

# Plane Speaking

**Manston**  
Kent's International Airport

A public consultation newsletter from Manston Airport



In common with many other airports (Gatwick, Heathrow, Stansted, East Midlands, Doncaster Sheffield, Birmingham and Bristol), Manston is proposing to introduce a regulated night-time operations policy.

Manston welcomes the start of consultation on our proposed policy and agrees with Cllr Clive Hart, Leader of Thanet District Council, that: 'This issue needs to be drawn to a conclusion for the sake of the community, the council and the airport.'

This newsletter is designed to focus on the key issues relating to the airport and to stimulate a broad debate on the case for Manston and delivering a successful regional airport in Thanet. We would ask every Thanet resident to consider the issues and engage with the consultation

Please take a moment to read through the question and answers and do let us know your thoughts. You can either complete the feedback form or email me on [consultation@manstonairport.com](mailto:consultation@manstonairport.com)

**Charles Buchanan**  
Chief Executive, Manston Airport

## Questions & Answers

### **What is the airport proposing?**

Manston Airport is proposing to introduce a regulated night-time operations policy.

The night-time period at Manston would be defined as between 2300hrs and 0700hrs, with restricted operations during a 'QC Period' between 2330hrs and 0600hrs local time. The total number of aircraft movements permitted during the night-time QC period would not exceed 659 per year – an average of less than two landings or take-offs during these hours per day.

In addition, Manston is proposing to adopt a Noise Quota system – based upon the certified noise generated by an aircraft on landing and take-off – and defined as a 'Quota Count' (QC). Manston is proposing to allow a maximum number of 1,593 QC points per year.

Importantly, no aircraft with a QC greater than four will be allowed to land or take-off during the night-time period. This means that aircraft such as the current DC8s will not be allowed to take off during this period.

### **Will allowing night-time flying generate new jobs?**

Generating new jobs is crucial if Thanet is to break free from being a low paid economy. With an average weekly full time local wage of £412.50, Thanet is the lowest paid community in Kent and second lowest in the South East. The airport isn't the only answer, but we believe it is part of the solution.

So how will the airport create jobs? Allowing longer operating hours will give airlines more commercial

confidence in the airport's long-term future. More airlines, especially those with 'based aircraft' (who start and finish their flying day at Manston) equals more routes. More routes equals more passengers (inbound and outbound), which equals more jobs.

The airport currently employs around 100 people, with a broad range of skills, and two thirds of them are Thanet residents, with a further 27% living in CT postcode areas. There are an additional 40 people employed in operating the airport by other organisations, and a further 100 working with aviation related companies and on the airport site. However, it's not just the direct jobs an airport can bring. It's also about attracting more inbound visitors, as well as new businesses to an area. There's also the broader benefit to local businesses, such as those that supply goods and services to the airport's operators and customers.

Skills is one of the biggest issues facing Thanet and the airport is committed to working with Thanet College, Canterbury Christchurch University, Employ Thanet and other training providers to ensure it plays its part in tackling the issue, and that local residents have the skills needed to access the new jobs that the airport's growth creates.

**Fact:** The number of people claiming Job Seekers allowance in the District has increased by 14.7% since January 2011.

**Fact:** Thanet has the highest level of youth unemployment in the South East.

# Manston agrees with Cllr Clive Hart, Leader of Thanet

## 'This issue needs to be drawn to a conclusion for the



*Situated just 60 miles east of London, Manston Airport's runway is 2,752 metres long x 61 metres wide.*

### **Will night flight restrictions hinder the airport's growth?**

Our Master Plan, published in 2009, shows the airport could grow to handle 2.29m passengers and 167,500 tonnes of freight by 2018. At this level of activity over 2,000 people would be employed in operating and supplying the airport, with a further 1,000 jobs supported in the wider economy. We recognise that the current economic situation may have delayed slightly the date when we reach these levels, and we still believe that it remains a case of 'when, rather than if' the airport achieves these targets.

Importantly it's been estimated that the airport would generate £65m a year for the local economy when the airport's Master Plan – a blueprint for its future – is realised.



