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2nd July 2021

Dear Ms Kopala,

Please find below my comments on your recent letter regarding the Planning Act 2008 and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

Re-determination of the Application by RiverOak Strategic Partners Limited for an Order granting Development Consent for the reopening and development of Manston airport in Kent

In response to the STATEMENT OF MATTERS, Item 2.

Bullet point 1 - level of need

There is no level of need for the services that the Development would provide, nor would there be any benefits. There is spare capacity at other airports which are geographically better placed to serve the whole country.

Bullet point 2 – changes to level of need since July 2019

The ‘need’ for the Development has been affected by changes since 9 July 2019. While there was already no need for the Development as there was spare capacity at several airports, there is now overwhelmingly no need as well-established airports have struggled for business since the pandemic started - all have spare capacity; Luton, East Midlands and Gatwick to name but three. It would be bizarre if those established airports with their already fully functioning facilities and infrastructure willingly gave up business to a smaller, untested start-up which is geographically poorly placed to serve the whole country. They will each be competing for work.

Bullet point 3 - regarding the sixth carbon budget

“The natural world you live in is dying. We’ve lost nearly 38 million birds in the last 50 years, and life as you know it could disappear within the decade. Nature’s closing down.”

RSPB 1.7.21

What has changed?

We had a pandemic! Negligible numbers of aeroplanes roaming the skies and very few vehicles traversing our roads encouraged many animals to visit towns and cities into which they had previously never ventured. Videos circulated world-wide showing Kashmiri goats in Llandudno, penguins in Cape Town, coyotes in San Francisco, ducks in Paris and kangaroos in Adelaide. Nature returned to urban streets – a clear indication that if the combustion engine is missing from our planet for only a few short months, nature will return. Our children are urging us, spurred on by Greta Thunberg and David Attenborough, to do more to save our planet. What has changed since the original submission? This is what has happened; animals have shown us how much humans’ enthusiasm for the combustion engine has damaged their environment. Aeroplanes are particularly damaging to the environment, sprinkling exhaust particulates, as they do, over a wide area.

Bullet point 4 - any other matters...

What hasn't changed?

All the things that were said before in many original submissions; Thanet is just too far away from the places RSP claim they will supply, to make a cargo hub profitable, the A2/M2/M25 intersection is a congested nightmare with too many vehicles already. The jobs promised will be a tiny fraction of those claimed. The man who is pushing this development has already tried to run an airport on the same site and failed; he also has a history of similar failures in other countries.

The seals and other wildlife are still in the nature reserve in Sandwich. The historic buildings in Ramsgate are still listed and cannot be sound-proofed. Local schools will still be affected adversely by continual overhead noise disturbing lessons and by particulates falling on the children in break-times.

There is no reliable evidence that the finances are in place. If they are, why are the backers so shy?

There were many months of detailed investigation by four government planning inspectors to produce a thorough report, the decision on which was overturned summarily for no apparent reason. Please think again.

Jill Saunder-Airs

Ramsgate resident