

AM Bates

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3rd September 2023

Dear Sir or Madam

Re TR020002: Manston Airport Updates email Fri 1st September 2023

Application by RiverOak Strategic Partners Limited (“the Applicant”) seeking a change to The Manston Airport Development Consent Order 2022 Order (“the Application”).

I fully support RiverOak Strategic Partner’s (RSP) application to vary the Manston Development Consent Order (DCO).

Nearly the entire Manston Airport site including that being used by the Home Office for migrant processing sits within Minster. There seems to be a number of individuals from elsewhere who appear to have their own agendas for this whole project to fail or be pushed to one side. This is the greatest opportunity for Thanet to pull itself away from being such a deprived area with little hope for jobs to becoming a more successful one in the years to come. The amount of private investment to complete it is enormous.

The 2 non-material changes proposed by RSP are logical. As RSP own the airport they don’t now need to lay aside as much money and therefore means that they need a minor change to the DCO to reflect this.

RSP are in fact correcting only minor administrative details brought about by their purchase of the airport on the last day of the original Examination. It was an oversight at the closing stages of the DCO Examination, so is simply a tidying up of those loose ends in a proper and sensible manner and will have little or no impact on anything in real and practical terms. This is contrary to what some within Thanet District Council, and Anti-Manston groups are suggesting by way of other current submissions that try and raise matters totally irrelevant to this process.

The first change includes compensation to Stone Hill Park, where RSP has applied to amend the security figure from £13.1 million to £6.2 million at Article 9(1)(a) of the DCO. This was based on SHP being the owners and what they could have been compensated for. However, RSP bought the airport from SHP on the last day of the original Examination, so the original sum to be set aside for that compensation aspect is far too large and the requested change is now based on that fact: hence the reduction.

The second non-material change proposed by RSP is because they feel the wording of Article 21 (3) is ambiguous. It could be interpreted that RSP would have to exercise its powers of compulsory acquisition immediately after the end of any legal challenge, rather than within one year. This non-material change is designed to give clarification to avoid this potential problem.

The Secretary of State for Transport made it clear in his decision letter that the DCO proposals for Manston are consistent with all relevant Government policies, including not only the Airports National Policy Statement but also the Aviation Policy Framework, General Aviation strategy and Transport Decarbonisation Plan, as well as recognising the contribution Manston will make to resilience in UK's under-pressure freight transport sector – something the Government is also focused upon, given the challenging global and domestic economic climate.

As an airport with more than 100 years of operational history, the use of Manston is also consistent with the Government's 'Making Best Use' policy. It can also make a significant contribution to the decarbonisation of aviation and is aligned with the Government's 2022 Jet Zero consultation policy proposals.

Balancing of any small amount of CO2 produced at Manston is a matter for the Government to factor into their Net Zero calculations, not a local authority such as Thanet District Council. The UK Government is responsible for the reduction of emissions from airports, ports and military transport. For example, the Government's approach for achieving net zero aviation by 2050 is set out in their Jet Zero Strategy.

Therefore I believe the 2 non-material changes are logical and would therefore ask that the Secretary of State for Transport grants the Applicant, RSP, permission to make them.

Yours sincerely,

AM Bates