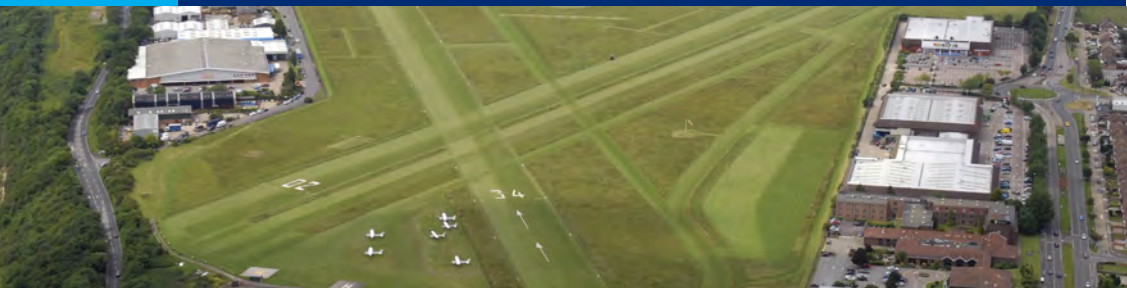


Rochester Airport

the future



Rochester Airport is important to many people living in Medway and is something that Medway Council has committed to securing a long-term future for.

First established in 1933, the Rochester Airport site is owned by Medway Council and has been leased since 2000 to an airport operator – Rochester Airport Limited.

Many of the buildings and facilities at the site date back to the 1930s and are reaching the end of their useful life.

That means we need to think now about how we are going to safeguard the important aviation activity that happens at the airport and help improve community access to this unique facility.

We also need to enhance the heritage and community facilities that will be integral to this historic airport.

Medway Council has recently announced plans that set out how we will do this. The purpose of this leaflet is to explain what is proposed and answer your questions about the scheme.

You can also see more details of the proposals at
www.medway.gov.uk/rochesterairport

Your questions answered

Why are you doing this?

The council has been working for a number of years to identify a financially viable way to protect Rochester Airport and provide greater public access for aviation and heritage/leisure use. The council cannot afford to pay for these improvements without private sector funding.

Working with airport specialists and neighbouring businesses including BAE Systems, we have evaluated a number of different options for the future of Rochester Airport. We believe this proposal achieves the right balance for local residents, businesses and airport users.

What kind of aircraft will use Rochester Airport in the future?

We want Rochester Airport to become a commercially viable airport. This is vital to ensuring a sustainable future for the site. But that doesn't mean it will become a busy passenger airport. The nature of the airport site means that it will always be a small airport with a mix of leisure, helicopter and air taxi uses.

We don't expect that there will be commercial passenger flights from Rochester Airport as the kind of aircraft that are used at other airports for these flights are too big to operate from Rochester.

Will this mean more aircraft noise from the airport?

Having a paved runway means that aircraft will be able to accelerate more quickly than on grass and take off earlier. That means they will have climbed much higher before they pass over homes near the airport – which will result in less noise than at the moment.

Will I be consulted about the proposals?

The new operator will need to apply for planning permission for the new runway and facilities. Local residents and businesses will be consulted about the application and will have the opportunity to put forward their views about the proposals.

If planning permission is granted, conditions may be put in place such as limiting the number or type of flights from the airport or the hours of operation for the airport. At the moment there are no restrictions on flying times from the airport.

How many jobs will be created?

It's too early to be specific about exactly how many jobs will be created in the new hi-tech industrial development on the north-west part of the airport. However we expect the proposals will preserve the existing jobs at the current airport and would expect the new industrial development to eventually generate more than 1,000 new jobs.

Who's supporting the scheme...

"Together with local residents we have fought long and hard to retain the airport over the past 12 years. The combination of closing one runway and modernising the airport is a good one. With low-rise business employment buildings being considered, we can look forward to an exciting economic future for the area and a new landmark leisure facility for our neighbours and visitors."

Dick Searle

Chairman, Rochester Airport Limited

"The MAPS Chaps" of Medway Aircraft Preservation Society welcome this major step, towards creating an airport worthy of the Medway community. It promises us a more secure future for the voluntary work we do in preserving our important aviation heritage and in revealing Medway's proud record to an international public."

Malcolm Moulton

Chairman, Medway Aircraft Preservation Society Limited

"The National Police Air Service utilises the facility at Rochester Airport as a forward operating base. There is a commitment to continue this agreement for the foreseeable future to ensure an appropriate service is delivered to Kent and the surrounding area. The cooperation received from the airport management has enhanced the relationship in support of our continued use of Rochester Airport."

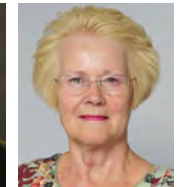
Richard Watson

Ground Operations Director National Police Air Service

"I believe these proposals represent the best possible opportunity to protect Rochester Airport and secure a major private sector investment into this important asset in Medway. The proposed scheme will safeguard aviation for business, heritage and leisure use in this well-connected location as well as releasing new land for jobs in Medway."

Cllr Alan Jarrett

Deputy Leader, Medway Council



"As ward councillors Rochester Airport is one of our biggest priorities; consequently we welcome this proposal, which will safeguard this invaluable ward asset for future generations and provide much needed job opportunities for the local economy."

Cllr Trevor Clarke

Cllr Rupert Turpin

Cllr Sylvia Griffin

Ward members for Rochester South and Horsted, Medway Council

Plans and benefits at a glance

At the moment we have announced plans to tender for an airport operator to work in partnership with the council to implement these proposals.

The operator will need to apply for planning permission for the new facilities. This application would include extensive consultation with local residents and businesses about the proposals.

What's being proposed?

- Major improvements to existing airport facilities on their current location on the airfield
- Better public access to the site for heritage, leisure and tourism
- A new permanent home for the nationally recognised Medway Aircraft Preservation Society (MAPS)
- Creation of new parallel paved and grass runways to replace the existing 02-20 grass runway, as well as improvements to navigation aids and outdated facilities
- Closure of the old 16/34 grass runway
- Development of around 12 hectares of the old 16/34 runway area for hi-tech business, science or technology development next to the existing Rochester Airport Industrial Estate

Benefits

- Safeguards Rochester Airport as a “smaller but better” sustainable airport with improved facilities for Medway residents and visitors
- New land released for job creation – with the potential to eventually create more than 1,000 new skilled jobs
- A new aviation heritage attraction to encourage more visitors to Medway
- Preserves the existing green view of the airport from Maidstone Road as well as reducing aircraft noise around the airport through use of a paved runway
- Opportunity to attract private sector investment into Rochester Airport by offering a 25 year lease to an operator alongside a council contribution to the overall development

Rochester Airport the future

www.medway.gov.uk/rochesterairport

Employment land

Land available for development for more than 1,000 jobs. Improved site access via Laker Road and Maidstone Road

Protected area

Existing views and wildlife protected

Green bank

Raised green banking to help shield industrial area from view

Redevelopment of facilities

Redeveloped airport facilities with improved access and public/heritage facilities for Medway Aircraft Preservation Society

New runways

New paved runway with parallel grass runway for vintage aircraft

Safeguarded area

Boundaries of safeguarded Rochester Airport site

Improved public access

Improved public access via existing Maidstone Road entrance

Indicative layout only