

Deadline 8 submission to: PINS, Manston Airport

From: Homeowners Against Manston Cargo Hub

12 June 2019

Dear Sirs,

The members of the group Homeowners Against Manston Cargo Hub would like to make the following points to meet Deadline 8 of your examination into the DCO proposal by RSP to open a freight hub on the disused airfield at Manston, currently in the ownership of SHP.

Our group launched on Facebook in the wake of RSP's proposals, but members are in contact with many fellow residents who do not use social media, but who do share the extreme concerns. The group represents young and older people who were born in Ramsgate as well as those who've moved here over the course of 30, 20, 10, or 1 year.

We do not believe any of us has a greater or lesser say over the place we call home.

Members who lived in Ramsgate during Manston's previous incarnation remember the intense noise and disruption of landing aircraft day and night, especially those living directly under the flight path.

We all share the same fear of the huge-scale cargo hub that RSP propose, with potentially more flights in a 24-hour period than landed in an entire year before. As well as the obvious concern over noise and air pollution and sleep deprivation, we fear the damage to our properties.

One resident of Albion Gardens on the East Cliff describes the planes flying in so low, he could see the pilot's face and read the serial number on the aircraft tyres. He lost a chimney pot to falling debris.

Others had damaged roofs and rattling windows from 80+ decibel planes that disturbed them during the day and woke them through the night.

It could reasonably be expected for any company planning to disturb life to this degree to provide noise mitigation for the 40,000 homes under the flight path, yet RSP have nothing in place to reach this scale. Equally, their offering of compensation is limited to fewer than 300 homes.

It's important to note that listed buildings under the flight path are not able to install secondary or tertiary double glazing to reduce noise impact.

There is video footage on the Save Manston Airport Association site of Sir Roger Gale MP mocking what he describes as 'DFLs' [people 'Down From London'] buying houses under a flight path, then complaining about planes. The fact is, anyone coming to Ramsgate and its surrounding area since 2015 bought their property near a disused, bankrupt airport. Nothing showed in searches, because no plans were in place (at least for the general public to access). The land belonged to SHP for the purpose of building houses.

If RSP, a start-up company, were to be granted the DCO and finally produce proof they have the funds to pay for it, the people under the flight path in Ramsgate would see the town, and their own health and homes, suffer by RSPs own admission: 'a significant adverse effect'.

Quite apart from the environmental and health consequences, the plan to open a freight flight path over Ramsgate, which has a historic Royal harbour and notable Georgian architecture, is distressing to those who have homes they love, live in and have invested in.

Many have restored dilapidated, semi-derelict houses and flats, using the local workforce. Scaffolders, plumbers, carpenters, builders, decorators, electricians, glaziers, painters, roofers, have to schedule in work months ahead to meet demand, which is clearly a boost for Thanet's economy.

It would be unnatural for anyone who owns a property not to be concerned about the value it retains. That equity may represent, for example, a pension or care-home plan. If that value is substantially decreased, as it inevitably would be if planes were to fly 300-1000ft overhead, it would have a serious impact on our futures.

Some of those in favour of RSP's plans would answer: 'So move.' But perhaps, if we've lived here for the best part of a century, as some of us have, we have no inclination to move from our home and family. Nor long-term or recent inhabitant wants to uproot children from their home, school, grandparents and friends.

Those who've been here just months, having taken the commitment to sign up to a first mortgage, because property is more affordable in Ramsgate than Canterbury or Whitstable, invested life savings and

enrolled children in nursery or school, don't see why they should move either.

And who can afford to bear that cost? How could it be fair for young couples, first-time families, single-parent families, working families, semi-retired couples and pensioners to lose money they've worked for and carefully invested, in order to make profit for a start-up company registered offshore?

We have spent years attempting to extract some assurance that RSP would mitigate against our potentially grave losses, but found none.

Our homes and life savings are under threat by RSP's plans.

We urge the Examining Authority to consider the question: How can this be fair?

On behalf of Homeowners Against Manston Cargo Hub

12/6/2019