

Submission regarding heritage aspects on the Manston Airport site by 'Supporters of Manston Airport', in conjunction with 'History of Manston Airfield'. 16th June 2019.

Summary

'History of Manston Airfield' is a non-profit history project run to research and promote the history of aviation at Manston. It is also aimed to help promote publications about Manston and the museums. The project is not directly connected with either of the two museums currently at Manston and the submission makes no claims to speak for either of the museums currently based at Manston.

This submission is based on the concerns over the retention and development of the historic features of Manston Airport. There are concerns about historic features that could be lost, or where close proximity of development may be detrimental to them. This is not intended to be a critique or opinion in regards to the current application outside of the heritage aspects of the current application which would apply to any future use of Manston airport.

We are concerned that the recent hearing held 3rd June 2019 on Landscape, Design, Archaeology and Heritage spent only around 15 minutes discussing non-designated assets when there appears to be disagreement or lack of agreement between the applicant and interested parties. We were also concerned although they were in attendance in the public area, it appeared that representatives from the museums were not included in the Interested Parties invited to attend and participate in the discussions for both their own futures and those of heritage features on the site. We are aware of further discussions on 7th June 2019 and there appears to be some way to go before agreement between the applicant and interested parties.

We have concerns that the applicant appears dismissive of the potential of at least some historic buildings/structures on Manston as stated by Historic England in response to Question HE.3.2 as part of the Deadline 7a Submission. It would also seem that further surveying and analysis must take place in order to document them. We agree that the loss of the buildings and features cannot be largely mitigated by recording only, but it seems that protection of all of them does not form part of the development plans, contrary to The Airports National Policy Statement (2018) (ANPS).

The history of Manston is a highly emotive subject, to which the applicant and examiners will be well aware. The site has been involved with the battles of World War II on the Western Front including the Battle of Britain, Dunkirk, D-Day, Dieppe and Market Garden. It has helped to protect our country as well as the local population, Kent and London from attack in both World Wars. Countless airmen, ground crews and other workers have been lost on the site and countless others have been saved when landing back at Manston after being damaged or low on fuel.

We would urge the inspectors to ensure sufficient measures are in place to make sure that surveying of all archaeological and historic features, known and unknown, is carried out in full consultation with interested parties. Further we would request that all existing features from the military history of Manston are protected. We would hope these sites are preserved and form part of a wider scheme of historic protection and education for the public as suggested by the KCC submission. At this point in time, it would appear that the applicant's plans do not include the protection of all the potential heritage on the site.

We would agree with this statement by Historic England in their representation of 22nd February 2019. *"There are no designated heritage assets within the proposed development site at the present time; however we think that further heritage assessment work might reveal heritage assets that have a level of importance equivalent to designated heritage assets such as listed buildings or scheduled monuments, which is one of the main reasons that Historic England has made representations about this application."*

We also note and support the following statements:

Deadline 3 Submission QUESTION E.1.8 - INCOMPLETE SURVEYS

1.3.1. *"Enough information is available to indicate that there are certainly some important historic buildings on the airfield. It is Historic England's view, on the basis of this information, that the T2 Hangar, WWII Dispersal Bay, RAF Manston Control Tower and the RAF Manston WWII Battle HQ are potentially nationally important and if so should be preserved. However, the relatively superficial survey on which the ES depends might prove to either underestimate or overestimate of the level of significance for each building so decisions about which buildings should be preserved may not be well-founded with the result that unjustified harm might be caused or unjustified constraints on development might be imposed. Additionally, the ES is not clear about the applicant's proposals for which buildings would be demolished or retained, so consideration of the likely impact of the development is made doubly difficult."*

It is clear that the large proportion of the proposed development already covers the original site of RNAS Manston and the subsequent grass runway and development of the site through its alteration to RAF Manston and subsequent use in WWII. Whilst understanding that the development would not proceed if it was to avoid these areas, it does show that the open aspect of the site and these areas will already be compromised, so as much concern as possible should be made in relating to the other features.

