

Sue Coles and Roger Upfold  
c/o [REDACTED]

A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down Case Team 01.05.2019  
National Infrastructure Planning  
The Planning Inspectorate  
Temple Quay House Bristol BS1 6PN  
By email: [A303Stonehenge@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:A303Stonehenge@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

**The Planning Act 2008 Section 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 8, 13 and 16**  
**Application by Highways England for an Order Granting Development Consent for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down**  
**Examination Timetable and procedure**

**Our references: 200118007 (Sue Coles) and 20018352 (Roger Upfold)**

Dear Sir/ Madam,

This response is made on behalf of Cycling UK, the national cycling charity that promotes all forms of cycling, protects the interests of existing and would-be cyclists. Sue Coles and Roger Upfold are members and Sue Coles is a registered campaigner for Cycling UK. Both cycle frequently in the area.

The following response relates solely to the impact on cycling of the proposed scheme and in particular the severance issues caused by the A303.

**General comments:**

The scheme takes insufficient account of the needs of cyclists wishing to cycle for transport reasons. It is the policy of both central and local governments to encourage sustainable transport and pedal cycles (of any type) are an important element of this mix. The scheme categorises cyclists as a single group wishing to access the public rights of way network. Although the needs of recreational users are important, the scheme should better reflect government policy on sustainable transport and also Highways England's own Cycling Strategy, which says:

*Our Cycling Strategy shows how our planned roads improvements programme will provide integrated schemes which improve cycling facilities. This will contribute towards the development of an integrated, safe, comprehensive and high-quality cycling network. For our network this means cycling facilities which are safe, separate from traffic and that enable users of all abilities to cycle, encouraging cycling as a sustainable form of transport.*

We support the decision to make the routes accessible to cyclists definitive rights of way and not permissive routes, particularly in view of the experience of the stopping up of the A344 between the A303 and Airman's Corner, especially the section between the A303 at Stonehenge Bottom and Byway 12. Many cyclists are unable to use this section because of its inadequate surface (and were prevented from using for 5 years while the grass established itself). In particular, this has a bearing on our comments below regarding the restricted byway proposed alongside the A360.

Surfacing of the proposed bridleways and restricted byways is of crucial importance to facilitate easy all-year, any time of day and all-weather usage by every type of cycle. When making the final decisions on this, we recommend that a cycling representative either from Cycling UK or the Cycle Opportunities Group Salisbury (COGS) is party to the discussions.

## **SPECIFIC COMMENTS**

### **Western Section**

The proposed bridleway alongside and then south of the A303 from Winterbourne Stoke to Longbarrow junction should be suitable for commuting cyclists. If the width is inadequate for differential surfacing, the surfacing should be suitable for all NMUs and we suggest a material such as Flexipave (see <http://www.kbiuk.co.uk/>), which is acceptable for walkers, cyclists and equestrians.

We strongly support the provision of a restricted byway (RB) from Longbarrow Junction north to Airmen's Corner. This is essential to allow cyclists to access the road to Shrewton at Airmen's Corner. In particular we note the objection by English Heritage to this RB. We refer here to the experience gained from the stopping up of the A344 which exacerbated the existing severance for cyclists in this area. The exclusion of this RB from the scheme would be a major blow to sustainable transport and would be contrary to Highways England own cycling strategy. The proposed width of this RB is 4m and so we suggest a material such as Flexipave that can safely accommodate all NMUs. The detailed design of the route for accessing the proposed RB from the south and north should be safe and convenient.

### **Central section**

On the alignment of the former A303, we strongly support the provision of an 8m wide RB consisting of:

- a 4m high quality bound low maintenance surface for cyclists, the mobility impaired and authorised motorised access, and
- a 4m wide chalk grassland habitat for pedestrians and horse riders.

We agree with the proposal to provide a suitably coloured surface for the bound section through the WHS. The bound surface should facilitate effective drainage which will also minimise ice build-

up and enable every type of cyclists to cycle at the recommended design speed for utility routes. The Amesbury end of the RB should flow into the existing Stonehenge Road.

