

Regarding the content of the HA Assessment it is also important to know that 'For site designations a search area of 2km either side of the route was used. A larger search area for mobile organisations, such as birds, was employed, in order to make a realistic determination of the impacts they may incur'.

In addition a statement was included which forecast that 'Construction of the A303 Realignment and the Eastern link would result in a direct adverse effect on 80 known archaeology sites'.

It should be understood that most of the 80 sites identified were well away from the Route under examination.

Here now follows further extracts from the HA Assessment with each being identified at the start by the Assessment paragraph number:

5.3.5.1. The A303 Realignment route would result in a substantial indirect beneficial effect on settings of 25 upstanding sites within the WHS, through the closure of the A303 and A344 to motorised traffic.

5.3.5.2. The WHS is a landscape of international importance by virtue of its prehistoric monuments. The scheme would bring significant indirect benefits to the monuments within the WHS.

5.4.3.6 Its main disbenefit would be its effect on unspoilt tranquil countryside.

5.10.3.9. The A303 Realignment would remove completely the existing A303 between Countess Roundabout and Longbarrow Junction and part of the A344 within the World Heritage Site and replace them with byways. This would result in additional benefits over and above those of the Published Scheme (the Tunnel), assuming that the removal of the roads facilities the aims and objectives of the Stonehenge WHS Management Plan. Rights of Way users within the WHS would benefit from improved amenity, as they would not be subjected to impacts from A303 traffic.

5.10.3.12. Any strategic benefit of the route would be localised to two areas: the impact on the nationally important Stonehenge World Heritage Site, and the strategic impact on Salisbury itself. With regards to the former, the route would contribute to the overall enhancement of the area. **It would protect the future of the site for years to come, enhance the visitor experience and lead to increased (and better managed) visitor numbers in the future.**

5.10.3.19. There would be a positive impact for businesses in Salisbury. The improved accessibility would enable businesses to move goods and services out of the city, making it a more attractive and accessible business location. In addition the proximity of the A303 to Salisbury would bring one of the region's spinal routes within close proximity to the city enhancing the possibility of passing trade from tourist and business traffic. This would be of benefit to businesses providing accommodation and catering facilities.

5.10.3.20. There would clearly be significant benefits for those who visit Stonehenge, and other sites in the WHS. The site would become free from the visual and noise intrusions that arise currently from the A303 and the A344. In the long term this could lead to potential

increases in visitor numbers to the local area and associated benefits in terms of volume and value of visitor trips.

5.11.3.2. The route would give pleasant views of the Till valley and the Avon valley for travellers in both directions on the main line, with dramatic views from Beacon Hill for westbound travellers. In between there would be a series of views of rolling downland and good views of Old Sarum.

5.11.3.6. The A303 Realignment section comprises a longer route (approximately 25km in total compared to 17km) than the existing A303 and as such, may be considered to contribute to driver frustration on the part of regular users of the A303 owing to increased journey distance. However it is expected that traffic using the route would encounter only a 1 minute delay over the existing situation (for free flowing traffic), while during periods of congestion, the route would be quicker. Thus it is considered that the route would result in benefit in this respect.

5.11.3.9. The route would overcome current problems on the A303 associated with fear of accidents. Fear of accidents relating to the narrowing of the carriageway, the termination of safety barriers between vehicles travelling in opposite directions, poor standard lay by arrangements, distraction from Stonehenge, and fear of pedestrians stepping into the road would be reduced on the route. By including design in accordance with contemporary safety standards (in terms of safety barriers and lay bys) avoiding settled areas, grade separated junctions with footpaths, bridleways and byways, and bypassing Stonehenge , a reduction in driver stress over the current situation would be achieved.

5.11.3.11. The route would overcome problems associated with the existing lay bys on the A303 which do not meet current standards. The proposed new lay bys would meet current standards, and as such would provide comparatively better places to stop and provide better protection from traffic than those on the existing A303, as well as improved sight lines for entry and exit over those on the current route.

5.11.4.1. Temporary driver stress due to construction activities would be mitigated by measures identified in the Contractor's Environmental Management Plan. This would include clearly defined traffic management and effective temporary signing. Once the route is open to traffic many problems on the existing roads that lead to driver stress would be reduced.

5.11.5.1. It is considered that mitigation, combined with likely reduced fear of accidents and reductions in uncertainty associated with the route would ultimately result in benefits in terms of reduced driver stress for users of the A303. It is considered that overall the route would result in a reduction of Driver Stress over the baseline situation from **High to Low** for the majority of users of the A303, in particular for users accessing the A303 from Salisbury and the south who would benefit from an Eastern Link. This would help to mitigate against the loss of views of Stonehenge for A303 and A344 traffic.

