


From: 
To: [Manston Airport](#)
Subject: Bring back Manston as an Airport
Date: 23 January 2019 10:56:08

My reference: 20011959

Dear Sir

I am delighted to respond to the request for thoughts as to why Manston should be returned to an airport, thank you for the opportunity.

I was born and brought up in Broadstairs and have, apart from a few years away when I was working, lived in the town all my life. As a child, the airport was quite central to a lot of my 'growing up experiences' – particularly with regard to the part that it had played in WWII and the fact it remained an RAF base for so many years after. This in turn, provided employment to local people in a civilian capacity as well as to RAF staff both in support roles as well as at the fire/rescue training school, Air Traffic Control, maintenance etc. Manston was also home, for several years to the Air Sea Rescue helicopters and was responsible for covering a wide coastal area. It was often called to missions along the North Kent Coast and along the South coast as well. The team were often seen practising rescue scenarios at the cliff tops which can be quite treacherous. In turn the RAF museum, more recently and the Spitfire museum, which has been there for decades and still pulls in many visitors to the area each year. At one point I know that there were air shows also held at Manston, which were extremely popular, and which again pulled in many visitors and locals alike. There was also the annual air display by the Red Arrows, who were the highlight on Water Gala days, over Broadstairs in August.

There have, of course, been civilian air flights from Manston over the years, providing flights to European holiday destinations, which continued even right up to the closure of the airport. KLM, as I understand it were doing very well and keen to expand their flight routes until Ms Gloag took over the show which decimated what was turning into a lucrative business with strong local and regional support and which provided many jobs, which have, for now, all been lost. Luckily, there are, just about, local helicopter (Polar Helicopters and Helicharter) businesses operating in the area, which also provide jobs for local people as well as an excellent service to business men and women.

Other uses of the airport have included its use as a freight/cargo hub bringing flowers from Holland and importing many other things from the US and around the world, again this would enhance the area and can only be yet another reason for the reopening of Manston as an airfield to be seriously re-considered.

Another important and much needed aviation service that has have been provided over the decades too, including not only the Air Sea Rescue helicopter teams, as mentioned before, but Manston was also a place for emergency landings either through sudden faults with the planes, illness of passenger necessitating emergency landing or inclement weather such as fog which in turn necessitated the use of the long (one of the longest runways in the UK) runway for landing. With the recent emergency at London Gatwick with regard to the illegal use of Drones flying too close to the airport, if Manston had still been open it could well have provided emergency landing and further support rather than redirecting/diverting planes to far flung airports in Europe or across the North of England.

The recent debacle of attempting to use Manston as a lorry park, in case of Operation Stack or as most recently attempted for a problem in the case of a No Deal BREXIT result, was a ridiculous thought even before the exercise was attempted. Manston is and should remain an AIRPORT and NOT a car/lorry park.

As to the 'nay-sayers' who endlessly discuss night flights and noise, Manston is an

airport. Many people bought property when the airport was fully functional, the activity and limited noise is all part and parcel of an airport. Surely rescuing the economy and providing jobs for East Kent is more important? Manston, once up and running again will never have flights coming and going every 2 -3 minutes as is the case at London Heathrow??? In fact, having an air service return to Manston, would lighten the load of London Heathrow and negate the need for a further to runway to be built, at great expense, there.

It would appear that RiverOak are a serious contender for running Manston as viable airport, providing jobs at all levels to people whether local or who move into the area. East Kent, has been, for many years, an area of high unemployment which has not been helped by the reduction in Staff numbers (both highly qualified and trained) at nearby Pfizer as well as other closures, this area desperately needs Manston to be re-instated as an airport NOT as a lorry park or a housing estate. If houses were to be built on the airport, there are insufficient jobs/ infrastructure to provide jobs, schooling, hospitals (which are currently being examined with a view to reducing the services that they offer, including A&E) ,and the ability to move about with ease to justify this move. It would also remove some of the much needed /required green belt area. The recent road infrastructure expansion (over the last 10-15 years) has been an excellent plan, which provided jobs whilst the roads were being built, gaining a faster and safer access routes to the motorways, London and beyond and now could really come into their own should RiverOak be granted permission to reopen Manston as a viable airport. HS1 has also been a help to the local economy with the influx of many more visitors to the area year on year, both from a tourism and jobs perspective.

I would suggest that with the High Speed train link carrying passengers to and from St Pancras in just 1 hour and 15 minutes, could in turn facilitate the flow of passengers to and from the airport should it return as such, by taking care of passport control and checking passengers in and security checks at both ends of the journey, carrying their baggage directly to / from the airport in a timely way for their flight to and from a variety of destinations. It would be wonderful if KLM were encouraged to return and reinstate their flights to Schiphol in the Netherlands, along with other airlines for flight to further away areas as well as to other UK airports.

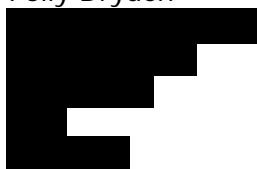
Manston could also be used as the new 'home' for the Red Arrows, who I believe are looking for a new base as well as returned to be the base for the Air Sea Rescue helicopters.

The people who have championed the return of Manston to a lucrative and proud airport which would contribute to not only the local but national economy, are to be thanked for their on-going support of the cause, including Sir Roger Gale, Beau Webber, to name but two, BUT also thanks should go to RiverOak for having vision and faith to pursue this venture. Manston is NOT a 'dead duck' and should be re-instated as soon as possible to provide jobs and a much-needed air industry and associated services to help in increasing the prosperity of East Kent.

I hope that you will consider these comments along with the many others that I know you will receive, and that Manston can once again be returned as a thriving base and hub for aircraft and associated activities.

Kind regards

Polly Dryden



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