We also remain concerned for the future of the two museums at Manston. Plans for their continued role at Manston appear to be unclear. Although the suggestion is that the agreements between the applicant and museums falls outside of the scope of the application, their locations are inside the area included for compulsory acquisition and they also would be in close proximity to the access road being proposed and airport development plans.

Manston has already lost another Museum in 2014 after being at Manston for 20 years. The Manston Fire Museum is currently at Scunthorpe after initially relocating to RAF Scampton.

Protected Military Remains

There appears to be a discrepancy in two of the applicant's documents regarding military remains.

In: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/TR020002/TR020002-003612-Draft%20Written%20Scheme%20of%20Investigation.pdf> by Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited, it suggests:

5.4.5 The 1986 Protection of Military Remains Act (PMRA) applies to any aircraft which have crashed while in military service and to certain wrecks of vessels which were wrecked while in military service. PMRA makes it an offence to disturb, move or unearth military remains which have been designated.

5.4.6 There are no designated protected areas or controlled sites within the site boundary, and there are no records of military vessels or aircraft having been lost within the site boundary.

Whereas in <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/TR020002/TR020002-002423-5.2-8%20-%20Environmental%20Statement%20-%20Volume%208%20-%202%20of%203%20-%20Appendix%209.1%20Part%201%20cont.pdf> by Amec Foster Wheeler, it states:

4.6.33 Additionally, there are 14 potential protected military remains within the study area, 11 of which are located within the limits of the site. These assets are detailed in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Protected Military Remains within the study area (original table is partly duplicated)

| Reference UID | Name |
|---------------|---|
| DKE20136 | ME109 |
| DKE20248 | BB893 |
| DKE21799 | Crash site of Messerschmitt Bf109E-4 |
| DKE21805 | Crash site of Heinkel HE 111H-2 |
| DKE21806 | Crash site of Messerschmitt BF110D |
| DKE21807 | Crash site of Messerschmitt BF110D |
| DKE21808 | Crash site of Supermarine Spitfire I |
| DKE21809 | Crash site of Supermarine Spitfire I |
| DKE21823 | Crash site of Bristol Blenheim |
| DKE21825 | Crash site of Consolidated B24H Liberator |
| DKE21826 | Crash site of Consolidated B24J Liberator |
| DKE21827 | Crash site of Hawker Typhoon IB |
| DKE21828 | Crash site of Hawker Typhoon IB |
| DKE21829 | Crash site of Heinkel HE111H-2 |

We would seek clarification in which of the two statements are being suggested by the applicant (or which take precedent), what measures would be in place to protect any known sites and mitigation should further sites be found.

Dispersal Bay

The applicant has made a case to exclude features such as the T2 Hanger and WWII Dispersal bay, quoting the Historic England's Listing Selection. However, the full quote includes the following "...group value with related structures...", such that it does not exclude individual buildings or features.

The full section quote is: *"Outside these key sites, it is only groups (of buildings, fighter pens and defences) and individual examples of strong intrinsic or associational importance, particularly those with key historical episodes of the Second World War, which have been recommended for protection (Fig 8). Selection principles will include rarity; technical or structural interest; group value with related structures; and operational importance (such as direct involvement in an important campaign such as the Battle of Britain or the Battle of the Atlantic)."* <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-military/heag123-military-structures-lsg/>

The same dispersal bay can be seen on an aerial photograph of RAF Manston taken on 5th June 1942, which shows at least five bays over the entire site.

It could be argued that the fact that part of the structure exists could provide opportunities for rebuilding or part-rebuilding by heritage or educational groups to illustrate their use and to be included in the wider story of the site.



Figure 1 – 5th June 1942



Figure 2 – Close up

The same pens are also shown on aerial photos taken by the RAF in 1946/1947, which also shows the T2 Hanger.



Figure 3 - RAF Aerial Photo 1946/1947

Other Type B pens are subject to listed building protection.



Figure 4 - Parade for the Distinguished Flying Cross investiture of No.609 Squadron's Flying Officer C 'Cheval' Lallemand, showing what appears to be the dispersal bay in the background. 19th May 1943.