5.14.3.1. The route would provide for, and encourage car usages rather than public transport, but government guidance does recognize that road development is an integral part of an overall integrated transport strategy. Because the route would be less direct than the existing A303, it may encourage a small element of trips to divert from roads to public

transport. **Overall the route would be consistent with plans and policies for sustainable development.**

5.14.3.2. The A303 Realignment would help support the A303/A30 corridor as a strategic corridor to the south west, albeit on a less direct route. It would therefore be consistent with plans and policies at national, regional and local level to upgrade this strategic route to the south-west.

5.14.3.18. The removal of all major roads and traffic from the World Heritage Site would result in substantial beneficial reductions in noise. Properties close to the A303 between Winterbourne Stoke and Amesbury would enjoy similar gains. **These benefits would be in substantial conformity with policies and plans for noise and vibration.**

5.14.5.1. A review of a wide range of plans and policies at the international/national, regional, county and local level, indicates that the route would achieve considerable compliance with policy. The WHS is a cultural heritage resource and landscape of international importance. Removing the existing A303 and part of the A344 within the WHS and returning them to agriculture would improve the amenity of visitors, in conformity with the aims and objectives of the Stonehenge WHS Management and other Cultural Heritage policies and plans.

End of HA Assessment Comments.

Of all the many treasures on these islands, none is more internationally revered than Stonehenge.

We have recently started to realise that the standing stones are just a beginning, they sit at the heart of the world's most significant and best preserved Stone Age landscape and the Government plans to endanger this unique site with the construction of a tunnel. (Mr Dan Snow President of the Council of British Archaeology)

To construct a tunnel on the World Heritage Site would be the most brutal intrusion into the Stonehenge Age Landscape ever. Archaeologists have understood over the last 10 to 15 years that Stonehenge isn't a monument, Stonehenge is a landscape. (Tony Robinson)

The Stonehenge Alliance, which is supported by environmental and heritage organisations say the tunnel plans will cause 'severe and permanent damage' to the archaeological landscape of the World heritage Site, in direct conflict with International advice to the Government. We are shocked at the Highways England indifference to UNESCO's advice. (Kate Fielden)

The International Council on Monuments and Sites which advises United Nations Cultural Body UNESCO, has said it "firmly objects to the proposals for a tunnel at Stonehenge". (ICOMOS UK)

There is serious concern with the proposal to construct a huge double tunnel under the World Heritage Site because of the potential danger of 'underground water diversion' which could interfere with the normal underground water flow towards the City of Salisbury. The City has a Cathedral which foundations sit in four feet of gravel and water and any major change to the water level in the foundations could force the building to be closed. Indeed, any

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In June 1988 the United Kingdom signed the World Heritage Convention. The Stonehenge World Heritage Site (6000 acres) was designated.

Under Article 4 of the World Heritage Convention, each signatory state pledges 'to do all it can and to the utmost of its resources' to ensure the identification, protection, conservation, preservation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage situated on its territory.

The protection of the World Heritage Sites will receive international scrutiny.

The region immediately round Stonehenge contains more prehistoric barrow-burials than any other area of the same size in Britain, and this concentration, like the grouping of graves round a church, must reflect the great sanctity of the district from Neolithic times onwards.

However, because of the growing amount of traffic using the A303 road which crosses the World Heritage Site from East to West, the Government decided to produce a Plan which would ease the the flow of traffic as it crosses the World Heritage Site.

The Plan consists of a short Tunnel moving under the Stonehenge Stones, with deep 'Exit Roads' from the Tunnel exits and rejoining the A303 roadway outside the World Heritage Site.

Unfortunately, the construction of the 'Exit Roads' would produce serious damage to the World Heritage Site and in particular to the Archaeology contained therein.

It is now noted that in order to move towards meeting the 'Signed Heritage Convention' the Highways Agency (now Highways England), tasked the Firm Balfour Beatty/Costain, to study the Tunnel Option for the World Heritage Site and produce an 'Archaeological Mitigation Design Document'. The Document Reference is: No .P1A-ENV-ACH-R001 and dated March 2004.

