



LOCAL COMMITTEE
(RUNNYMEDE)

WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS
1st NOVEMBER 2010

1. Question from Ms Meyer Oliaji on Airtrack modelling

I would like to ask the committee:

"Regarding Cabinet's proposed change of stance of a tunnel below the railway line in Egham, based on the results of a modelling exercise, will Surrey County Council commit itself to releasing and publishing full details of the model, and the inputs?"

Whilst not in the remit of the local committee, the Chairman has asked officers if they could investigate:

Surrey County Council has published the full report on the modelling used to assess the underpass at Pooley Green on its website, as a background paper under the Airtrack item for the Local Committee (Runnymede) under its committee papers section. This document is in pdf format and is 66 pages long, and may be downloaded.

2. Question from Mrs Aileen Owen-Davis on level crossing data

I attach the results of a survey at the Station Road level crossing (between 6 am to 8 pm on the 30th September 2010) undertaken by members and friends of the Local Greenpeace Support group and the local Green Party.

Each volunteer did a two hour stint noting each time the barrier closed and opened. The same timing piece was used by each person. From these figures we extrapolated an average closing time for each hour and an overall closing average for the 14 hours surveyed.

The results show that the amount of time per hour that the barrier is down of 22 minutes is significantly different to the figure of 15 minutes quoted in the **Heathrow Airtrack Position Statement: Level Crossings in the Egham Area** dated 9th September 2010 which came with a letter to me dated 13th October 2010 (ref.232/312/OBJ/255).

My question is:

Can you show how Airtrack's figure of 15 minutes closure time in an average hour can be reconciled with our figures shown in the attached document and explained above, and can you explain what is an "average hour" as it is used in the report ?"

Whilst not in the remit of the local committee, the Chairman has asked officers if they could investigate:

As this question relates to the information provided by BAA/HAL in the Environmental Assessment, this question was passed to BAA/HAL and their consultants to respond. The response is given below:

Actual barrier downtime is a function of the number of trains, whether they are fast or stopping services, the timetable in operation, the location of level crossing in relation to signals and stations, the extent to which there are perturbations in train services on any given day (e.g. operation of trains outside of timetable such that delays in arrival and departure from defined locations occur) and, for manually controlled barriers, daily operating circumstances affecting the decisions and opportunities of the signalmen to actuate the barrier closures.

Generally, conditions are constantly changing on the rail network: it's a dynamic system with complex interfaces between road, rail and people, so comparisons will always show variations. This has attempted to be overcome by modelling the way the timetable would actually work. The modelling is based on 12-hour video surveys and a methodology agreed with local authorities and Network Rail.

HAL's surveys were undertaken in Spring 2009 with additional CCTV and traffic count (and at some crossings also origin and destination). The survey submitted with the question was undertaken on 30 September 2010. From late September alterations have to be made on some routes because of problems caused by leaf fall. Fallen leaves are crushed by passing trains, creating a slippery film, which coats the rails. This means that drivers have to approach stations more slowly than normal and trains pull away from station stops more slowly than normal. Network Rail runs special rail cleaning trains but these can only reduce, not completely eliminate, this problem. Leaf Fall Timetables (<http://www.southwesttrains.co.uk/timetables.aspx>).

ITEM 4 TABLED

In respect of the definition of an average hour used in the report: the surveys were undertaken over a 12 hour period with downtimes measured during each hour. The total downtimes were then divided by the total 12 hour survey period to provide an average hour figure.

ITEM 4 Appendix 1 – Public Questions
Survey of Barrier Closure Times at Station crossing
30th September 2010

Hour	No. of closures	total minutes closed	Av. Minutes closed	Total time open
6 to 7 am	6	22	3.6 minutes	36
7 to 8 am	7	23	3.28	37
8 to 9 am	8	27	3.39	36
9 to 10 am	7	22	3.14	31
10 to 11 am	8	26	3.25	31
11 to 12 noon	4	19	4.75	43
12 to 1 pm	5	24	4.8	39
1 to 2 pm	8	19	2.39	40
2 to 3 pm	4	21	5.25	41

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3 to 4 pm	5	13	2.6	43
4 to 5 pm	7	19	2.7	43
5 to 6 pm	8	21	2.62	31
6 to 7 pm	9	31	3.14	31
7 to 8 pm	7	21	3	39

Average closing time over the 14 hours from 6 am to 8 pm is 22 minutes