

To: Grant Shapps

Secretary of State for Transport

I have been a resident on the Isle of Thanet for 60 years. My father was born in Broadstairs, and it was Manston Airport that first seeded an interest in aircraft and flying in him. He became a pilot flying spitfires in WW2 and his love of Manston Airport never left him and was passed onto me.

It is not just a sentimental feeling that The Isle of Thanet on mass have towards the airport but also an economic thesis. The history of Manston Airport is an interesting one and very much also part of the history of the Isle of Thanet.

We call it our airport because of its importance to the Islands prosperity and wellbeing. It was given to the RAF with covenants that its use was for the country. It was in effect our land given for the protection of us not just on the Isle of Thanet but for the South of England and further.

I have worked in education all my working life, before retiring in 2010. I worked in further education and Training providing pathways into work for many young people and unemployed adults.

One of the most important features that a successful airport can achieve are in the areas of Education and Training. This can have a deep effect on the health and wellbeing of the community. A busy successful fully operational airport brings with it the need for workers from all fields, from the most technical and skilled jobs to the wider need for workers in a myriad of professions and occupations. This then opens to more opportunities for Training and Education, developing more career prospects for the population living in Kent and further afield.

Everyone is aware that unemployment is, and will, rise exponentially due to the pandemic effects on economic decline. The government has pledged money to enable people especially the young to retrain for new employment opportunities. Work coaches employed by the DWP will be seeking employment opportunities for so many who have lost their employment. Businesses both local and national have and will continue to have major difficulties, some will disappear while others will change. New ones will evolve around different trading and operating conditions. The new normal will often also mean the need for training in many areas.

RSP has as stated in their DCO application to want to lead the way in training, including flying to airport related activities vital to the running of a busy airport. To enable a thriving air industry there is a need for training.

The Isle of Thanet is desperate for skilled employment. At present most employment is centred around retail and hospitality. These sectors have taken a big hit during the pandemic and it is not sure if it will ever return to as it was. There are plenty of smaller industrial businesses who have expertise and innovation and with expansion could retrain many into other sectors of employment. A busy and thriving airport would support this growth and could lead the way to vital services initiating employment.

Pfizer's an American company put millions into expanding their chemical plant at Richborough, Sandwich. It employed at one time over 4000 employees and was successful. Pfizer's left the vast complex to centralise their organisation in Europe. Despite Enterprise Zone Status the complex after many years is still underused. It is an ideal environment for the development of top-class training in all fields of expertise. The many biochemistry and research industries are growing, a working airport that can transport vital requirements will be even more necessary in the future.

If RSP go ahead with the planned reinvention of Manston airport then so does employment which will increase, as will the need to expand the capabilities of the college and other training organisations. This can only benefit all as there is a need for more lecturers, trainers, service staff, crafts and technicians and so on. Airports generate employment in all areas of a community.

There was always a flying school at Manston TG Aviation who has a scholarship program that is of benefit to aspiring young pilots. This could be expanded to carry on the expertise built up over many years to put more pilots in the air. As aviation expands as it must to ease the congestion on the ground, then more pilots are required.

There is potential on the Isle of Thanet to develop educational courses to adapt to the needs of the airport. Christ Church University Campus built at Westwood in 2000 to enable a University presence on the Isle of Thanet, was unfortunately closed. This is a purpose-built facility for education with ample space for training. I am hopeful this building could be again used for the benefit of our young people to learn skilled occupations that would lead to employment.

Education and training are the keystone to any business, especially if a business is to improve and expand along the lines of international requirements. The world is getting smaller and our use of the skies and how we operate as a collective body will be important.

The air travel industry is struggling at present because of the pandemic restrictions. No one knows the future direction it will be taking but smaller

satellite airports, where all restrictions and procedures could be undertaken more easily, could be the direction it will go. We may have seen the end of large package holidays as the world will not be rid of the Covid virus and its many strains. We will have to work with it. There will be a need to a re look at passenger air travel arrangements.

Employment is so important to any community. It enables prosperity to be shared to all who have a stake in their futures. With an out of balance community some sections will never prosper. People move away to further career prospects, despite their deep-felt feelings for their hometowns. Often after making their way and gaining wealth they return to start up small businesses and are successful but have little growth to benefit the young unemployed.

