

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Manston Airport](#)
Subject: Manston Airport Consultation - The need for the Airport.
Date: 03 December 2021 14:17:28

For the Attention of the Manston Airport Case Team

Dear PINS

I have written on numerous occasions previously in support of the case for Manston Airport and now wish to update my response in the light of the poor report prepared by Arup regarding the need for an Airport at Manston.

As a business owner in Thanet, one major hurdle I have faced is that I simply don't have the time to trawl through extensive reports in depth to try and make sense of whether they are correct or not in their findings. Running a business means that must come first. For my case, prior to the closure of Manston Airport, I used it regularly (indeed it was one of the main reasons I chose to relocate here as I travelled internationally very frequently). Now I find I have to travel to airports like Gatwick, Stansted and Luton and on occasion Heathrow. This has cost my business many thousands of pounds in extra travel, fares, mileage and time, not to mention hotel costs because of the need to be at an airport for an early flight.

But the main thrust of RSP's proposal relates to air freight and not passenger travel. The Arup report suggests that sea freight is a major competitor to air freight. This is nonsense for perishable goods which was what Manston did best previously. While Arup suggests there is plenty of capacity for freight, evidence like the following suggests that in fact there IS pressure on existing cargo hubs and that they are struggling to cope. For example see

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It states inter alia "Cargo sheds across Europe and North America are struggling to keep up with this year's peak season demand, causing delays for the pick up and drop off of cargo. In Europe, handlers at major cargo hubs Frankfurt Main, London Heathrow and Amsterdam Schiphol are all feeling the strain. Air Cargo News reported at the end of last month that there was [congestion at Europe's busiest cargo hub Frankfurt](#) and the issue has yet to ease. New import rules requiring each individual house air waybill to be pre-registered and high demand are the main reasons behind the congestion at the German hub. In October cargo volumes at Frankfurt were up by more than 11% compared with pre-covid (2019) levels for the month." This seems to fly in the face of the suggestions by Arup that there is "plenty of capacity."

To me, however, the arguments as to whether or not there is a need miss the fundamental point. The Airport is privately owned and RSP's backers have backed their business case for a cargo hub. RSP are not asking for a handout or funding from government, they simply want permission to run their airport in a manner that suits their business case. Surely, whether or not there is a need will be readily demonstrated by whether they are successful or not. It is after all their money! If it doesn't work, then that is the time to evaluate what might be done with the site. In the writer's opinion, I cannot help but feel that housing developers are circling like vultures just waiting for their opportunity to build all over the site. That would be a disaster for the area as the sewerage already cannot cope and we suffer significant congestion at peak periods. The pressure on the hospitals ,

doctors and dentists would be massive too. In this deprived area we need EMPLOYMENT and potentially the airport is capable of providing that. For a depressed area that would be a major boost.

For me we need to look at the case for what a functioning airport could provide to this area.

Thanet is a deprived area and suffers from a real lack of job opportunities, particularly those that might involve STEM careers – as an airport would.

COVID especially has strongly impacted employment here with many people losing their jobs. Any potential new employer should surely be welcomed.

There is a small but very vocal minority here in Thanet that want the airport to remain closed. All are well off individual and are not in the least concerned about mundane things like employment, which is crucial to most of us. Their arguments hold little water and there are, as has been well demonstrated in the past, a minority. The vast majority of people here can see the benefits an airport can bring and are keen for it to be given a chance.

I do not have time to comment further on this, but I do appeal to PINS to think very carefully before deciding – especially if that decision is to turn down the DCO. That would be a disaster for this area in my opinion.

Professor Michael Grantham

