

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Manston Airport](#)
Subject: Manston
Date: 12 November 2021 12:38:09

Dear Sir,

I am writing, once again, to object to the granting of a DCO on the former Manston Airport site.

My stance on this woeful process has not changed at all; nor, materially, have the circumstances around this ridiculous proposal, and I confess that I find myself, once again, at a loss as to why we are obliged to make yet further submissions to you. What is your desired outcome? That, this time, against all the evidence, somebody will present you with a cast-iron reason to support reintroduction of aviation at Manston that isn't going to leave you with a situation at least as damaging as the Grayling ferry debacle down the road at the Port of Ramsgate?

The ExA spent almost two years receiving and weighing evidence from all interested parties as well as carrying out its own investigations which, unsurprisingly, found that the case for the site of the former Manston Airport as a NSIP requiring a DCO had not been made. Instead of accepting this, you decide to overturn the findings of your own government experts, insisting that a DCO SHOULD be granted. You then select your own independent body of experts, Ove Arup, to ponder upon exactly the same questions as the ExA. Equally unsurprisingly, they have arrived at the conclusion that a cargo-hub at Manston is neither wanted nor needed. This is against the background that fourteen previous investigations have come to the same conclusion – bar one, that commissioned by RSP themselves which has been subsequently completely discredited. (See below). How much more time and money is to be spent to get the same answer?

Throughout the lengthy examination by the ExA as to whether or not a DCO should be recommended, there were many occasions when it was felt that the process would inevitably be halted due to the clearly flawed application (and that is about the kindest construction which can be placed on it), by RSP, who have the declared intention to open a 24/7 cargo hub which would render Ramsgate and surrounding areas virtually uninhabitable.

In some ways the opportunities implicit in this application are quite beguiling. Apparently, anybody can invoke a DCO based on the flimsiest evidence of NSIP status. You don't have to have any money to speak of; you don't need a credible business plan; you can base your application almost solely on a report by an individual with no aviation experience whatsoever (whose only longer document – probably, was their PhD dissertation); moreover, you can ignore the comprehensive reports of acknowledged industry experts who find your theories ill-founded and totally at variance with evidence from the real world of cargo movement; you can have a history of total failure in your various aviation projects to date, all leading to eye-watering financial losses for all concerned (except you). During the examination process you can evade and avoid pertinent questions, or indeed, state you're not going to answer them at all; you can ignore all deadlines set by the examining authority without having your proposal dismissed out of hand as a result; you're permitted to submit erroneous data which a cursory google search would disprove, despite all of which you can still expect your application to receive due consideration. Worse still, when the 'Emperor's Clothes' have been resoundingly and decisively proved non-existent, you persist that the proposal is viable.

While the numerous subjects for discussion have been spotlighted over the months (night flights, noise contours, QCs, particulate contamination, public safety zones, traffic management, HRDF, employment projections, etc, etc, etc), all of which have been explored in considerable detail, it seems evident that the foundation upon which the DCO was built, that the site is a NSIP, has most definitely not been proved. On the contrary, many airports in this country, all of whom have access to far better infrastructure than do we in the Isle of Thanet, have plenty of capacity for more cargo haulage opportunities, which is not being taken up. This is quite apart from the trend to fly cargo, belly-hold, in passenger aircraft because it's cheaper. Despite many SMA supporters wistfully anticipating flights to holiday destinations from their own local airport, they will not be doing so in cargo aircraft. Passenger flights, according to RSP, are dependant on the success of the freight operation and somewhat in the unspecified future.

There are many who see this as no more than an elaborate 'land grab', and that RSP have no real intention building an airport but, instead, to play at it for a year or two, decide that, as expected, it wasn't possible, then undertake a building project to their own specification, enabling them to anticipate a massive financial return from the process. Nobody can know this for sure of course but it might be noteworthy that Riveroak is a property company with no history of involvement with the aviation industry. What could their interest be in a former airport? SHP offered a 125 year lease to RSP conditional on the site remaining an aviation hub. Very reasonable I'd have thought but rejected by RSP. Quite why must be a matter for speculation. I understand that a further offer was made by SHP to sell the site for a suggested price, the only proviso being that if RSP failed to 'make a go' of the site as an airport within a certain period of time, they must sell the site back to SHP for the purchase price. Again, rejected by RSP. Some might reasonably think that SHP have gone to some effort to test RSP's stated will regarding the setting up of a cargo-hub; being so tested, have they not been found wanting?

Yours faithfully,

Christopher Warner
(Ramsgate resident)