I would like to see an excellence build in an Educational arena such as East Kent College have achieved in Catering where the onsite training is award winning. Linking with the airport, offshoot businesses associated to the air industry. this excellence can be extended and benefit not only the Isle of Thanet but also much further afield. On the Isle of Thanet, we have a workforce, we have the institutions, that can be expanded to fulfil all training needs to a high level of excellence.

RSP have plans to develop just this and have forecasts for an increased employment base that can only benefit everyone.

Non-Technical Summary RSP.co.uk

1.1.15

In addition to helping meet air freight capacity requirements, an airport at Manston would bring significant economic benefit to the area. **Since the closure of the Pfizer plant near Sandwich in 2012 and Manston airport in 2014, east Kent has not been hosting to a significant high-tech employer. Reopening Manston is predicted to bring 4,000 direct and 30,000 indirect jobs to the local economy by 2038. To ensure the demand for skilled workers can be met locally, RSP is also working with local educational institutions to establish complementary education and training programmes.**

1.1.84 Socio-economic 1.1.84 Chapter 13 of the 2018 PEIR contains the socio-economic assessment. Thanet is the most easterly district in Kent. The economy in the area is based on the coastal towns and Canterbury. **The population has a relatively low proportion of those of working age and a relatively high proportion of elderly compared both to Kent and to England and Wales. In**

the future, there is a predicted aging of the population reflecting the aging of the 50-65s (the ‘post-war bulge’), outmigration of those of working age, and a falling birth rate.

1.1.85 In the latest statistics, Thanet remains the most deprived local authority in Kent and is in the top 10% of England’s most deprived authorities. Health statistics are also worse than average, and there is a smaller proportion of people in work. Thanet has 20% fewer managerial, administrative or professional households than the national average.

1.1.86 In relevance to the proposed development, the Thanet Economic and Employment Assessment notes that key sectors within the business base include wholesale and retail and construction. There are also over 530 businesses within the tourism sector representing 11% of the business base. Thanet’s Draft Economic Growth Strategy identifies the ‘heritage, culture and visitor economy’ as a sector with growth potential, with the ambition to “rebuild our reputation as the UK’s favourite visitor destination. The Thanet Destination Management Plan highlights investment and promotion of the three towns and the beaches in particular (“Thanet’s strongest natural assets”).

1.1.87 The primary business driver for the proposed development is new demand in the air freight market and the additional potential to supply passenger services. The employment resulting from the proposed development from direct, indirect, induced effects is estimated to lead to 9,333 jobs by 2030 and 13,241 by 2038, of which the number of direct jobs (mainly on-site) is 3,011 in 2030 and 4,271 by 2038. Catalytic jobs are associated with more general growth and are inherently difficult to estimate but could add over 12,000 additional jobs by 2030 and over 17,000 by 2038, all contributing to increases in economic gross value added (GVA) and national GDP.

1.1.88 The demand for employment can be met from the local population, through reduced outbound commuting, lower unemployment and increased participation rates. A proportion of their expenditure will enter the local economy. Local businesses are also part of an existing well developed and historic local economy which can provide services to Manston.

All communities need to have a healthy employment ratio, this I believe is another reason the Isle of Thanet has never been able to get a balanced prosperity outcome.

It cannot be minimised how the effects of worthwhile full time and part time employment, in skilled and semi-skilled work, could have on the health and wellbeing of people living on the Isle of Thanet. We have always been cited as being a deprived area with poverty and lack of skilled work. Educational training opportunities being highlighted as huge factors.

My experience of working in education and training with the unemployed to improve communication, and educational skills has shown me the importance on health, confidence and wellbeing that worthwhile well-paid work can do to an individual, their family and the wider community.

The UK has decided to leave the European Union so this is an opportunity to develop excellence in our people and our country.

I believe that Manston Airport should be fully retained as a working productive Airport where Education and Training would be of service to all UK airports and organisations. The increase in employment opportunities from the airport expansion and development as a cargo hub can only benefit the communities on the Isle of Thanet and the UK. Education and Training are vital if we are to prosper in all areas of business and industry. Over 80% of residents have continued to support Manston Airport. I want to see Manston Airport become a competitive and vital utility for the future of our people and country.

Linda James

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