

Open letter from Medway Council.

Dear Secretary of State,

We are writing to you as a matter of urgency to seek a meeting between yourself and representatives of all political groups from Medway Council.

We do this following the news on today's media that the government proposes to consult in March on an airport in the Thames estuary.

Medway Council jointly runs a campaign against this pipe dream of an airport scheme along with Kent County Council and the RSPB.

And all Medway councillors unanimously back this campaign against an airport on or near the estuary. This was reaffirmed as recently as last week during a vote at our Full Council meeting on 12 January.

It would appear to us – in light of today's news - that the Mayor of London's office have been privately briefing the government on its plan and we think a meeting with yourself at the earliest opportunity would provide a good, and much needed, opportunity to discuss face to face the ramifications of such proposals for Medway, the historic county of Kent and all communities near the Thames estuary.

We feel it is important to point out that 76 per cent of the UK public say they are against the airport proposal as are many major airline industry leaders.

If it were to go ahead it would have a huge affect on the lives of hundreds of thousands of residents in Medway, as well as across Kent and the wider Thames estuary, and would devastate an area of global environmental significance providing a home for around 250,000 migrating wildfowl annually.

An airport would cost up to £70billion, would require huge highways and infrastructure and would cut great swathes off the green belt and countryside.

We strongly urge you to keep to government policy and continue looking at fully utilising the capacity of existing airports – such as the five London already has (which is two more than New York) and others such as Manston and Birmingham – which could both be joined to London by high speed rail.

We look forward to meeting with you at the earliest available opportunity to discuss this urgent matter further.

Yours sincerely

COUNCILLOR RODNEY CHAMBERS  
LEADER- MEDWAY COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR PAUL GODWIN  
LEADER OF LABOUR GROUP – MEDWAY  
COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR SHEILA KEARNEY  
DEPUTY LEADER OF LIBERAL DEMOCRAT  
GROUP – MEDWAY COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR ANDY STAMP  
LEADER OF THE INDEPENDENT GROUP –  
MEDWAY COUNCIL