

Councillor Mike Miller

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



By email:
londonairspaceconsultation@ipsos.com

Our Ref: : EP/Policy/Consult/Govt Consult
Date: 5 December 2013

Dear Sirs

London Airspace Consultation

Thank you for consulting me on proposed changes to London airspace. My interest lies with those changes affecting London Gatwick airport.

Having reviewed the material provided, I have no objection in principle to the proposed changes. More efficient flight management leading to less fuel burnt and a consequent reduction in CO₂ is to be welcomed, as is a net reduction in aircraft noise through more continuous arrival and departure flight paths. I also support the principle that minimising noise should take priority in determining the use of airspace at lower heights.

For land within Reigate and Banstead borough, the consultation swathes for flight paths below 4000ft correspond closely to the existing noise preferential routes for eastern and western departures that lie between Horley and Redhill/Reigate, and therefore I do not anticipate any significant change in noise disturbance to residents in the borough when taken as a whole.

However, greater precision in track keeping does have the potential to concentrate noise within a narrower corridor that is currently the case. I am concerned that this could lead to localised increases in noise disturbance. Existing flight paths overfly residential areas within the noise preferential routes, such as Earlswood, Whitebushes and south-west Reigate, as well as isolated houses in the rural area. These do already cause some degree of disturbance, particularly for easterly departures where aircraft are both lower and closer to south-west Reigate than is the case when the airport is operating to the west.

In my view, future flight paths should be positioned to avoid residential areas so far as possible, although wherever placed I recognise that there will be some



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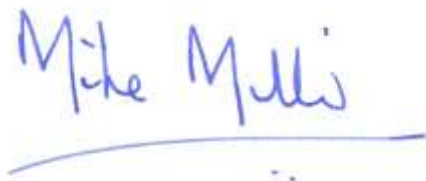
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properties under or close to the flight paths. I therefore support investigation into the use of respite routes in cases where there is disturbance from overflying. Such routes should be positioned to minimise noise disturbance to residential areas, and sufficiently wide apart so that there is a clear respite from noise for those properties which are affected.

The current consultation gives information on principles and broad route swathes, but none on specific routes. Since it is the latter information that will be of greatest interest to those residents who are affected, I am firmly of the opinion that further consultation should be carried out once information on the location of flight paths becomes available. Such consultation should also contain information on potential respite routes.

I would like to flag the Council's interest in being included in later phases of the London Airspace consultation relating to London Heathrow airport. Some of the departure routes from Heathrow place limitations on Gatwick airspace, including the height of aircraft using the noise preferential routes to the north of the airport, and there may be opportunities to further reduce aircraft-related noise to residents in this borough.

Yours faithfully



Cllr Mike Miller
Executive Member for Planning and Development