

A303 - Stonehenge to Berwick Down Scheme

Written Representation of:
Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council

Registration ID 20019107

&

Dr A D Shuttleworth

Registration ID 20018263

Executive Summary

This written representation to the Examining Authority is a composite of the views of Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council (WSPC) and Dr Andrew Shuttleworth (ADS), a member of WSPC. This has been done for efficiency, simplicity and to prevent any unnecessary repetition.

Our starting point is that a bypass of both Stonehenge and Winterbourne Stoke is long overdue. Whilst we and many of our fellow villagers would have preferred a solution that either skirted the World Heritage Site (WHS) entirely, by taking the A303 to the north of Durrington, Larkhill and Shrewton (an option never considered) onto MoD land, or to the south of Amesbury and west, along the alignment of the A36 to the west of Stonehenge and rejoining the current A303 at Wylde, we now have a proposed solution which, though not ideal, is the least bad of those offered.

The points raised in our written representation thus seek to make the best of this route, for the village as a whole, in the short, medium and long term. My points specifically address the following issues:

1. the need and justification for a safe north-south crossing (ideally an underpass) of the A303 at the western end of the scheme at Yarnbury Castle. Highways England have artificially ended the proposed scheme to the east of the byway crossing; ignoring the impact the scheme is going to have on traffic speeds and safety as a result of improvements to the east of this point;
2. the undesirability and lack of credible justification for Green Bridge 1 in Winterbourne Stoke. Highways England's justification for this is demonstrably unsound and they have changed their rationale for it on three occasions since the scheme was first proposed;
3. the need to convert the route of the existing A303 to the west of Winterbourne Stoke to a gated, restricted byway, to allow limited controlled farm access and to restrict likely criminality;
4. the need for removal/filling-in of the existing lay-by to the west of Winterbourne Stoke to minimise its attraction to the travelling community and to restrict opportunities for criminality (eg. hare-coursing)
5. the need for both visual **and sound** barriers on the southern side of the Till viaduct and through the village. Furthermore, the need for visual barriers to be much higher than the proposed 1.5 metres. We believe the models used to assess sound levels, although in common usage, are unfit for purpose, are non-compliant with the UK Government's Aqua Guidelines¹ and

consequently, should not have been used to assess noise impacts for this scheme. Visual assessments seem to ignore the fundamental human response to movement and light in the visual field. The proposed visual barriers at 1.5m high are too low to achieve any realistic improvement in visual intrusion;

6. the need to reroute the proposed cycleway and footpath to the east of Winterbourne Stoke and a Green Bridge Crossing of the A360: re-routing the proposed footpath to the south of the current A303 does away with the need for a crossing of the old A303 at Longbarrow and requires a new Green Bridge on the A360, near its junction with the new route of the A303 at Longbarrow, instead of the proposed light-controlled crossing for equines, cyclists and pedestrians proposed by Highways England, as a critical safety measure;

*7. the need to ensure that Highways England have sought the appropriate scientific and health advice regarding the inhalation risks posed by radiation from particulate alpha emitters (particularly isotopes of polonium, bismuth and lead) found in any phosphatic chalk excavated from the proposed tunnel. Highways England have seemed unable to understand that the hazard posed by dried phosphatic chalk spread onto the land surface, comes not from the radon, a decay product of the uranium contained therein, but from particulate, α -emitting radon progeny, which can be inhaled into the deep lung, or ingested, by animals and humans. This can lead to increased incidence of cancer in those so exposed; and the level of risk needs to be determined. - **This concern has now been overtaken by events and is the subject of AQ 1.20 of the Planning Inspectorates first Written Questions².***

