



30th January 2020

Ref: Manston DCO

Dear Secretary of State,

I welcome the fact that the SoS has considered the valid points raised by Five10Twelve Ltd in their submissions. Rather than repeat those points I think it is worth drawing out some of those points and how they may cause reputational damage to the Department and to the DCO element of the planning process. These being;

- The 1.9% of national emissions attributed to aviation that RSP claim they will need will, of course have to be balanced by denying that amount at other UK airports. This is a high-risk strategy as Riveroak Strategic Partnership Ltd (RSP) have no background in aviation operation and have not been able to name future customers.
- There is a reputational risk for the DCO process itself. It cannot have been the intention of the Planning Act 2008 that a start-up company with no experience in the field, and no proof of funds, can use the DCO process to compulsory purchase the land of others for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.
- There is a high likelihood that the level of operational activity will fall below the levels claimed by RSP in their application. The work of the consultant from Azimuth Aviation was roundly discredited at the hearing by consultants employed by the then owners, Stone Hill Park. Respected aviation consultancies such as York Aviation, Altitude Aviation, Falcon Consultants and Avia Solutions have all concluded that a new airport at Manston will not be viable. If therefore, the future levels of demand at Manston fall below the required level to qualify as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project questions will be asked as to how such a scheme was included for consideration. This lack of testing the viability of a scheme within the process will possibly attract criticism and may be used to delay or obstruct future projects using the DCO process.

- The Airports Commission Report 2015 was well researched and impartially assessed and, as such, still represents the best available advice on airport capacity to Government. That report identified three options for developing capacity in the South East. These of course, are based at Heathrow and Gatwick. Manston was not considered as being able to offer that increase in capacity. It would be unfortunate if approval of the DCO were considered as ignoring the advice from the Airport Commission and ultimately undermining the case for any of those identified options.

Finally, in support of my previously stated views that it is in keeping with the purpose of the Localism Act 2011 that any decision relating to Manston airport should remain with the local planning authority. This is supported in a Govt. policy paper, From Beyond the Horizon: The future of UK Aviation, which states;

1.10 Further, local authorities have a duty to consult before granting any permission, approval, or consent. This ensures that local stakeholders are given appropriate opportunity to input into potential changes which affect their local environment and have their say on airport applications.

As I am sure you are aware the Manston application by RSP is unusual when compared to all the other projects that PINS have considered. All other cases were for new infrastructure whereas Manston represents a facility that has failed repeatedly under different owners. It would be a brave decision by a SoS to award a DCO for such a locally divisive scheme especially as by overriding the local authority the SoS and, by extension, the Department would be regarded as having 'ownership' of the approval and can be expected to have to deal with all future issues.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Heverin CMILT