



Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC.510
Date: November 23 2007	
The AirTrack rail project	

Report by the Technical Adviser

1. Members have been briefed on a number of occasions about the AirTrack project which aims to bring in a new rail connection from areas generally to the southwest of Heathrow Airport, to connect with the station at Terminal 5 and other destinations under investigation.
2. Proposals for construction of the route, which have been promoted for a number of years, were given a significant boost when BAA announced that it would meet the costs of obtaining a Transport and Works Act Order in Parliament which would authorise work to take place.
3. Support for the project continues to grow as evidenced at the annual meeting of the AirTrack Forum, held in November 2007, which was hosted by the South East England Regional Transport Board.
4. The Chairman of the Forum, Iain Reeve, said that it is expected that a planning application for the scheme will be submitted in February 2009.
5. Related parts of the project outlined by speakers were:
 - Improvement of Reading Station
 - Some domestic use of the vacated Eurostar platforms at Waterloo Station
 - The expected re-development of Waterloo Station in about 2013
 - Improvements to Clapham Junction Station
 - An intention to "give rail back to travellers at weekends"
6. Martin Tugwell, Director of Development for the South East Regional Assembly, spoke about the Inspector's Report of the Inquiry into the South East Plan which established the strategy to be implemented. In his Report, the Inspector had said that he "considered AirTrack critical to the spatial strategy... and hence it should be included". Implementation would enhance infrastructure for areas of re-development planned for growth in the Woking and Guildford areas.
7. Mike Noakes, General Manager Rail, BAA outlined the service levels being proposed of two semi-fast trains per hour to Waterloo, Woking/Guildford and Reading with the possibility of an increase in the number serving Waterloo. BAA has appointed Network Rail to advise it about capacity and where the pinchpoints are; a feasibility report is expected in December 2007. Halcrow has been appointed as consultant to undertake the engineering studies, there is a need to understand the integration with the Reading scheme opportunities.