T2 Hanger/Battle HQ/Control Tower

Although the hanger may have been altered considerably since its use in World War II, the photo from 1946/1947 shows the context of this hanger in regards to the two dispersal bays that were in close proximity to it. Similarly, the Battle HQ and Control Tower, again whilst subject to alterations as most buildings are likely to have been on a working airport, should still be worthy of proper investigation and protection.

Intelligence Huts

These buildings thought to be the same as would see visitors such as Winston Churchill during the height of the attacks on RAF Manston are outside the boundary of the application site, however they are in close proximity to the proposed junction improvements.

Lost Assets

Clearly Manston has changed since the role it played in wartime. However, parts of its history have been more recently lost from the site, or redeveloped.

In 2006 a Pickett Hamilton Fort, a pop-up Pillbox was removed for recovery and preservation from an area close to the current museum locations. Such installations at Manston would fit in with the airfield being given its own battalion of soldiers to protect from paratroopers. These may have been the same troops referenced on 31st August 1940 when it became the focus of a highly secret commando unit of the Home Guard. It has been suggested that this was a result of the earlier visit by Winston Churchill.

Whilst outside of the main site, 'The Loop' area and the hangar that was there, now replaced by a modern unit, was used by the USAF during the 1950s, but according to accounts, was also the location for where the top secret Gloster Meteor jets were operated from. Given the same need for security, it may have been where the work was carried out to the Upkeep bombs by Barnes Wallis during the trials at Reculver.

Again, outside of the DCO site, there remains buildings or sites of previous buildings which may possibly date back to 1920s when Manston had its own railway. These are outside of the Heritage Designation Plans and there is no obvious indication that these are referenced. Clearly even recently, the buildings have been refurbished and likely altered over the years, but they would deem to at least be recorded.

Context of Buildings to the History of Manston

The importance of RAF Manston and of RNAS Manston before it, is often overlooked in preference to the more well-known Battle of Britain airfields. In fact, Manston not only often took on a front-line role but was often used as a forward base and refuelling base for many missions carried out by aircraft from more protected airfields.

After the site's commissioning as an airfield and the first huts erected in February 1916, there are a number of key events that happened at Manston. These are a tiny fraction of the entire history of Manston:

9th July 1916: The first Sopwith 1½ Strutter engaged in Home Defence from Manston.

1916 and 1917: Manston used as a base to defend London from Gotha bomber raids.

22nd August 1917: The last daylight Gotha raid on England and the first enemy aircraft to crash on English soil – shot down by a Sopwith Camel flown by Lt Arthur Frank Brandon from Manston.

6th March 1936: The RAF's first operational 'modern' monoplane, the Avro Anson, equipped with a retractable undercarriage, entered service with No.48 Squadron, RAF Manston.

21st November 1939: Three aircraft of 'Yellow Section' of No.79 Squadron ordered to patrol the channel near Folkestone. Only two took off due to engine failure. A lone Dornier 17 was attacked and crashed into the sea off Deal, the first enemy aircraft brought down over the channel.

27th May 1940: Aircraft such as Boulton Paul Defiants of No.264 Squadron use Manston as a forward base for operations to defend troops as part of Operation Dynamo at Dunkirk.

During the Battle of Britain, although limited numbers were based at Manston, many aircraft used Manston as a forward base.

28th August 1940: After six heavy attacks on 24th August left Manston unserviceable, Manston's importance was recognised when the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, paid it a personal visit. He saw an airfield barely serviceable, still with craters everywhere and markers

denoting unexploded bombs still to be dealt with. Churchill was said to have been so appalled by the scene of destruction on the airfield, he wrote the next day to the Air Ministry to voice his concerns over the repair process. Churchill had his photo taken with members of 615 Squadron, based at Kenley during his visit, standing by what is thought to be the wooden intelligence hut at what is now often referred to as "the Spitfire Junction", although this building may have been moved to its present location.



Figure 5 - The Prime Minister Winston Churchill and members of No.615 Squadron

25th September 1941: The Prime Minister, Winston Churchill visited No.615 Squadron at RAF Manston accompanied by his wife, Clementine. He was in his capacity of Honorary Air Commodore of the Squadron. He was photographed with members of the squadron inside a building at Manston.



