

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 04 August 2022 18:43

To: Karl McCartney [REDACTED]; Gareth Davies [REDACTED]

Subject: Manston Airport DCO delay.

Dear Karl McCartney MP,

Due to the extreme delay since we have last been updated by the DfT (7th April 2022 on the PINS site), regarding the Manston Airport DCO, the Save Manston Airport association are contacting you again, on behalf of our 3,800 members, many of whom are still waiting for aviation related jobs at Manston Airport, after 8 ½ years.

Please see the attached letter, from our Committee, on behalf of our members,

Regards,

Dr. Beau Webber

Chairman, Save Manston Airport association..

2022-08-04

cc. Gareth Davies CB

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Dear Sir,

We would like to draw your attention to the appalling way that RSP and their Investors have been treated in their application for a DCO at Manston Airport. This is £500 million of private investment in an area of high deprivation and high unemployment. The unacceptable delay and lack of transparency of the redetermination process risks this and future investment in the UK being lost.

It is (or should be) a huge embarrassment to the Department for Transport and reflects very badly on UK PLC.

Timescale

- The 2008 Planning Act was designed to give certainty to developers and investors by having a strict timetable.
- Following the recommendation by the Examining Authority, the appropriate Secretary of State should have 3 months to make a decision on whether to grant the DCO or not.
- In the case of the Manston DCO, the Secretary of State should have made the decision by 18th January 2020.
- The decision to grant the DCO was finally made on 9th July 2020 (9 months after the Examining Authority gave their recommendations).
- The decision was challenged, and the Secretary of State agreed in November 2020 to quash the DCO on the grounds that he had “failed to give adequate and intelligible reasons” despite taking 3 times the allotted time to reach his decision. This is inexcusable.
- The DCO was formally quashed in the High Court in February 2021.
- At the time of writing, it is now 21 months since the Secretary of State conceded in November 2020 (7 times the original allotted time) and the Secretary of State has failed to redetermine the DCO.

Not only do these unnecessary delays reduce the confidence of developers and investors in the DCO process I am sure it is costing RSP daily and almost certainly is losing business for UK PLC as goods are trucked to and from Northern Europe. With a granted DCO, Manston could begin the process of picking up that business.

Thanet District Council (TDC) Local Plan

- The Local Plan was adopted by TDC in July 2020.
- Policy SP03 committed the council to carry out a review of the plan within 6 months (January 2021).
- Policy SP07 *“Manston Airport as identified on the Policies Map is safeguarded for airport related uses. Whether or not the DCO is confirmed, the future use and development of Manston Airport and/or other policies affected by the outcome of the DCO process will be determined through the early review of the Plan”*.
- TDC have been unable to carry out the review as required by SP03 because of the inaction by the DfT.
- This has brought TDC into conflict with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities.
- There is the real risk that TDC will be put into Special Measures as a direct result of the DfT not deciding on the DCO. This is inexcusable.
- Such unintended consequences reflect very badly on the DfT.

Government Policy - the Manston DCO is fully in line with Government Policy:

- Beyond the horizon: the future of UK Aviation – Making best use of existing runways e.g. Manston already has a 2,748m runway.
- Leading Up the United Kingdom e.g. The analysis of the most deprived areas in the UK with high levels of unemployment.
- Net Zero strategy; Build Back Green review. RSP have indicated through its “Updated Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (RAC)” and a commitment to a “Climate Change Adaptation Strategy following the planning of the DCO that Manston will be a ten setter in “Building Back Green”.

Emerging Policy that Manston DCO is fully in line with emerging Government Policy:

Flightpath to the Future: a strategic framework for the aviation sector. e.g. “3 Support growth in airport capacity where it is justified, ensure that capacity is used in ways that delivers for the UK. 5. Explore the potential for new technology and its uses and 6 Unlock local benefit at level p .

- Future of Freight: A long term plan e.g. “1.7 Air freight is an excellent example of how aviation is key for the UK in supporting our global ambition”.
- Jet Zero our strategy for net zero aviation. e.g. Manston Airport will not have the legacy issues of other airports which were identified in the Jet Zero Consultation, such as ramping up power demand, and will be the template for future airport operations.
- Zero Emission Flight (ZEF) e.g. Manston is already playing its part in supporting emerging technology having signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hypoint for the development and testing of Hydrogen Fuel cells for use in helicopter and aircraft at Manston.

Research by Loughborough University for the End Child Poverty Coalition released in July 2022 show that 1/3 of all children (over 9,000) in Thanet are living in poverty.

Thanet desperately needs the £100 million investment at Manston to provide the jobs, stimulate growth within the area and to help alleviate the deprivation and sense of helplessness within the community.

For all the reasons outlined above, we urge the Secretary of State to urgently issue the decision letter (but with adequate and intelligible reasons) to prove that this government is serious about the intention to level up the whole of the UK.

From the SMAA Committee on behalf of the 3,800 members

Dr Beau Webster (Chairman)

Liam Coyne (Vice Chairman & Chief Moderator)

David Stevens (Vice-Chairman)

Margaret Sole (Treasurer)

Gregory Nocentini (Treasurer)

Angela Stevens (Secretary)

Ex officio members:

Bryan Girdler

Gary Dumigan

