smelly old aeroplanes flying just over our rooftops and affected the lives of thousands of people.

In spite of River Oak's denial, night flights are still going to take place, as River Oak are applying for a night time quota of 3028 per year, so this could mean unlimited night flights. They are also hiding the true noise impact behind average noise contours. The true levels we experienced were 90 decibels plus and they were only 450ft above our house.

A few years ago we suffered with old freight planes going over our houses at about 450ft day and night, with decibel readings of 90db. It will be the same again but all night long, so all residents will suffer with a lack of sleep, resulting in many health problems and thus putting a further strain on the Health Service. We had many nights where we were woken up by extremely noisy planes thundering over our rooftops. Once woken it was almost impossible to return to sleep. This affected me at work.

When the airport was operational I was diagnosed with [REDACTED], which I never had before. I was prescribed inhalers. Since the airport closed I have not needed any inhalers and my [REDACTED] has gone. The only conclusion is that it was caused by the pollution from the planes, as this is the only thing that has changed. No planes, no pollution, [REDACTED]!

Many children live on this estate, and the whole area, their learning ability will be affected due to being constantly awoken during the night. They will be unable to concentrate at school, let alone hear what is being taught, this will affect their future prospects in life. How can we put all our children and teachers into such an environmental hazard? The teachers will not be able to teach our children efficiently because the children will be unable to hear what is being taught. With all the noise disruptions throughout every school day, their learning ability will diminish drastically.

Our [REDACTED] has just passed the Kent test, and is able to go to a grammar school. His parents dismissed the nearest choice, which was Chatham House, the school attended by former Prime Minister, Edward Heath, because of the prospect of such dreadful noise affecting his schooling. We experienced the noise at Chatham House School when we attended a meeting about the airport there many years ago. Tony Freudmann and Thanet Council were there and the speaker had to stop talking for quite a few minutes when an aeroplane went right overhead. He had to stop talking because of the noise which was drowning out his voice.

Looking back at some of my newspaper clippings, I found there were some interesting comments. On 22nd February 1999 in the KM Extra, Lord Northbourne raised the subject of Manston airport development in the House of Lords. He said that the council issued an

“existing use” certificate for the operation of Manston as a civil airport without attaching any conditions and that there was an established usage of 55,000 movements in and out each year. He said that historically the type of aircraft used were Tiger Moths or today's single engine training aircraft and gliders. Lord Northbourne was concerned that developers might interpret this as allowing 55,000 jumbo jets into the airport each year. In a letter he says that it appears that the council's enthusiasm to create employment has led them to take a cavalier attitude to the control of noise and pollution.

In the RSP documentation it says that it will have a permanent adverse effect on the area and people's lives.

Ramsgate has just begun to thrive and the area has improved for the better. A cargo hub would stop people investing in the area and many jobs would be lost. Tourism in the area would fall, as no-one will want to visit an area where you cannot hear what is being said to you or it is impossible to get any sleep!

There is no evidence that we need a freight hub anywhere in the country as there is adequate capacity at existing airports. To want to put it on the doorstep of so many people is ridiculous. It would affect not just the lives of the people of Thanet, but also the surrounding area as the roads are already full with current traffic, to propose even more lorries transporting freight and fuel to and from Manston would be a nightmare.

Claims that an operation of this type located in the far south east of the country would be of national importance are unrealistic. Manston has never been anything other than a minor regional airport. It has been closed for four years with no appreciable loss, nationally, regionally or locally.

Many people have relocated to this area over the last few years that have no experience of the noise generated by the airport or the effects on their health. Many of these have been kept in the dark about RSP's intentions, by deliberately not leafleting the area about consultations that were to take place. Nobody that I have spoken to on this estate has ever had any leaflet about the consultations.

The wildlife in the area will also be affected. The number of birds in our garden alone fell dramatically whilst the airport was in operation and since its closure is just beginning to recover, we have the birds returning at last! So it must affect the nature reserves in the area as well.

RSP has shown a lack of adequate consultation process, many residents received no notification from them. I have lost faith in our local MP's, who have shown no concern for us, as people that they have been voted in by, and whom they are supposedly representing.