

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Manston Airport](#)
Subject: Noise Contours
Date: 28 June 2019 08:44:22

Dear sir/madam,

My understanding of the DCO process is that it is supposed to be a transparent process, which ensures that all of the information required to make a decision on the application is made public so that anyone who wishes to comment and object has an opportunity to do so. This application doesn't seem to have met this objective. RSP does not seem to have answered many of the questions posed.

I would like to raise a query about the noise contours which have been produced. Noise is one of the prime concerns for people who live in the vicinity of the airport. If you consider the case of the third runway at Heathrow you could argue that the potential for more noise has been the single most important factor in preventing this project from going ahead. There is no reason to suppose that noise would be any less important in a relatively tranquil seaside resort like Ramsgate.

Noise contours are important to local people because they provide an easy-to-understand graphic showing who is likely to be affected by noise. For this reason it was disappointing that RSP were unable to present noise contours during the consultations about their proposed development. It seems entirely possible that some people may have been duped into supporting plans to reopen the airport because they were unaware of the potential levels of noise. From the submissions you have received you will see that it is not uncommon for pro-airport campaigners to claim that noise would not be a problem, or to claim that modern aircraft are not noisy. When you consider the situation around most airports in the world, these claims fly in the face of reality. Given the scale of the disinformation campaign, and the numbers of people who are still in denial about the noise impact of an airport, it is clearly essential for local people to have been given clear and unambiguous information about the potential noise impacts and who is likely to be affected. The DCO process has not succeeded in providing this clarity.

It took me some considerable time to locate the noise contours which had been submitted by RSP in their application. Given the importance of these graphics to local people you have to wonder why they were buried away and made so difficult to find. I found it particularly difficult to understand why they would have been given so little prominence when they showed that hardly anybody would be affected by significant levels of noise. However, the motivation for not publicising the noise contours became a lot clearer when a local residents' group commissioned their own noise contours for the proposal. In stark contrast to RSP's version, these showed that large numbers of people are likely to be affected by significant noise levels.

We are left with a difficulty. Local residents have been told two contradictory things. RSP has, effectively, told them that relatively few people will be affected by any significant level of noise. The CAA has told them that relatively large numbers of people are likely to be affected. These two things cannot both be true and the DCO process has not established which of these two things is true. So how are people supposed to know what noise impact this development could have on them? How are they supposed to know whether they should or should not object to the proposed compensation arrangements when they have not been given clear, unambiguous information about the noise impacts? Given the importance of noise to this application, this situation is, clearly unacceptable.

There is a second difficulty. The accuracy of RSP's noise contours has been called into question by the publication of these alternative noise contours. If RSP has presented inaccurate data to the examination, how do you/we know that the other data they have presented is accurate? The DCO process seems to rely on the examining authority asking questions to establish that what they have been told is true. But, in the case of the noise contours, it has been necessary for local residents to use their own money to pay for their own noise contours in order to show that the information provided to the examination is flawed. Are you expecting residents to commission their own Environmental Impact Assessment to determine whether the data provided by RSP is accurate? Isn't this your job?

The examination closes on the 9th July. I would suggest that, before it closes, a clear and unambiguous picture of the likely noise impacts of this proposal is made public. As it stands, I imagine there are many people living in the flight paths who have been conned into believing that they will not be affected by noise. As somebody who lived in the runway approach whilst the airport was operational I can confirm that noise was a major issue and that the noise levels experienced in the centre of Ramsgate were very high; often well over 90dB(A). This is confirmed by official records of the noise-monitoring which took place between 2000 and 2014. Those records are included in the minutes of the Manston Airport Consultative Committee to which I referred you in earlier correspondence. As a reminder I advised you that all of those minutes should be included in the evidence you considered during this examination. I trust that this was done. The Manston Airport Consultative Committee was the body which monitored and oversaw noise complaints when the airport was, previously, open and it would make little sense not to have considered the actual data on noise levels which was collected at that time. It would certainly be of use in deciding whether the picture presented to the examination by RSP has been an accurate one.

Kind Regards,

Mr. Peter Binding