Figure 6 - The Prime Minister Winston Churchill shakes hands with a sergeant pilot of 615 Fighter Squadron during a visit to RAF Manston, Kent, UK, on 25 September 1941. His wife, Clementine, can be seen behind him. Churchill was honorary Air Commodore for the squadron and is wearing the appropriate uniform. © IWM (H 14200)

29th October 1941: General de Gaulle met French members of the RAF at Manston. All French pilots in England had been invited to the announcement that the first entirely French squadron was to be formed in the RAF, 340 Squadron 'Ile de France'.

12th February 1942: Six Fairey Swordfish of 825 Squadron FAA commanded by Lt Cmdr Eugene Esmonde DSO took off from RAF Manston to attack the largest German battle fleet ever assembled, 'The Channel Dash'. All the aircraft are destroyed and only 5 aircrew rescued out of 18.

28th August 1942: 56 emergency landings on the night of 28th August 1942 left devastation that would lead to the approval for the new runway to be built. The Station Commander had already seen the increasing numbers of emergency landings, with damaged aircraft of Bomber Command trying to make it to Manston in every kind of imaginable trouble. At the time, the airfield was comparatively limited for such landings, with many aircraft overshooting, adding to the damage to them, increasing casualties and also damaging the airfield and buildings. The undulating surface made matters worse, although Wing Commander Gleave had already pleaded for the construction of a really large runway with "lead in" lights, so far he had not been successful. The scene of carnage eventually led to the approval of the new runway.

13th April 1943: The first trials at Reculver of the Dambuster's bouncing bomb invented by Barnes Wallis. Manston was used as the base for these trials by pilots including Guy Gibson. Test work and modifications to the test Upkeeps were carried out at Manston, all in utmost secrecy. Tests and development work carried on until 13th May when a live bomb was released five miles off Broadstairs before their mission on 16th/17th May.

After the main runway opened in April 1944, Manston became one of the essential emergency airfields providing a landing site for aircraft returning from operations in Europe. Often the aircraft were damaged, with crew injured and killed. Even during landing, many aircraft crashed, injuring or killing the crews.

14th May 1943: First operation of a Hawker Typhoon in a bomb carrying role. Numerous Typhoon operations were carried out from Manston by Squadrons including No.609 Squadron, attacking enemy locations in occupied territory. It would have been aircraft such as these that could have been based in the fighter pens.

6th June 1943: In the run up to and during D-Day, operations took place from Manston including Typhoons to attack sites such as the V1 rockets fired at London and enemy tanks, trains and radar stations.

15th June 1944: Flt Lt John Musgrave (pilot) and Flight Sergeant F W Samwell (Navigator) in a Mosquito VI from No.605 Squadron operating from RAF Manston become the first RAF crew to shoot down a V1 flying bomb.

26th July 1944: No.616 Squadron flying Gloster Meteors from RAF Manston was declared as the world's first operational jet squadron.

4th August 1944: The first V1 flying bomb downed by a Gloster Meteor jet by Flight Officer Dean from Manston.

17th September 1944: 56 Armstrong Whitworth Albemarle took off with their Airspeed Horsa gliders in tow to form part of 1st Allied Airborne Army's major operation in Holland, including Arnhem as part of Operation Market Garden.