This is a very detailed document which spells out the damage that would arise from the Tunnel and road construction on the World Heritage Site. In the 'Document Conclusion' the following is published:

"It is inevitable that some archaeological remains would be adversely affected - Where possible archaeological remains would be preserved in situ - However, where this is not possible the strategy described in this document would ensure that these remains are treated 'with due care and respect'. So whilst this is a good move to try to keep archaeology safe it does not properly comply with the Government Signed Convention. Moreover, it certainly seems to be much more acceptable to produce a bypass and thus continue to maintain the Governments original intention to Protect the World Heritage Site for the benefit of future generations.

Finally, this major road and Tunnel construction on the Heritage site does not comply with the Convention signed by the Government in June 1988, as listed above.

THE PLAN FOR A SHORT BYPASS THAT IS COMPLETELY CLEAR OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE AND WHICH WILL CERTAINLY PRODUCE A MAJOR REDUCTION IN CONSTRUCTION COST COMPARED TO A SHORT TUNNEL PLAN.

So in order to comply with the World Heritage Convention, in 2004 the RSA Planning Officer presented an alternative Plan for the Government in order to solve the Traffic Problem on the A303 as it moves on across the World Heritage Site.

The Plan shows the A303 moving on a 'BYPASS', well outside and just south of the World Heritage Site, thus leaving the World Heritage site completely free of a main road. This very busy A 303 bypass Road will thereby fully comply with the Heritage Convention already signed by the Government.

Several different options for a bypass were examined, including a bypass to the north of the World Heritage Site, and also a bypass well to the south of the city of Salisbury. However, having taken an aircraft flight over the whole area both at low and high level, and also walked most of the area, it was decided to produce a bypass just south and outside the Heritage Site. This bypass location would only add some four minutes for vehicle movement as opposed to driving through a Tunnel. But there are other major advantages that this new route for the A303 will provide.

So, in addition to this bypass staying well clear of the Heritage Site, it will offer at some future date the option for the construction of an Eastern bypass link to the east of the city of Salisbury, and this Eastern Link will enable the very heavy present movement of traffic passing through the City of Salisbury to use this Link and thus ensure the removal of a vast amount of 'Pollution' from the city streets. This will be of considerable benefit for the future health of many hundreds of citizens of the City area. It will also reduce traffic in a number of villages in the Wylve Valley and again improve the health of many more citizens in those villages.

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ACTION NOW NEEDED BY HIGHWAYS ENGLAND (HE)

HE have a number of very experienced road planners and it is now suggested that they take the line of the already presented A303 Realignment Plan and examine the ground very carefully and when satisfied that they understand the Line detail of the route, they make contact with the Land Owners and Farmers in order to brief them on the line, but also to adjust wherever possible should it be helpful to them.

Next, they need to identify where bridges are required and make a decision whether a bridge should be under or over the new A303. They should also examine the entry points onto the existing A303 east and west of the area and decide on the detail required.

The road crossing over the river Avon was examined by the Highways Agency lady who completed the Newbury bypass on the A34, and in my presence she explained that a low level crossing by the Church south of Lower Woodford, then the road going in a low gully round the north side of Old Sarum would be excellent and not seen from the top of Old Sarum. She ended by saying that the eventual planting of trees would be excellent.

The road then goes up the hill going west and joining the A360 Road which runs north towards Winterbourne Stoke. It then needs experienced planners from HE to decide the detail of it. With HE information on traffic detail a decision needs to be made as to whether the new A303 bypass should form up with the A360 current road.

CONCLUSION

It is understood that UNESCO has called for a bypass road off the World Heritage Site and the A303 Realignment would be very good for this purpose.

The Tunnel construction requires several bypass temporary roads on the WHS during the Tunnel construction, whereas the A303 Realignment plan can be built without affecting the running of traffic on the current existing A303 road on the WHS. The entry points for the bypass can be completed when the rest of the roadway has been completed.

I have shown the plan to Road Engineers and because it is a surface road they suggested that it could probably be completed in under two years and not eight like a Tunnel road.

The cost using the average dual carriageway cost seen on the Web might well be about 450 million which would be a major reduction of the Tunnel cost.

I have very high confidence in the ability of the HE planning staff and I am sure that they will be able to assemble a good working plan on the line shown in the document "Protection for The World Heritage Site and Stonehenge".

Having started road construction work in 1951 when with the Royal Engineer's and after three years studying road planning at London University I produced a plan to remove all traffic from the main Street of Bromley in South London. I presented it to the University and they sent it immediately to the Bromley Council who carried out the plan.

I would be pleased to talk with the HE Road Planners should they wish me to help in any way.