

Medway Labour and Kent County Council Labour Group, part of a wider local campaign against any Estuary Airport proposal, would like to take the opportunity to appeal to the Davies Commission in the strongest possible terms that an Estuary Airport would be bad for the environment, bad for Medway and bad for UK PLC.

Medway has benefited from four shadow ministerial visits throughout the past month - from Ed Balls MP, Mary Creagh MP, Caroline Flint MP and Ivan Lewis MP. During those visits we highlighted our key concerns regarding the proposals.

The concept of an Estuary Airport is deeply unpopular in our community: concerned residents, environmental groups, local business and local decision makers on a cross-party basis agree that this is a completely unacceptable proposal.

All parties involved in the 'No To Estuary Airport' campaign were deeply concerned that the Commission did not rule out Estuary Airport when the Interim Report was published on 17th December 2013.

Perhaps the best statistic to highlight the economic danger of Estuary Airport can be found in the report *Best Placed for Britain*, which states that 202 of the UK's top 300 company HQs are within a 25-mile radius of Heathrow; this underlines the economic damage that an airport on the Isle of Grain would cause.

The hundreds of billions of pounds that would need to be spent to: build the new airport; buy and close Heathrow; build new transport links; build new houses for the workforce; and support the new Heathrow unemployed are key arguments why an Estuary Airport must never proceed. We note that other airports have submitted credible plans to the Commission for expansion at a much lower cost than those outlined in the proposals for the Estuary Airport.

Further, the environmental damage that such a project would create makes the proposal, without any doubt, completely unviable. RSPB has made it very clear the importance of the local environment to vast populations of birds and the severe impact an airport would have on them. The wreck of the SS Montgomery, complete with 1,400 tonnes of explosives, is another significant environmental factor that must be considered. Finally, the reality of rising sea levels poses an increasing risk to London and surrounding areas; positioning an airport within an estuary will only add to the risk posed by future rises in sea levels.

Medway Labour and Kent County Council Labour Group wish to submit to the Davies Commission the above arguments, reiterate the overwhelming local opposition and to emphasise that an Estuary Airport would be bad for the environment, bad for Medway and bad for UK PLC.

We look forward to hearing the outcome of your studies in September.

Cllr Vince Maple – Leader of Medway Labour Group

Cllr Gordon Cowan – Leader of the Labour Group, Kent County Council
Cllr Teresa Murray – Deputy Leader of Medway Labour Group
Cllr Roger Truelove – Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, Kent County Council
Cllr Tristan Osborne – Parliamentary Candidate, Chatham & Aylesford
Naushabah Khan – Parliamentary Candidate, Rochester & Strood
Paul Clark – Parliamentary Candidate, Gillingham & Rainham