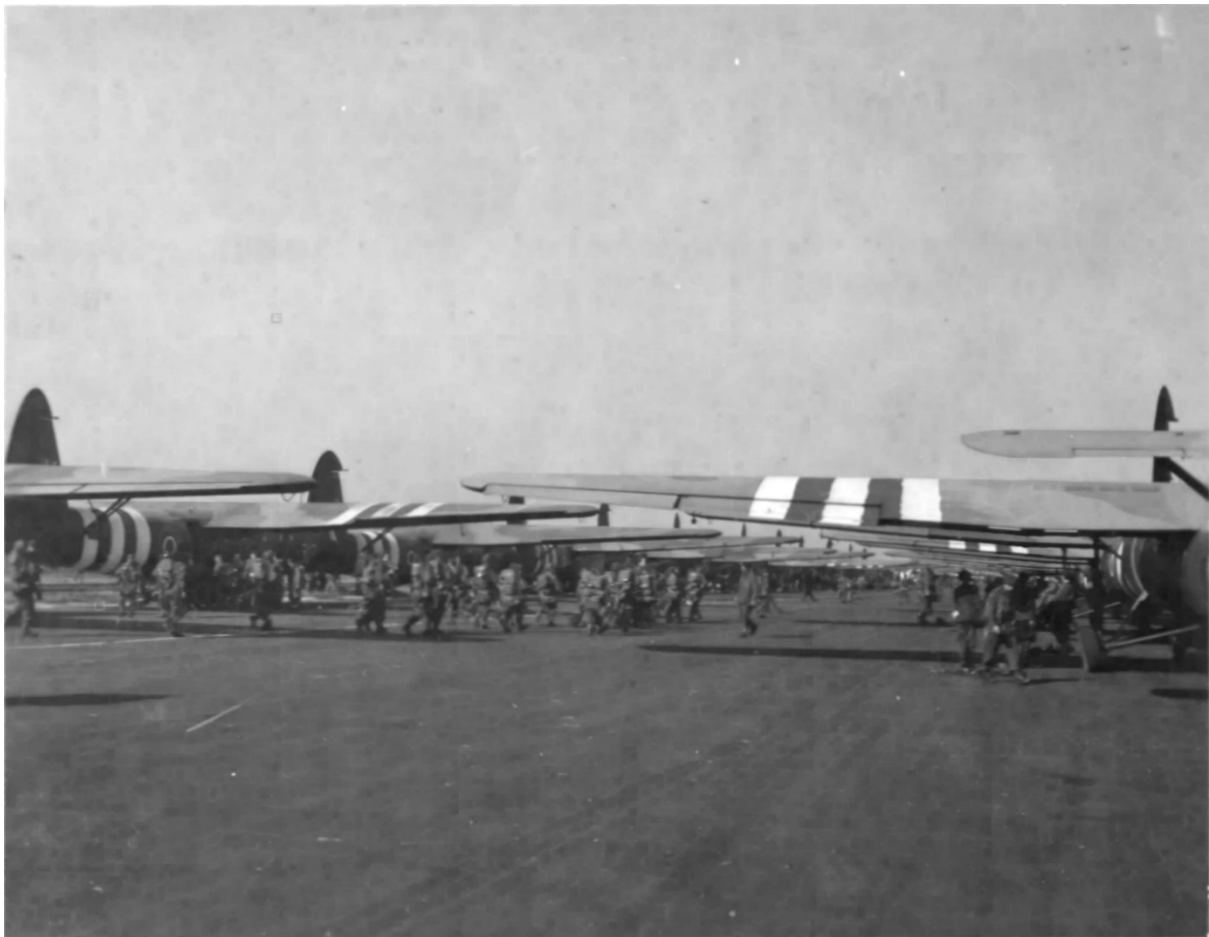


Figure 7 - Troops preparing to board British Horsa type gliders at Manston Air Base, England. Believed to be before or during Operation Market Garden.

7th November 1945: Group Captain Hugh Joseph Wilson, CBE, AFC, Royal Air Force, Commandant of the Empire Test Pilots' School, Cranfield, set the first world speed record with a jet-propelled airplane, and the first speed record by an airplane in excess of 600 miles per hour (965.6 kilometres per hour), when he flew the Gloster Meteor F.4 (Mk.IV) EE454 'Brittania' to 975.68 kilometres per hour (606.36 miles per hour) at an altitude of 250 feet (76.2 meters) over a course from the Herne Bay Pier to Reculver Point, along the south coast of the Thames Estuary. He took off and landed back at Manston.

22nd September 1950: First non-stop flight across the Atlantic Ocean took place from Manston to New York. One of the two aircraft's pilots had to bale out after having refuelling rig damage, but the other landed at the USAF base at Limestone.

7th July 1981: The first solar-powered airplane, The Solar Challenger piloted by Steve Patek succeeded in crossing the English Channel, landing at Manston.

Far more detailed posts and history are available on the "History of Manston Airfield" Facebook page, and website (<http://www.manstonhistory.org.uk>)