

Arise to Protect – Save Manston Airport

Why I and my micro-SME scientific research company and the "Save Manston Airport" group believe that Manston Airport could be a successful and important airport for the South East of England, if it were just managed and advertised as it should be.

First :

The official Thanet District Council (TDC) petition to help keep Manston Airport as an operating airport gained 7,700 signatures, far more than the 1,000 it needed, and TDC and Kent County Council (KCC) are currently in discussion investigating due process for the Compulsory Purchase Order.

- please sign this for a chance to reduce Heathrow and Gatwick flights and the need for new runways :

Save Manston Airport petition, soon to be handed in at Parliament (well over 20,000 e-signers + paper signers) :

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-manston-airport>



Where shall I start ? Loss of jobs and additional costs on local businesses:

It is not just the 140 direct job losses by Ann Gloag's employees, but the ancillary knock-on effect in local businesses total about 700, including a small aviation firm, TG Aviation, that has been booted out of its 50 year leased premises. They were not granted an injunction to enable them to keep flying from Manston – the case will be heard “soon”.



Take my micro-SME scientific research firm, as small as it comes - the additional £100 to £250 additional cost (car-rail-parking-hotel) of each journey across the South of England to Gatwick or Heathrow becomes significant over the year, not to mention the effectively day lost from the coal-face of the business by the travel time. It was 10 minutes from my research laboratory to Manston Airport, plus 30 minutes check-in time (mostly spent with a hot drink) - including published check-in times, via the M25 from Canterbury to Gatwick and onto the plane is about 4 hours, and to be prudent, to Heathrow is about 6 hours. And of course nearly as much for the return journey. Often also requiring an over-night stay in a hotel at extra expense, to ensure catching an early or mid-morning flight.

Manston History :

RAF Manston served in both the first world war and the second world war.

Its motto was "Arise to Protect" :

[Psalm 12:5](#) "

Because the poor are plundered,
because the needy groan,
I will now arise,"

In the second world-war, Prime Minister Winston Churchill was honorary air commodore for 615 Fighter Squadron, and paid them a visit at RAF Manston, Kent, UK, on 25 September 1941.

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205125495>



It has seen Concorde, the Space Shuttle could have but never actually needed to land, and recently BA's new Airbus A380 spent a while at Manston, both for crew training and filming an advert :



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iaEh3W_8q8Y



Manston had KLM flying two return flights to Schiphol Hub daily, Newmarket holiday flights, and many cargo users. But on Thursday 15th May 2014 Manston Airport was shut by the current owner, forcing KLM, Newmarket and cargo firms to leave. Most airport operations ceased at 5pm. Currently the final flight went off just before 12 noon, Saturday 31st May, 2014 – a plane for the Football English Squad to Brazil has just been fitted out and flew up to Luton to pick up the players. Airport operating equipment is already being sold off, with an ongoing auction. Offers of the full asking price of £7 million have, it is reported, been rejected by the current owner. We believe the intention is to dig up the runway, demolish the airport buildings, and build houses. A "Garden City" is being touted - where are the jobs for these people ? Thanet is already an area of "significant socio-economic deprivation".

OK, next, why should people fly from Manston

- surely it has been shewn to not be a popular airport ?

My next thesis is high-lighted by a visit to the nearby city of Maidstone (40 miles from Manston), by the leader of the "Save Manston Airport" group

- the commonest response by the good people of Maidstone : "What Manston Airport ?".

This is no surprise to me - the only reason I knew that KLM had started flights to Schiphol Hub in Amsterdam, was I was driving past the airport perimeter daily, and there was a banner on the fence!

Well we have now in a short space of time flown to the USA and elsewhere a number of times via Manston and Schiphol Hub. We flew in the second week, and I flew on the last day. When Ann Gloag announced her "closure consultation", visitors and directors of my company had 8 European and long-haul flights booked via Manston, not all of which were able to take place. And I have already had to do an additional European journey via Gatwick. The KLM passenger use of Manston was successful and growing - we suspect that this is one of the reasons why Ann Gloag asked KLM to leave as soon as she did. This closure "consultation" was announced on the same day that support for starting new routes from regional airports was announced in parliament, 5 months, 2 weeks, 2 days after they took over the running, announcing they were going to develop it for at least 2 years.

