

Manston Concerns over re-opening of airport

Effect of night flights on education, children & young people

1. The number of schools disturbed by noise, my daughter was in nursery and school when the airport was last open and I have seen first-hand the disturbance and disruption caused when planes went over. Teachers could not be heard, even in a modern double glazed school.
2. Sleep disturbance affects everyone badly, but is particularly damaging to the brain development and learning of children and young people – I work in education and have seen the effect of disturbed/not enough sleep on young peoples' learning and the knock on effect of disruption from students who are frustrated by struggling to learn. In an area where educational standards are already lower than the national average and many young people have a very difficult start in life, night flights will impact the younger generation and worsen existing social issues caused by deprivation.

The promised jobs/training will not offset this.

Effect on Health

1. Disturbed sleep and noise related stress creates and exacerbates mental and physical health issues.
2. Pollution from aircraft and associated roads/lorries.

Effect on town regeneration

1. Town has seen a growth of tourism and cafe life in the harbour and beach areas. Planes fly directly over this area and will stop that growth.
2. Growth of creative industries such as music, film and design companies also likely to be destroyed by airport.
3. Ramsgate and the surrounding area has many attractions in terms of nature and historical architecture. All of these will be negatively impacted by the airport.

The number of jobs created by the airport will not offset the number lost if this growth and regeneration created by the beauty and location of the town is destroyed.

Lack of transparency regarding Airport Plans

1. People living under the flight path were not kept informed of plans or invited to meetings. Information on plans was not made easily available. I live directly under the flight path but only knew about new airport plan because of the No Night Flights campaign. No-one involved in trying to re-open Manston ever contacted me with information, until I contacted them with my concerns. I know many people who, like me, lived here when the airport was open and who do not want it re-opened, but they don't campaign, because they say "Oh it will never happen" they are completely unaware of the plans and the DCO. BECAUSE THE INFORMATION HAS NOT BEEN PUT OUT THERE

2. People who support the airport also seem misinformed, with many thinking it will be a small passenger airport as it was before with a few flights a day. They believe there won't be any night flights. Even our own MP (Craig McKinley) thought that night flights were not a part of the plan. I wrote to him to express my concerns and he said in his reply that he was against night flights and would campaign against them, yet he supports an airport plan that includes them.

3. Lack of representation for the many people who do want the airport to return. With both MPs fervent airport supporters, there is no-one who will raise the very real concerns of people under the flight path. I originally wrote to both MPs, both of whom made out that my concerns were groundless. I have lived here through various versions of Manston as an airfield and know first-hand how it affects life here, but neither MP will address my concerns, and one of them replied with a very unpleasant e-mail. As someone who will be extremely affected by the night/ frequent flights, I raised concerns calmly on Social Media and received abuse back!

Airport supporters are able to claim they have support from a large section of the local area as a direct result of this lack of clarity and transparency.

Housing/Local Plan

1. Many airport supporters believe that if we have an airport, we will not have so many houses built. They also believe that the planned houses on Manston will be 'for Londoners, not for local people' or 'bought up by London Councils for overspill from estates' (Yes - these are in quotes because that is what people I have talked to believe - lack of or misinformation has been used to stir up division in the community between people that have lived here long term and anyone who moved here more recently.).

2. No housing on Manston, will mean housing being built on green areas, further blighting Ramsgate as a place to live or visit.

There has been a lack of honesty about the local plan and the old airports possible role in it.