

29th November 2021

For the attention of the Manston Airport Case Team

Re: Determination of the Application by RiverOak Strategic Partners Ltd for an Order granting Development Consent for the reopening and development of Manston Airport in Kent.

This is in response to the Statement of Matters:

Changes since latest consultation 21st October 2021

I am against the proposal for the following reasons:

1.Climate Emergency

SINCE 21ST OCTOBER 2021 THERE HAS BEEN COP26 IN GLASGOW. THIS WAS A MAJOR GLOBAL EVENT TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY THROUGH DEBATE AND PLEDGES. IF THE UK GOVERNMENT IS SERIOUS ABOUT ITS COMMITMENT TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY IT MUST DEMONSTRATE PUBLICLY THAT THEIR WORDS USED AT THE GLASGOW CONFERENCE ARE REAL AND NOT GREEN WASHING. COASTAL TOWNS LIKE RAMSGATE ARE ALREADY UNDER THREAT FROM RISING SEA LEVELS. I WANT TO SEE THE UK GOVERNMENT SERIOUSLY PROTECTING OUR TOWN FROM THE MANSTON AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT AS A FREIGHT HUB AND SAY “NO” TO IT.

Building a freight hub at Manston goes completely against the government’s targets of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 78% by 2035* and to net zero by 2050*). This is now enshrined in law (June 2019). Flying goods is very damaging to the environment. Gradually shipping and rail will be favoured because of having less impact on the environment. Also because of the geography of the airport emissions would increase as well because of the increase in use of HGVs. A climate emergency in the Thanet area was declared by our own Thanet District Council on the 11th July 2019 [REDACTED]. By 2030 they pledged that Thanet would become carbon neutral. The development of this freight hub hardly fits in with this vision and determination.

[REDACTED]

2.Housing

Because a large amount of housing stock is desperately needed (as in a lot of areas in the UK) precious farmland around the Manston area is being built on. These decisions being made are irreversible in a lot of cases and the land will be lost forever. This has been going on since June 2020 and includes several fields in Cliffsend and Monkton. There is also a

proposed 1,600 housing stock being considered to be built in Birchington. This is being strongly opposed by local residents. These proposals would not be such a problem if the Manston airport brownfield site could be used for mixed usage including a large part of it for housing. This I believe is so crucial, as do many other people, in terms of the preservation of our valuable green fields. This in turn would dramatically cut greenhouse emissions because this would contribute to us becoming more self sufficient by not having to import so many crops from abroad. Sir Roger Gale MP for North Thanet, who supports the development of the freight hub, has voiced his concerns over the building of housing on green field sites.

3. Changes to the Airline Industry

Since 2020 the whole world has gone through a Covid 19 Pandemic and is still going through it. Consequently there have been major changes to the airline industry which are ongoing. The changes have meant massive redundancies in the industry and permanent and temporary decimation. Using air travel for business and leisure has been banned or severely restricted. There is now at airports such as Gatwick, Heathrow, East Midlands and Stansted extra capacity and they could easily manage extra freight movements now and in the near future. As Manston airport would not be up and running until at least 2023 these other airports could adequately cover the need. Also not to forget that the infrastructure is already in place at these other airports unlike Manston. Geographically they are also better situated in terms of the rest of the country unlike Manston which is in a tiny pocket of south east Kent.

I would like to conclude by asking the question: Why if this has already undergone a massive scrutiny by the Planning Inspectorate and been rejected by them still being pursued as a viable proposition by the Secretary of State for Transport who has ignored and overturned the findings by the experts? He also has not given a good enough reason for his decision. Also I am very worried by the political interference in the decision of the planning executive and the attempts to discredit OVC Arup's latest detailed report which clearly states the airport is not required.

Please for the future of humanity and the planet do the right thing and reject this application for good. I am sure much more value can be created if the site can be used and developed for the good of the country in terms of creating green jobs, sustainable housing, rewilding and other visionary projects in order to contribute to the pledge that Thanet Council made to be carbon neutral by 2030. This is so important.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Hawting 