

Submitted by James Hose Ref MANS-S57179 Deadline 8

Dear Sirs,

I am a local resident of Ramsgate who actually does live under the flight path unlike others who claim they do. I live on the Nethercourt Estate at the end closest to the airport site and directly in line with the runway.

I have followed the fortunes of RiverOak's attempts to acquire the site from the current lawful owners with interest. I saw them fail, twice, to convince the local authority in seeking a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

I attended at least four consultation events organised by RiverOak at various locations in an attempt to learn what their plans for Manston were. On each occasion I came away with more questions than answers.

Now we have a DCO application to deal with. I have spent many hours reading the Azimuth Reports by Sally Dixon and the Northpoint by Chris Cain. I have read much of the thousands of pages and reports RiverOak submitted in support of their DCO application. I have read most of the 2000+ Relevant Representations. I have also read widely papers and reports on Aviation, Cargo handling, Aircraft Noise and Pollution. While this does not in any way make me an expert I feel I do have a grasp of the issues being investigated.

I have attended, in person many, if not all the DCO hearings. First at the Winter Gardens, then Odd Fellows Hall and finally the Laurence Suite at Discovery Park. I have also registered as an interested party and have submitted written representations as part of that process.

Now the six month examination stage draws to an end I feel all parties should be in a position to examine some hard facts. Sadly, even after following the process closely I don't feel hard facts have yet been determined.

I have not heard a justifiable reason why this DCO application meets the basic requirement to fulfil the requirements of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. RiverOak have submitted the figure of 10,000 Cargo ATM's to justify their application under Sec. 23 Planning Act to avoid an application with the local authority planning regulations which they perceive as hostile following two previous failed attempts for a CPO. The figure of 10,000 Cargo ATM's were never previously mentioned and are now only being put forward to fulfil the requirements of a DCO application.

How they will achieve this number of cargo flights are not evidenced by them. Nor do they evidence where any flights will be coming from or the companies likely to operate them. All evidence submitted appear to be based on optimistic forecasts and speculation.

During the process of this application the corporate identity of RiverOak has evolved from RiverOak Investment Corp. a U.S. company who pulled out at an early stage. To RiverOak Strategic Partners Ltd, a UK registered company who acquired all rights and interests from them to assume financial and operational responsibility for the DCO in respect of Manston Airport.

RSP have since devolved further to a new identity involving a number of dormant companies with no visible assets and dubious backing from a company in the British Virgin Islands, a location noted as a tax haven with the distinction of heading the overseas territories featured in cases of grand corruption and money laundering. *(The British Virgin Islands was the destination of choice for corrupt individuals looking for secrecy. Out of the 1,201 companies from the Overseas Territories we identified, 1,107 (92 per cent) were incorporated in the British Virgin Islands. Companies registered in this jurisdiction featured in 213 (90 per cent) of the 237 corruption and money laundering cases we analysed.) ('The Cost of Secrecy' a report by Transparency International UK)*

I have no confidence that the applicant has or can acquire sufficient funds to progress this project to fruition. RiverOak have stated they intend to seek further funding should the DCO be granted. Any such funding would require a return on any investment. In a competitive market with a poor track record at Manston it is hard to imagine who these backers would be. RiverOak claim backers have been identified but hide their details under a veil of corporate secrecy.

The project as outlined by RiverOak does not appear to be viable. They have failed to submit a credible business plan and rely instead on hypothetical and optimistic forecasts outlined in the Azimuth Report that are fundamentally flawed and have been disproven by other reports with more credibility.

They have not investigated other viable options other than Manston and have not engaged in any meaningful way to acquire the land voluntarily from the current owner. The value of the land has not realistically been assessed in comparison to the sum paid for the Jentex site or the true value of it.

Without a guarantee of viability and proof of funding there is no evidence that RiverOak will achieve their aims of investing £300million to open a freight hub. The fear is, having failed, they will return to the current situation of a

brown field site ripe for development for housing. They will have acquired the land under false pretences.

It is worth noting at this stage that Prestwick Airport has just been put on the market again. Prestwick, like Manston was sold for £1 by Infratil after suffering heavy losses. At Prestwick the Scottish government invested £40million of taxpayers money but still failed to develop a viable airport. At Manston Ann Gloag saw the problems and closed Manston before more money would be lost.

As a local resident of Ramsgate I cannot see how sanctioning the grant of a DCO can be in the public interest. Since its closure I have seen Ramsgate and the surrounding area thrive with more investment being made in support of the tourist trade.

I am also concerned about the dangers to residents of a vast increase in ATMs should a Freight Hub become a reality. Where is the Public Protection Zone? Surely with the projected numbers of flights our safety should be of some concern. We have seen the grounding of Boeing 737 MAX planes following two recent crashes of nearly new planes. RiverOaks focus on cargo suggests older less well maintained aircraft will be flying over our heads.

There are no adequate figures on aircraft noise or pollution. Noise is mitigated by the use of average noise levels instead of actual noise levels as planes fly over our heads. How are flights to be restricted with such a high quota count? Without knowing the flight mix quota counts are meaningless. Likewise the promise of no night flights. Without a definitive definition of scheduled and timetabled and shoulder periods the system is open to abuse to the detriment of our health. I feel our human rights are in danger of being violated.

In short I feel the applicant has failed to put forward a credible case for the granting of a DCO and has failed to show adequate funding or a viable business plan. The compulsory acquisition of a large land holding in the possession of another would be nothing short of an unjustifiable land grab sanctioned by a government agency.



DCO  
Application

I'VE GOT A GREAT  
IDEA.