*"A design speed of 20 mph is preferred for off-road routes intended predominantly for utility cycling. This provides a margin of safety for most cyclists. The average speed of cyclists on a level surface is around 12 mph".*  
(Department for Transport Local Transport Note Cycle Infrastructure Design)

## **Eastern Section**

### **Countess Roundabout**

This junction is part of a south – north route for cyclists from Amesbury onto the A345. Highways England has stated "The precise form of non-motorised user (NMU) crossing will be confirmed during detailed design. At this stage, it is anticipated that this will include signalised road crossings to provide safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists, preserving north/south connectivity along the A345 and enabling pedestrians and cyclists to pass beneath the A303 flyover above". As long as these signalised road crossings are provided, we have no objection to the removal of the existing underpass.

### **Diversion of existing Allington Road/Track**

The documents refer to this as a Track. However, it would appear that it is the current tarmac road from Allington village. We support the provision of a new highway linking directly into Solstice Park. This will allow cyclists to safely access Solstice Park and also Amesbury town.

We note that the section of the road to be stopped up between the new 'link' Allington road and the A303 will remain open for authorised access. We urge that this section is also kept available to cyclists and pedestrians travelling to and from the Cholderton Road, including Stonehenge YH – see additional comments below.

### **Cycleway/footway Cholderton Road (known as Amesbury Road) to the former Allington Road**

In response to a request for this link as part of the scheme, Highways England has stated "A new bridleway in this location is not necessary to integrate the Scheme into the wider public rights of way network and so is beyond the proposed scope of the Scheme. The provision of new bridleway in this location would be a matter for Wiltshire Council to consider".

As stated in our earlier response, the A303 already creates de facto severance for most cyclists and this will be compounded by the present scheme. There is currently no direct route to and from Stonehenge YH at Cholderton to Amesbury avoiding the A303 other than the byway south-west from the YH to Arundel Farm, the surface of which is at present completely unsuitable for the majority of cyclists. This severance should be eliminated. The current scheme offers a cost-effective way for Highways England to provide a bidirectional, off-carriageway shared cycleway/footway to allow users to access the new Allington Road to Solstice Park.

If such a route were provided, we would not object to the stopping up of the section of Allington Road from the A303 to the new road. If it is not provided, we object to the stopping up of that section of road to NMU traffic.

## **Ratfyn**

Amesbury 44 has a tarmac bridge over the A303 from Amesbury to Ratfyn. Access to the bridge from Ratfyn Road (Amesbury side) needs minor improvement, which would improve access for cyclists wishing to cycle from Amesbury to Bulford and complement the scheme built by Wiltshire Council from the Solstice Roundabout to Bulford.

Highways England has stated that “access improvements to Ratfyn Bridge are not needed as part of the Scheme and are beyond its scope”. However, it also says that construction work will involve work from the Ratfyn sub-station to the A303. Improvements to the link from Ames 44 to Ames 35 could tie in with this work.

## **Construction issues**

During scheme construction it is very important that the needs of cyclists of all types are fully met throughout all phases of construction without loss of existing rights, and where necessary for safety, prioritised. Any temporary alternatives must be acceptable to cyclists and meet HE's Cycling Strategy. In the absence of other suitable facilities cyclists must still be able to ride along the entire length of the existing roads within the scheme, including the A303.

## **Accompanied site inspection**

Surfacing is particularly important for cyclists and we suggest that any site inspection includes Byway 12 between A303 and the stopped-up A344. Despite repair to the gravel, it is still unsuitable for most cyclists and because of damage was the subject of a temporary experimental TRO last year after repairs. In addition, the permissive bridleway along the former A344 from Stonehenge Bottom to Byway 12 shows the problems with permissive, unsealed routes.

We request that the above is taken into consideration and are at your disposal should you require further information or wish to discuss issues.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Coles and Roger Upfold

Enclosures:

Previous consultation responses by Sue Coles and Roger Upfold