

Written Representation regarding the Application for Development Consent for the A303 road scheme, Amesbury to Berwick Down

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My association with the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site is of long standing, through my membership and committee service for the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society (Chairman of the Archaeology Committee and Council/Board), CBA Wessex and as Trust Member for Wiltshire for Wessex Archaeology. Many of my research interests have been centered on the WHS: the archaeology, heritage landscape management, environment issues, remote sensing and experimental archaeology. I am a member of the Avebury WHS Steering Committee and c-Chair the WHS Archaeological and Historical Research Group.

The family owns and manages a farm in the Avebury part of the WHS which was the first to gain Countryside Stewardship in the area, setting the example for the historic environment to feature as a strength in such applications.

When the WHS was first Inscribed in 1986 there was no category for Cultural Landscapes. Since then the assurance has been given that, although not inscribed as such, this is the way in which the WHS is viewed and research throughout the areas has reinforced the necessity of this approach:-

"...The World Heritage Site extends far beyond the iconic henges at Avebury and Stonehenge to encompass their surrounding landscapes, each containing an unusually dense concentration of exceptionally well-preserved prehistoric monuments." (Duncan Wilson, CE Historic England, Foreward in *A Research Framework for the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site* ed M Leivers & A B Powell. Wessex Archaeology Monograph 38, 2016.)

The research mentioned above has revealed the presence of many now invisible monuments, whether deliberately created as such or subsequently destroyed by ploughing or development. These sites are as important as those currently visible and as components of these complicated and designed landscapes should be treated as such.

The proposal for the development of the road scheme does not exhibit cognisance of the importance of the gradual development of the Stonehenge landscape. The proposed cutting in the western part of the area would slice through one of the most important and very early areas to have been created. It would sever the WHS, irretrievably damage the landscape and destroy the tranquillity of the western part of the area. The Wiltshire Council Core Strategy, Core Policy 59iii includes *"...reduce the negative impacts of roads, traffic...."* – what is difficult to envisage is that the road proposals would improve the situation as it is now as the noise levels would rise with faster movement and the impact from traffic entering and leaving tunnels.

Despite many representations over the years from many historic landscape specialists, it has been very difficult to persuade developers and others that the WHS is not just about the henge monuments at Stonehenge and Avebury but about the entire landscapes within which they sit. The so-called protection of the eastern part of the Stonehenge landscape would be at the expense of the western section.

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