

6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

For the attention of the Manston Airport Case Team:

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

I am not in favour of this protracted political project; the following items having changed since being turned down by the inspectorate and overturned by the SOS for transport:

1. Brexit

*RSP argue that another airfield is needed to ship goods from further afield than western Europe and because of this lack of capacity, goods are trucked across the channel.*

I would argue that utilising Manston would only cause more lorry traffic in Kent and further afield. Using more central airports that are increasing their capacity would require less road traffic and pollution.

2. Covid

*RSP argue that using passenger aircraft to transport good is unsustainable and Covid has proven this.*

I would argue this may have been true but the government is keen to get passenger flights for holidays back to normal as soon as possible, and belly hold cargo is the most economical, both financially and environmentally.

Both these arguments put forward by RSP assume lack of capacity in existing airports, however all the main airports are intending to expand to fill this capacity. RSP will be in competition with them and since Manston is in the extreme corner of the country this will not be viable, unless the government intends to interfere with the free market and put tariffs on goods traveling through England's other airports.

3. Climate change

RSP and Roger Gale have insisted that Manston will be carbon neutral, but of course this does not include the aircraft. (A slight misconception to imply that the airport is carbon neutral).

The climate change conference COP26 is taking place later this year, however the Climate Change Committee Chairman Lord Deben has said '*That to open a new cargo hub at this time would seem to be madness*'. The rest of the world will see that our COP26 aspirations are just pontificating and that we have no intention of meeting them.

Finally, to recap the past:

In 1993 the Department of trade found Manston to unsuitable for development as a major airport due to its proximity to the town of Ramsgate.

In 2019 the Planning Inspectorate concluded that on balance the proposal was not justified and would not outweigh its impact, however Sir Roger Gale MP stated that Ramsgate was worth sacrificing for the airport.

Also, Sir Roger Gale assured me during the DCO process that we would all have to abide by the inspectorate's decision. However, when the inspectorate's findings were not to his liking, he said *'it was the SOS duty to overturn the inspectorate's decision'*.

This when he was president of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Aviation of which Grant Shapps MP was chairman prior to becoming SOS for transport.

Hugh Langston