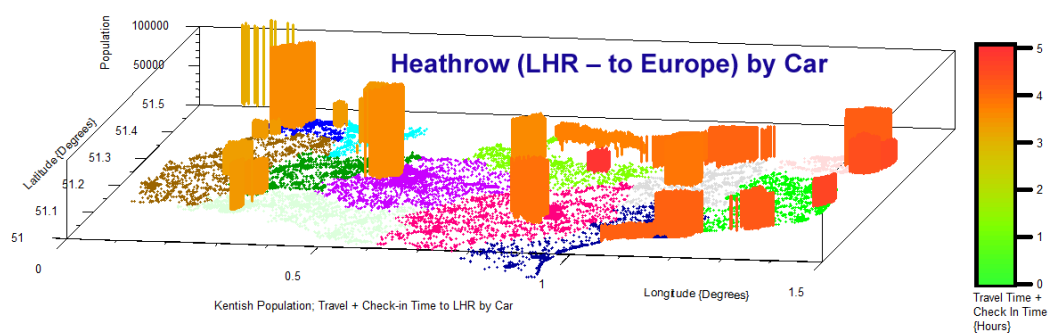
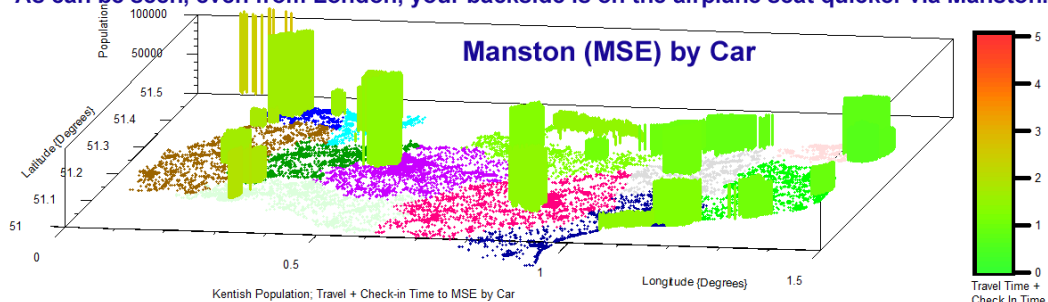
So for whom does it make sense to use Manston Airport ?

Well surprisingly my web data mining has given us extensive evidence that the highly efficient nature of Manston Airport means that you can be as far away from Manston as any of the 13 Category-A mainline stations in London, or on the junction 9 roundabout on the M23, at the Gatwick Airport boundary, and you will still be quicker to fly from Manston Airport than either Heathrow or Gatwick Airports.

3D Maps : Travel + Check-in Times From London and Kent to two Airports, MSE & LHR. (v2b-r)

Bright green : zero delay time; through to Bright red : five or more hours.

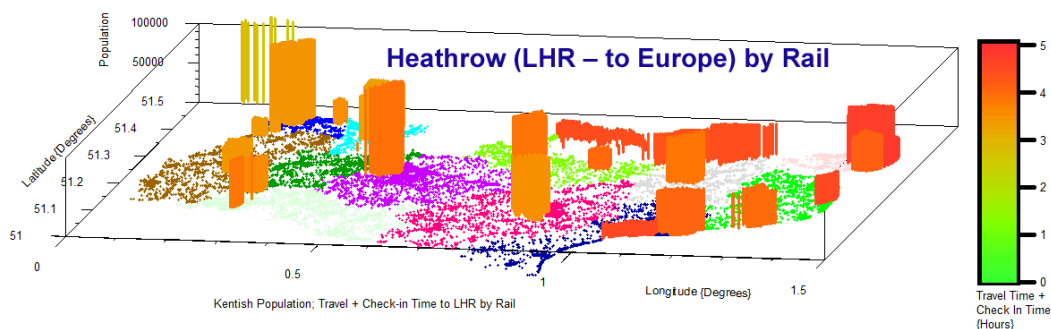
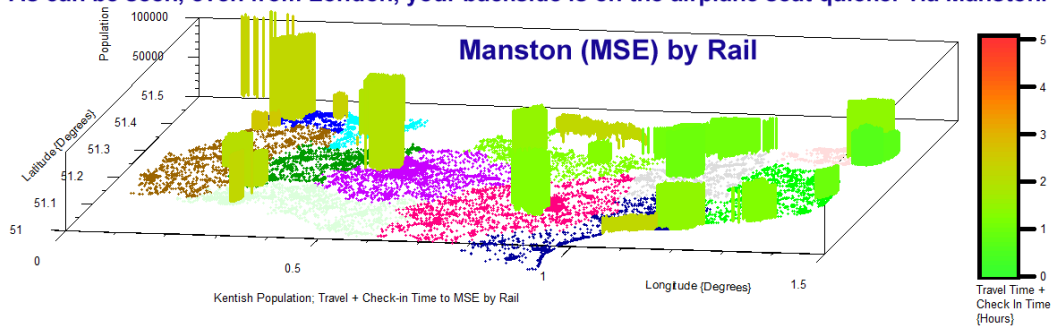
As can be seen, even from London, your backside is on the airplane seat quicker via Manston.



