

From:
To:
Cc:
Date:

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Susan Kennedy

Dear Prime Minister

I truly hope that the intention for a reconvening of COP next year with more ambitious targets and commitments becomes a hard reality.

I was heartened to hear you say last week that current global targets around sustainable aviation were 'pathetic' and that the world can and should do much more. I agree. The world is on course for the most catastrophic warming that will destroy so much of our way of living as well as our planet and ours and nature's environments. Aviation is a chief culprit. Whilst I don't think that 'guilt-free' aviation is necessarily possible, we need to move towards a world in which we seriously reduce both the amount of flying and the impact of aviation. Disappointing then to see you jet back from Glasgow to London rather than showing sensible leadership and taking the train.

My main point in writing is to urge your government to think quickly and sensibly about curbing airport expansion. This is difficult, of course. One easy win though is with regard to the defunct airport at Manston in Kent. Currently subject of a DCO application by a private company, Riveroak Strategic Partners, Manston has been the subject of controversy for years since its closure in 2014.

The appointed Examining Authority concluded in 2019 that there was no need for a cargo hub airport on this site and that, were it to go ahead, it would be devastating for local residents. The ExA recommended to the Secretary of State that the application be declined. Despite this expert recommendation, the SoS' decision was to agree it. A swift judicial review launched by a Ramsgate resident and supported to the tune of over £100k by so many of us, resulted in this decision being overturned.

The SoS then launched a further consultation saying that there may have been material changes since 2019 which might, might, provide reason for need (having had to concede that he had had no good reason to approve the DCO). We are thus engaged in yet further consultation and submissions. The SoS commissioned an Independent Assessor who has since reported, 21st October 2021, that they agree with the ExA findings that there was no need for this proposal. The IA also finds, having examined all the evidence, that the intervening 2 years have not provided any other reason, compelling or otherwise,

that supports the need case.

Many of us have been concerned by the Sunday Times article on 14th November 2021, which considers the extent to which your Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, is compromised in his role and his decision-making by his own personal enthusiasm for all things aviation.

Manston is not needed as an airport. There is plenty of existing capacity at functioning and successful airports in the UK. This is an easy win for you and your government. Deny this application. The UK doesn't need new airports. It needs to find ways of making existing ones more sustainable, more carbon neutral and we need to see strong leadership over this.

The decision lies with the DfT but I hope that your message from COP26 is one that is infiltrating ALL departments of government. The world cannot afford to not act or to not act quickly and radically enough. Ramsgate and Thanet is a tiny tiptoe in the right direction but let's at least see this done.

Kind regards

Susan Kennedy

Founding Member of No NIght Flights and Ramsgate Resident