

Dear Sir

**Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

**Application by RiverOak Strategic Partners Limited (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the reopening and development of Manston Airport in Kent.**

**REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

**My reference: 20013063**

**Lack of Consultation with Residents**

There was a responsibility of behalf of RSP to consult with the local residents. They deliberately applied the minimum of communication and avoided holding meetings in Ramsgate (the area most affected) altogether.

As a result, very few people in Ramsgate realise that they live under the threat of the destruction of their town and quality of life.

As it is five years' since the former airfield was closed, following successive failures, most local people are totally unaware of this threat. Most of my neighbours think it is the height of folly to even give thought to the matter.

Should the DCO be approved, which will lead to local residents discovering that their lives will be impacted with pollution and noise, the reaction will be huge.

RSP only went through the motions of consultation, deliberately keeping the truth from people, and if the DCO is approved, this will all come to light. The air field is so close to the town of Ramsgate, with 40,000 residents, and will lead to it's destruction. Once the local

population learn the truth of what has been hidden from them, they will create significant opposition.

How can you think you can sacrifice the whole town of Ramsgate without there being a confrontation?

### **Industrialisation of Thanet**

A report commissioned by TDC concludes a cargo hub would need to incorporate a major industry, eg car industry, with immediate despatch of products such as in the Midlands. This would completely change the land-scape and nature of the whole of Thanet and cause wide-spread opposition.

### **Geography**

Whatever resources may be ploughed into starting an airport at Manston, and whatever advantages it is provided with, it does not detract from the fact that the site is located in the wrong part of the country to be a success.

It does not have a central location, it is surrounded by sea, and so most unsuitable to be a successful central hub. The evidence is that it has failed previously on so many occasions, always under the guidance of Tony Freudmann.

The increase of road traffic which would be needed to carry the freight would cause huge congestion. It would be necessary to spend millions of pounds in providing better roads, and this provision would cause additional pollution in this area.

### **Money**

Where is the money coming from? None of us know! At the DCO examination, RSP was repeatedly asked to provide information on this, but RSP has refused to answer the questions posed by PINS. We know the company has been registered in Belize, but we do not know the people behind it. It could be a vehicle for money laundering, and when this was posed during the DCO examination, we were informed that it is not the business of PINS to know from where the money derives. As it is impossible to open a bank account in the UK without various checks on one's financial position, it seems crazy that a foreign company can gain

control of a site of “national significance” with no knowledge of the financial implications. We have a history of this sort of situation in Thanet, such as the Pleasurama site on Ramsgate sea-front, and it has never ended well. This is obviously the next scandal in the making, which will be to the embarrassment of the politician holding the responsibility

### **Listed Buildings & Heritage Zone**

Ramsgate has a large conservation area and has more listed buildings than any other town in south east England. It also has the only Royal Harbour. In recognition of this, Historic England has designated it as a Heritage Action Zone.

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his change in status for Ramsgate is recent, and has occurred since the DCO Examination period.

Listed buildings are very difficult to sound insulate due to the various regulations on them. What is possible is very costly. As RSP are providing very little in the way of noise mitigation compensation, most owners will find it impossible. Listed buildings, by virtue of their construction, are also very vulnerable to vibration damage, which does result from planes flying over so low.

The Heritage Action Zone in Ramsgate aims to achieve economic growth by using the historic environment as a catalyst. The aim is to help grow Ramsgate into a prosperous maritime town, where outstanding heritage and architecture, coupled with new investment and development, strengthens the economy for the benefit of the local community. The harbour in Ramsgate is a fantastic asset and has the potential to be an even bigger tourist attraction, which will increase the prosperity of the area.

### **Pollution**

Ramsgate and surrounding area is a highly populated area. Scientific studies have demonstrated the effects of airplanes on health, and a central cargo hub would not only pollute nearby Ramsgate of 40,000 residents, but other swathes of Thanet due to the wind direction.

### **Sandwich & Pegwell Bay Nature Reserve**

Sandwich & Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve is Kent Wildlife Trust's largest reserve, and of international importance for its bird populations. Creating a central cargo hub would destroy this site, and would greatly impact on the bird population, which cannot be replaced.

## **Conclusion**

The idea of creating a new central cargo hub at Manston is crazy. This is a deprived area, with high unemployment. Cargo operations rely on automation, and a cargo hub will not serve to create employment. There is a history of failure on this site with regards to aviation, generally accepted to be due to its physical location. Do we really want to waste more taxpayers' money on this site? Kent County Council has already reported that over the years, £100 million has been spent on the site, much of which has been public money, but it has all ended in failure. I would hope that this change of use to create a new central cargo hub will be rejected, so that the brownfield site can be used in a more imaginative and useful way. Just plugging away at old ideas, which have never worked, is the epitome of madness.

Diane Loveday

