

Gatwick Airport Ltd

If telephoning please ask for: Deborah Miles

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25 November 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

Amendment to Route 4 trial – response of Mole Valley District Council

Mole Valley District lies to the north west of Gatwick airport, with Route 4 crossing land in the south east of the District, including the villages of Capel, Newdigate, Beare Green and Leigh.

MVDC recognises that the amendment to Route 4 has decreased aircraft noise over Dorking and land immediately to the south of the town. However, this noise has been displaced and is severely affecting residents in the south eastern corner of the District.

During the monitoring period we have received strident complaints from residents in areas that have previously been overflown, but who are now experiencing significantly more disturbance than was previously the case. It appears the problem stems from the greater precision in track keeping which concentrates noise within a narrower corridor than has historically been the case, and consequently has a significant and more continuous impact on affected residents.

The 2014 Department for Transport (DfT) guidance¹ acknowledges that: *'While the [Civil Aviation Authority] should follow a policy of concentration in most cases, the Government recognises that there may be local circumstances where the advantage lies in dispersing traffic, such as for purposes of providing noise respite over areas which may be considered to be particularly noise sensitive.... This local context may be come apparent through appropriate consultation with the local community'*.

The area over which Route 4 flies in Mole Valley is rural in nature with low background noise levels and is therefore particularly sensitive to aircraft noise. It is clear from the response of local communities that the revised route has merely shifted the noise disturbance southwards, rather than providing an acceptable solution.

¹ Department for Transport: Guidance to the CAA on Environmental Objectives relating to the Exercise of its Air Navigation Functions, paragraph 7.8

To address these concerns, we believe there needs to be a review of the impact of flight path concentration. Until such time as concentration is reviewed, we wish to see a return to more dispersed departures within the defined noise preferential swathe. The Post Implementation Review (PIR) recognises that if the modified RNAV-1 design has not achieved, to an acceptable standard, its original aim, then it will not be confirmed and navigation will need to return to the conventional SIDs. Having regard to the DfT guidance, an acceptable standard has not been achieved, and therefore the aims of the PIR have not been met.

We ask you to take these views into account when reviewing the amendment to Route 4. Please listen to the very real concerns that local people have about aircraft noise stemming from the concentration of the aircraft routes into a much narrower swathe.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Vivienne Michael'.

Councillor Vivienne Michael
Leader of the Council