*The airport's land covers 296 hectares.*

To succeed Manston needs 'based aircraft', those which start and finish their flying day at Manston. This will increase the number of routes, increase passenger numbers and make the airport's operation more efficient.

Manston is already an important UK airport for freight thanks to its very quick turnaround time, which is better than all other UK airports. This ensures an extra day's shelf life for fresh produce passing through Manston, compared to other airports. The restricted operation that Manston has limits the airport's ability to attract new business. Manston must be able to compete with other airports in terms of the times it can handle flights.

### **Manston isn't operating at daytime capacity so why does it need night flights?**

For Manston to attract new airlines it needs to be able to compete on an equal basis with other airports.

Airlines only make money when they are flying and operate to very tight time and route schedules. At the moment no airline will base aircraft here with the current flying time restrictions, that limit their opportunity to use their aircraft to the maximum, when they can do so at other airports.

Our fresh-produce freight customers need greater flexibility. When crops are picked during the day, packed and loaded, they depart in the evening and land in the UK at night to stock the supermarkets' shelves. Arrival time restrictions critically hinder Manston's ability to secure more of this type of business, despite our great reputation for service and unloading times. Soaring all year round demand for fresh fruit and vegetables presents a massive opportunity for Manston.

# ...t District Council, that: ...sake of the community, the council and the airport.'

## **Does Thanet District Council's own report 'challenge' the airport's own economic impact study?**

No. The authors of the Council's report concluded: '...we are satisfied with the approach and values used for the economic assessment.' It added: 'The overall approach conforms to what we would consider 'industry standard' for an economic impact assessment of this kind.' The authors also acknowledged that they had only 'relatively minor queries'. So, does the Council's conclusion that their own expert's report 'challenges the findings' of the airport's economic impact assessment seem fair?

Manston is challenging the consultant's conclusions that we have underestimated the potential adverse noise impacts. The information submitted to the Council was undertaken in accordance with standard industry practice and Government guidance by recognised expert noise analysts. In addition the



*Manston currently offers flights to many European destinations.*

report acknowledges that the sound insulation programme proposed by the airport to mitigate the impacts on the most adversely affected properties "goes further than that required by government guidance...".

## **Can Manston become a regional airport?**

We believe it can. Manston has one of the longest under-used runways in the country. The government, and the air travel industry, has recognised that there is a shortage of runway capacity serving London and the South East. Heathrow is operating at 99% capacity, and Gatwick and Stansted aren't able

to build additional runways.

As a result the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, and others have revitalised proposals for an airport either in the Thames Estuary or on the North Kent Coast. The initial cost estimate of £50bn to build, the need to close Heathrow to give it a chance of being financially viable, and the impact that would have on the economy of the Thames Valley makes the Estuary airport a non-starter. If that's the case, what's the answer? We believe it is making the most out of existing airports which could serve London better – and Manston is one of those.



*Qualified staff monitor the airspace over Thanet and communicate with pilots from the airport's air traffic control tower.*



Manston recently played its part in bringing world-renowned Cirque du Soleil to the UK for its latest national tour when the airport welcomed two Boeing 747-400 freighters carrying 80 tonnes of staging and equipment each.

### Can Manston improve travel times to London?

The plans to improve travel times between Ramsgate and London by upgrading of the rail line to Ashford and

fast access to high speed train travel will strengthen Manston's position. There's a strong case for a Manston Parkway station to serve the island and further boost the local economy. However,

without the success of the airport which can flow from an acceptance of limited, managed and mitigated night flights the argument for these improvements is significantly weakened.

For more information: [www.manstonairport.com](http://www.manstonairport.com) or [www.thanet.gov.uk](http://www.thanet.gov.uk) • Email [consultation@manstonairport.com](mailto:consultation@manstonairport.com)

## We want your feedback

Please take a moment to let us and Thanet District Council know your thoughts on our proposed night-time flying policy and the future of Manston Airport. Post this form to Manston, Kent's International Airport, PO Box 500, Manston, Kent. CT12 5BL. Alternatively, email [consultation@manstonairport.com](mailto:consultation@manstonairport.com) and [consultation@thanet.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@thanet.gov.uk). Your comments may also be forwarded to Thanet District Council.

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