

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

14 September 2016
EIR Reference: E0002889

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 17 August 2016, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

'...the CAA assisted with flight path data on the SAM departure route which seemed to suggest nothing major had changed in the routing, but we are now increasingly receiving complaints from residents that believe they have not suffered departures before. It would seem that SAM has gone from its normal path to dip down south west in a concentrated format. This would seem to be the problem. Is there anyway that you can provide any data on this please? It would seem that they are above the 4,000ft but may still be within the 7,000ft which would suggest noise should still be a consideration.'

Our response:

Having considered your request in line with the provisions of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, we are able to provide the information below.

To investigate the extent of any possible changes in the heights of aircraft on the SAM/KEN SID we have undertaken an analysis of Gatwick westerly departures between 1 June – 31 August 2013 and 1 June – 31 August 2016 (representing pre- and post-RNAV implementation respectively). In this instance we have analysed the heights of all departures that passed through a 2 km-wide vertical gate, positioned across the SID centreline in the vicinity of Plaistow, which lies just beyond the end of the westerly SAM/KEN NPR swathe. Attachment 1 shows the location of the Plaistow departure gate relative to the NPR swathe, and also shows a sample of recent westerly flight tracks for reference.

A summary of the results is provided below:

Period	Average altitude	Tracks above 4,000 ft	Tracks above 7,000 ft
June-Aug 2013	8,800 ft	>99%	85%
June-Aug 2016	8,600 ft	>99%	82%

Whilst we do not consider the relatively small height differences between 2013 and 2016 to be significant, we do note however that SAM/KEN westerly departures appear to be following the SID centreline more closely over that region compared to 2013. For example, the percentage of all SAM/KEN westerly departures passing through the 2km-wide gate in 2013 was approximately 38%. In 2016 the corresponding figure was 47%. This finding accords with the general observation made by the CAA in its Post Implementation Review of the Gatwick RNAV SID implementation (reported in CAP 1346) that aircraft are broadly flying the same flight tracks as before but are more concentrated.

Finally for your information, and as an update to the diagrams provided previously in response to an earlier request under the Environmental Information Regulations (Ref. E0002813), we have enclosed a recent track density diagram that illustrates the general pattern of easterly and westerly departures on the SAM/KEN SID between 1 June and 31 August 2016, see attachment 2.

If you are not satisfied with how we have dealt with your request in the first instance you should approach the CAA in writing at:-

Caroline Chalk
Head of External Information Services
Civil Aviation Authority
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
Gatwick
RH6 0YR

caroline.chalk@caa.co.uk

The CAA has a formal internal review process for dealing with appeals or complaints in connection with requests under the Environmental Information Regulations. The key steps in this process are set in the attachment.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner at:-

Information Commissioner's Office
FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

If you wish to request further information from the CAA, please use the form on the CAA website at <http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/modalapplication.aspx?appid=24>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rihanne Stephen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and 'S'.

