

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Manston Airport](#)
Subject: Manston Airport Invitation to make a Representation
Date: 08 November 2021 13:37:14

Dear Natasha Kopala, Head of Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit

I write as a member of the public who is a local resident.

I attended many of the hearings back in 2019.

I have made previous submissions.

This is my final submission in response to the Manston Airport Assessor's Report dated 21st October 2021 and my comments are my personal views about this development.

The applicant River Oak Strategic Partners (RSP) failed to show real demand to convince the Examining Authority and still do fail to show demand as evidenced by the conclusion of the Manston Airport Assessor's Report dated 21st October 2021.

Numerous operators have failed to operate this airport at a profit since 1992, Wiggins Group, Planestation / EU Jet, Infratil, Lothian Shelf. Apparently the airport has lost investors and state sector input of about £100 million since 1992.

Why do RSP, who appear to have little or no real experience in operating an airport let alone successfully, believe they can do better?

RSP claims they will create 4,000 jobs. Really? At its best Manston created 159 jobs some of which were part time and sessional. While East Midland Airport employs 6,000 that is a bigger airport in the middle of the UK land mass serving a large population not a small airport on a peninsula a long way from the population they say they want to serve. In addition, East Midland Airport has a significant passenger base. RSP plans are aimed at freight only with perhaps passengers if any demand exists.

Previous operators like EU Jet and KLM can confirm how little demand exists at Manston for passenger flights. There were times on flights to Edinburgh, a major financial market and a capital city, where there were more air hosts and staff onboard than passengers.

Manston is only able to serve parts of the South East and parts of East of England within a 3-hour drive. East Midlands Airport is in the middle of the country and offers more access to the customer base.

The application is incompatible with Carbon Budgets and Climate Change Initiatives expressed at COP26.

£19.8 million has been awarded to Ramsgate from the government's Levelling Up Fund. Among many ideas are a top-class hotel and restaurants and developments to encourage more use of the marina and attract people to visit and invest in businesses and property in Ramsgate. As one Kent County Councillor said there is a question as to who would want to stay in Ramsgate with

24 hour freight flights.

Remember freight flights often have a higher noise level allowed than from passenger flights.

For another possible 159 jobs if Manston was to get back to its old level of activity, which it struggled to achieve from 1992, we could blight Ramsgate and no one with money is going to invest in Ramsgate let alone stay on holiday or base a yacht or invest in property there. Why do that under a noisy flight path when there is competition from the likes of Sovereign Harbour at Eastbourne and Brighton for marina facilities and many other locations to invest in and visit?

So, the potential for job losses and property devaluation and noise blight far outweighs anything RSP think they can deliver.

All the Thanet towns (Birchington, Westgate on Sea, Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate, Cliffsend) are under pressure to accept more housing when the local infrastructure and particularly sewage provision by Southern Water and the roads are inadequate are not coping with existing demand.

A previous owner of Manston Airport, Stone Hill Park, had a far better idea for the site of housing, commercial and light industrial use and in effect a small new town built with amenities for the residents and local areas to use, that would also relieve the pressure for over development of the existing Thanet towns.

RSP propose a noise polluting 24 hour mainly freight airport blighting Ramsgate which likely will fail after say 2 years and they will either walk away or more likely I feel try to force a development of the site for housing presented as "the airport has failed again and there is no choice for the local authority than to accept a huge housing estate" but without amenities and planning and mixed use that Stone Hill Park proposed, in effect a sink estate of housing cheaply flung up to let RSP make a profit before exiting.

Regarding RSP and Save Manston Airport (SMA) and Kent Needs Manston Airport (KNMA) claims ref freight will increase with more online shopping, note how these organisations cannot even get their representation of figures correct (see page 17 of the report) and also how they do not understand that products come in bulk from other countries to the UK and then distribution centres fulfil the last part of the delivery from the distribution centre to a persons address. They do not fly thousands of individual packages in from say China. It is ludicrous to think that one would send thousands of individual packets by air freight from the Far East when it is far cheaper to freight by ship or train in bulk then split and distribute from a distribution centre in the UK. It shows that SMA and KNMA have no commercial idea what they are talking about.

Air freight is nearly always more expensive than by ship or rail. Also belly hold air freight has a cost advantage over pure freight flights as the cost of the flight is partly paid for by passengers.

Note that the air freight sector's market share has remained at only 1.5% of the total market since 2009 (see page 19 of the report). A period of time that has seen online shopping expand considerably. This shows the lack of understanding of the commercial real world by both SMA and KNMA and frankly possibly RSP.

Finally bellyhold hold capacity for freight is recovering and with the USA opening up to passenger

flights will further increase so the need for freight only flights decreases, again.

Manston Airport should remain closed and be developed into a small new town with a mixture of housing types, light industrial and commercial buildings, and facilities such as schools and medical facilities. In fact, the plans that Stone Hill Park Ltd produced need revisiting. I accept that Stone Hill Park Ltd sold the site to RSP but these plans could be looked at by professional developers with known track records in housing and commercial development who could take over from RSP.

This saves in particular Ramsgate from blight, will produce more varied employment opportunities, will relieve over development pressures on the existing Thanet Towns, could help Thanet District Council meet government house building targets, in a well-integrated and carefully planned development.

RSP could sell up the site to a professional developer or developers, failing which a compulsory purchase order with the price tag based upon a defunct airport valuation be offered to RSP to exit and leave the area.

Regards

Ian Hide.