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See this pdf document on the "Save Manston Airport" group's Facebook site :

Manton Airport Kent has major travel advantages - v2b.pdf

[www.lab-tools.com/SMA/Manton Airport Kent has major travel advantages - v2b.pdf](http://www.lab-tools.com/SMA/Manton%20Airport%20Kent%20has%20major%20travel%20advantages%20-%20v2b.pdf)

We have even conducted an on-road and "virtual flight" validation of these timings :

www.facebook.com/events/580892218698984/ - Manston beat Gatwick by 1 hour 22 minutes.



"The (Airports) Commission noted ... a number of significant challenges, such as relatively poor surface transport links ...". "The Commission ... does not intend to revisit previous decisions."

As we can see, an uncongested dual-carriageway road runs right to Manston Airport boundary. This is the meeting-point of the A299/M2 to Central London, the A299 to Ramsgate Port and the A256 to Dover Port.

Manston Airport now has excellent HS1 high-speed rail links 3 miles away by taxi from Ramsgate station, to Ashford International and Central London (to be further upgraded this Autumn), plus recently completed dual-carriageway roads from Manston Airport boundary fence across Kent and into Central London. An announcement of funding for a new HS1 station, on the Manston Airport boundary, has just been made.

So why is this not more generally appreciated ?

- No one has been told !
- Where is the advertising on the tube and train-lines to the other London Airports ?
- How many travel agencies in the South East even know of Manston Airport ? - Again and again people have to tell their travel agencies about Manston.

But also, the Davies Commission refused to consider Manston Airport in its report on future air traffic for London airports :

The Airports Commission have stated, when I sent them these and other population/travel time figures :

"The Commission noted that some people living in North Kent valued the role that the Airport played in supporting regional connectivity, but noted a number of significant challenges, such as relatively poor surface transport links and a large distance from significant population, which rendered any significantly expanded role for the airport implausible."

And later :

"... has identified three options it will take forward for further development, as well as more work to allow it to understand the viability of a Thames Estuary option. The Commission is focussed on analysing these three short-listed options and the feasibility of a Thames Estuary option and does not intend to revisit previous decisions."

airports.enquiries@airports.gsi.gov.uk airport.utilisation@airports.gsi.gov.uk

So why is Manston Airport not included in this discussion of London Airports ?

More urgently :

Why close Manston Airport at a time of expansion plans for Heathrow and Gatwick ?

Well we now have partial answers to our questions, in that the Airports Commission has indeed responded and just announced an enquiry in the "smaller"/regional airports. Please do reply to their questionnaires.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/use-of-the-uks-existing-airport-capacity-call-for-evidence>

Over 20,000 people have signed a petition in support of Manston Airport which has been a remarkably fast, efficient, friendly and convenient airport to use, and to work at. In particular it featured a 30 minute check in and a 200m walk from car to plane.

Thanet District Council have just overwhelmingly voted to thoroughly consider a Compulsory Purchase Order on Manston Airport, with the intention of returning it to working status. Next meeting Thursday 17th July.
Full notice of motion: *“Council affirms its considerable disappointment at the recent closure of Manston as a regional airport. We recognise the public support for its continuation as an airport and endorse the steps taken to date towards that objective. Council urges all available options to that end be explored, including a detailed examination of the legal and financial implications of a Compulsory Purchase Order before a final decision is reached.”*

Kent County Council recommends that there should be better utilisation of regional airport capacity in the South East; Manston has the potential to accommodate up to 5 to 6 million passengers per annum.

