



Tree Cottage
Redlands
South Holmwood
Dorking
Surrey
RH5 4LE

The Rt. Hon. Patrick McLoughlin MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House,
33 Horseferry Rd,
London
SW1P 4DR

31 August 2015

Dear Mr McLoughlin,

Aviation Noise from Gatwick Airport

Plane Wrong is a group of residents living to the north of Gatwick airport in villages and towns including Dorking, Reigate and Redhill. It was founded a year ago in response to noise from aircraft departing from Gatwick Airport.

Last summer, local residents suddenly, and without warning, found themselves being regularly overflown by low flying aircraft taking off from the airport. Neither the CAA nor Gatwick Airport had consulted residents about these changes. The aircraft were flying over locations where aircraft had only rarely flown before, and were flying over these locations more frequently because they were less dispersed laterally than they had been previously. The change meant that whereas before local residents were aware of only a few aircraft in the distance they are now overflown by departing aircraft at a frequency, at its worst, of about one per minute and at levels of noise which make it impossible to hold conversations, enjoy our gardens or leave our windows open.

It became apparent to us last year that the change was decided on in August 2013. We refer to the CAA's letter of 14 August 2013. (We enclose a copy for ease of use.) Please note that we became aware of this letter only in August 2014.

As envisaged in that letter the CAA is now carrying out an operational review of the relevant Airspace Change Process, and accordingly, having taken legal advice, we are writing this letter to you.

The first point we wish to make is that the CAA have invited comments, which we as a group, and others, have provided, and we now hope and expect that they will take full account of these comments, including those which we and our supporters would have made had we been consulted in the first place. Also it is clear that the impact of the changes on residents could not have been known about at the time of the original decision, but only (as now) after the changes were put into effect.

We are also writing to you also because you are responsible for the noise policy at Gatwick, and for designating Noise Preferential Routes ("NPRs").

One feature of the airspace change is that aircraft are flying outside at least one of the NPRs surrounding the airport. It is not at all clear as to the extent to which this is happening with your knowledge or approval. We should be grateful if you would clarify this. Certainly, we believe that what is happening is contrary to government policy.

We therefore request that you act to enforce the NPR; we also seek your reassurance that no change will be permitted to it.

Finally, we also ask you to ensure that the CAA will take full account of our representations on noise before making any decisions in connection with its PIR. In this regard we request that you notify the CAA of the UK's international obligations under (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention).

We should be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this letter by return and if you would reply in full as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully



Mike Ward
Chair
Plane Wrong

Copies to
Phil Roberts, CAA
Sir Paul Beresford MP
Crispin Blunt MP