

For the attention of the Manston Airport Case Team

The New Submission to the Secretary of State follows from Paragraph 3

1. Introduction

1.1 The Thanet & East Kent Chamber operates in close liaison with the Dover District Chamber of Commerce, established in 1850. These two business support organisations monitor and support profitable trading in East Kent with particular reference to the districts of Thanet, Dover, Canterbury and Folkestone & Hythe.

1.2 We publish regular bulletins on business issues, host events throughout the year and contribute to media broadcasts in the UK and overseas. We publish the East Kent Business Directory. Following the demise of the local Business Link service, we have operated the East Kent Business Advice Clinic for the last eleven years providing targeted guidance to companies trading in the four districts of East Kent. We maintain close links with companies in nearly every sector of the East Kent economy ranging from large multi-nationals to start-ups yet to begin trading.

1.3 Since July 2020, we have developed our on-line communications and have played a full part in the organisation and promotion of The Open at Sandwich took place at Royal St George's Golf Club (RSG) from 11 to 18 July 2021. The last Open there in July 2011 produced an economic impact of £77 million [*Royal St George's 2011 Economic Impact Assessment, Sheffield Hallam University & SIRC, 23 November 2011*] with over £12 million spent directly in East Kent. RSG is a member of our Chamber of Commerce and the venue of our own Chamber Charity Golf Day sponsored by Nissan. World class golfers who travel by executive jets like to have an airport where they can land.

1.4 We maintain close relations with transport companies, sponsor business awards at Further Education colleges in East Kent and can claim a long history of supporting skills development; it was ten directors of the Dover Chamber of Commerce who provided funding for the foundation of Dover College in 1871.

2. Background

We read with close interest the pronouncement of 15 February 2021 by the High Court relating to the decision by the Secretary of State for Transport regarding the application for a Development Consent Order at Manston Airport and understand that The Department for Transport has requested Interested Parties to make further representations.

3. Manston Airport Assessor's Report Publication 21 October 2021

3.1 The latest report by Arup is an unusual consultation document. It is difficult to conceive how Arup can voice the interests of the local community in East Kent by promoting East Midlands Airport with such enthusiasm. By ignoring the economic benefits a revived Manston could bring to the district of Thanet, the report encourages the government to subsidise benefit payments rather than stimulate employment and inward investment.

3.2 The latest data from the Office for National Statistics shows an unemployment rate in Thanet of 7.7% against a UK figure of 4.8% and Thanet youth unemployment at 11.1%, which is the highest in

3.3 However, the sternest critic of this latest report should indeed be Arup itself. The Secretary of State will be aware of a previous report by Arup entitled “What makes an airport sustainable ?” [See www.arup.com/perspectives/what-makes-a-sustainable-airport] which lists five key questions.

1. How can an airport achieve net zero emissions?
 2. Can we design airports to become more physically sustainable?
 3. How do airports grow without damaging nature and biodiversity?
 4. How can airports become healthier for employees, communities and users?
 5. How can airports play a bigger role in the local community?
- [See www.arup.com/perspectives/what-makes-a-sustainable-airport]

All of these are planned to be met in a revived Manston Airport.

3.4 Answer 1. The leapfrog technology espoused by the Manston proposals simply cannot be met by East Midlands Airport. The planned use of sustainable electricity available from The London Array and Thanet Offshore Wind Farm in liaison with the UK's first hydrogen generation plant at Herne Bay can provide COP 26 compliant prospects currently not available elsewhere in this country.

3.5 Answer 2. Manston promises to be the greenest airport in the UK as confirmed by the Member of Parliament for the area, Sir Roger Gale MP.

“For the record, post-pandemic Britain will still need aviation and we shall still need to fly freight in and out of what is planned to be the ‘greenest’ airport in the World - Manston. 2/2”
[<https://twitter.com/sirrogergale/status/1245278236822712320>]

3.6 Answer 3. Throughout the proposals submitted by RiverOak Strategic Partners respect for biodiversity and the environment have been a prime concern. Established operational UK airports are naturally obliged to adapt existing infrastructure designed in a pre-Greta Thunberg era when environmental concerns were fewer and less important whereas the current plans for Manston had already embraced COP 26 concerns with full enthusiasm. This was particularly noticeable in the early consultations of 2018 regarding noise mitigation plan. [See *Manston Airport, Development Consent Order, 2018 Consultation Masterplan, 1,3,5 TR020002/SC2018/04*].

The UK government accepts the inevitable growth of UK aviation traffic.

“Also recognising that despite the impact of COVID-19, the international aviation industry and the number of global air passengers and volume of cargo is expected to increase significantly over the next 30 years.” [Policy paper, COP 26 declaration: International Aviation Climate Ambition Coalition, Department for Transport 10 November 2021]. If the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) is to become a reality in the UK, a revived Manston Airport can make an unambiguous claim to be a showcase for the scheme.

3.7 Answer 4. It is self-evident that this can be realised by embodying the latest technological and environmental advances in new designs rather than by adapting established airport structures.

3.8 Answer 5. This is clearly best achieved by working with the local business community which manifestly supports the return of aviation to Manston as outlined in this Chamber's previous submission. The Secretary of State has received extensive documentation illustrating the support of the East Kent Business community for a revived airport at Manston. Dr John East summarised this recently in an email to the Thanet & East Kent Chamber.

“There has never been a more important time to open Manston as a freight hub. With our foreign secretary Liz Truss pulling together world-wide trade deals. This week she is off to visit Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. South east Asia has some of the most dynamic countries and economies, add this to the trade deals undertaken with Australia and New Zealand, we as a nation will need to have open transport corridors and less reliance on road transport and bottle neck such as the crossing

from Dover. This opportunity to give the South East corner of the UK a levelling up and more Jobs in an area that has some of the poorest areas of the country. At the same time taking some of the pressure away from Gatwick and London Heathrow airports and let them concentrate on passenger flights. Our local infrastructure can support a Freight Hub and not another million houses, without a major investment into Health services along with water services in all its ways, along with schools and childcare.”

[Email to Thanet and East Kent Chamber, Dr John East, 8 November 2021]

3.9 It follows that Arup is clearly in disagreement with Arup. One must conclude therefore that in many respects Arup must be wrong.

4. UK Policy

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP stated recently that “We want to double the volume of our trade to £1 trillion”. *[PM’s speech at the Centre for Policy Studies: 22 November 2021]*. To make this a reality will require sufficient freight capacity at UK international airports for high value goods. A revived Manston Airport can make a significant contribution to doubling national trade and reducing local unemployment

David Foley
Chief Executive
Thanet & East Kent Chamber
Dover District Chamber of Commerce
3 December 2021