KCC are also this coming Thursday 17th July debating the following motion.

“Kent County Council supports the actions taken so far by Thanet District Council to retain Manston as a regional airport. We recognise the value that a regional airport brings to East Kent and are disappointed at its closure. Kent County Council further recognises that Thanet District Council is unlikely to have the resources to go through with a Compulsory Purchase Order, with all of the linked legal cost, by itself. Therefore as the Upper Tier Authority we agree to support Thanet District Council's investigations into the viability of a Compulsory Purchase Order with financial contributions and support from our legal team. Should Thanet District Council proceed with a Compulsory Purchase Order, we agree to support them further with financial and legal support.”

Manston Airport is an excellent diversionary airport, usually fog-free, with access mostly over the sea. In 2013 it accepted 7 flights diverted from Heathrow.

Manston Airport also has an enviable record for cargo handling, with no stacking on airport approach, and full loads of perishable cargo unloaded and on the road, and the aircraft back in the air, within 80 minutes of landing. Establishing small package freight to adjacent road/rail/air/sea hubs for global express packages is an important goal of the air-operations company that has offered the full asking price of £7million, for Manston.

RiverOak, who are interested in buying/running Manston Airport had a finger in the pie of getting Fort Worth Alliance Airport (AFW) up and running as a cargo / mail package hub. http://www.alliancetexas.com/Portals/0/PDF/Fort_Worth_Alliance_Airport.pdf

“Fort Worth Alliance Airport (AFW) is the world's first 100% industrial airport designed for cargo and corporate aviation. AFW features a vast array of flight services, including air cargo, corporate and military aviation, and is the cornerstone for the nation's fastest-growing industrial complex, the Alliance Global Logistics Hub.”

They say they intend to have passenger operations as well, at Manston.

Save Manston Airport and other local support groups are 100% behind RiverOak and its attempts to buy Manston Airport.

The EU also has a strong push to move freight from road to rail : The following goal is set up in the 2011 Transport White Paper: *“30% of road freight over 300 km should shift to other modes such as rail or waterborne transport by 2030, and more than 50% by 2050, facilitated by efficient and green freight corridors. To meet this goal will also require appropriate infrastructure to be developed.”* So an aim is to also use EU funding to establish such a road/rail/air/sea hub, to move UK incoming air and sea freight direct on to the HS1 rail line and avoid clogging the M25.

OK, that is was the appeal to logic, now for something different :

To Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted Airports :

“Give us your tired (who have walked too far from check-in to gate to plane to baggage pickup), your poor (who have paid as much to park - or to catch the train across England - as for their flight), Your huddled masses of stacked planes yearning for a free slot in which to land, The wretched refuse of your teeming sky and overloaded runways. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed and diverted planes, to us at Manston Airport: We lift our lamp beside the White Cliffs of the Dover Straights.”

Dr. Beau Webber - May, 2014, with apologies to Emma Lazarus.



Manston Dreaming

*The people were sent home
The planes flew away
All fell silent*

*In an office far away, predators scheme and plot
Shiver and drool in anticipation of the kill*

And at midnight, an unfamiliar sound drifts across the airfield on the cool night air.....

*A spirit sleeping
and dreaming of our return*

by Jennifer Maidman
26th May 2014



Manston Dreaming

by [SisterGoodbass](#)

<http://youtu.be/OImU9GJLXd8>

Annie Whitehead, of Penguin Cafe Orchestra, and the Kent group Arlet, on Trombone.



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Cheers,

Dr. Beau Webber

Lab-Tools Ltd., Canterbury & Ramsgate

www.Lab-Tools.com May, 2014, July 2014.

Save Manston Airport group :

www.savemanstonairport.com

www.facebook.com/savemanstonairport

www.facebook.com/groups/savemanstonairport

Petitions :

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-manston-airport>

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/no-to-houses-at-manston-airport>

Official 10 Downing Street Petition : <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/62738>