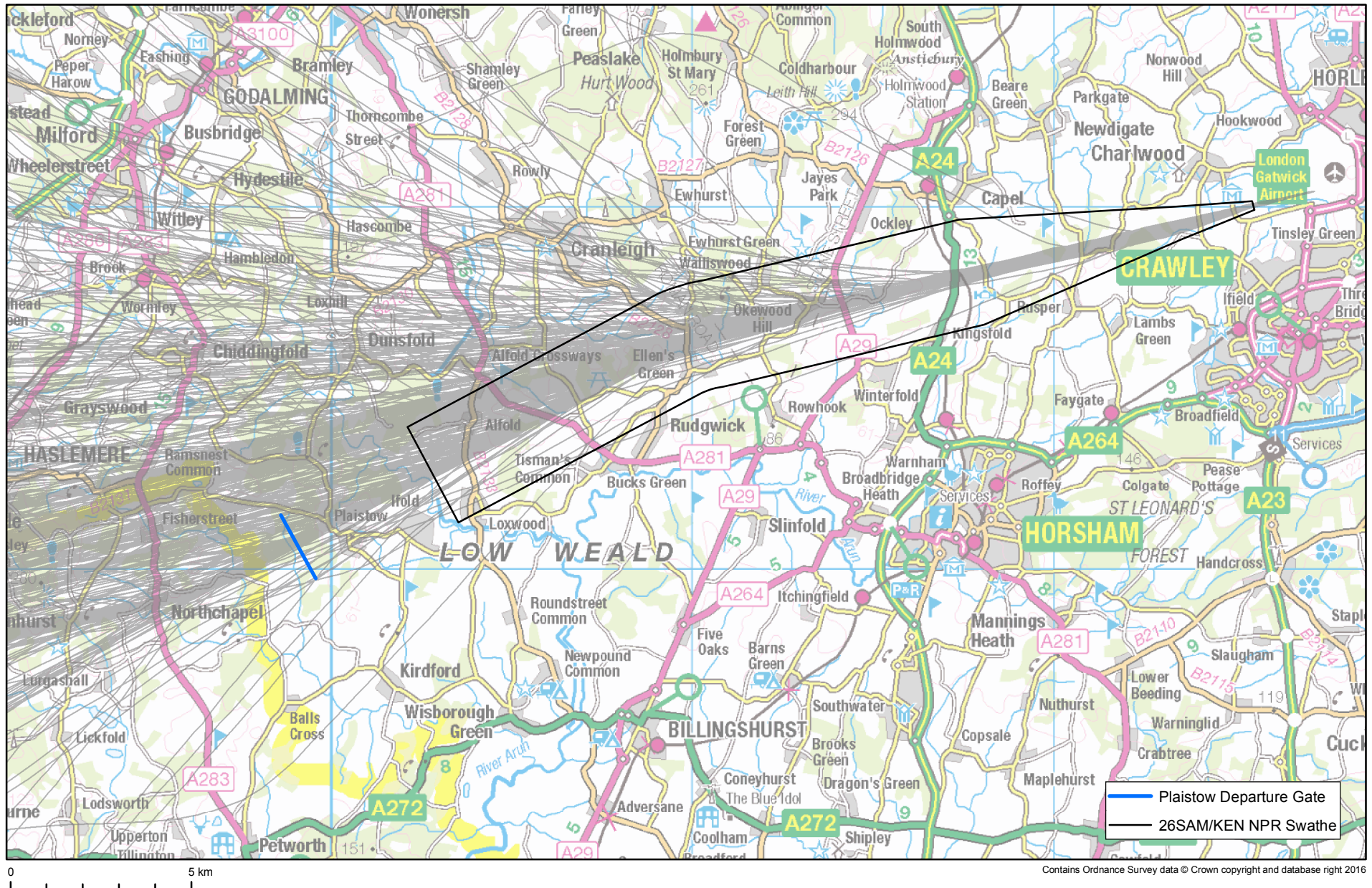
Rihanne Stephen
Information Rights Officer

CAA INTERNAL REVIEW & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- The original case to which the appeal or complaint relates is identified and the case file is made available;
- The appeal or complaint is allocated to an Appeal Manager, the appeal is acknowledged and the details of the Appeal Manager are provided to the applicant;
- The Appeal Manager reviews the case to understand the nature of the appeal or complaint, reviews the actions and decisions taken in connection with the original case and takes account of any new information that may have been received. This will typically require contact with those persons involved in the original case and consultation with the CAA Legal Department;
- The Appeal Manager concludes the review and, after consultation with those involved with the case, and with the CAA Legal Department, agrees on the course of action to be taken;
- The Appeal Manager prepares the necessary response and collates any information to be provided to the applicant;
- The response and any necessary information is sent to the applicant, together with information about further rights of appeal to the Information Commissioners Office, including full contact details.

Location of 2km-wide Plaistow Departure gate

(with a sample of Gatwick westerly SAM/KEN departures shown, 29 Aug - 2 Sept 2016)



1 June to 31 August 2016, Gatwick easterly and westerly SAM/KEN departures

