

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [A303 Stonehenge](#)  
**Subject:** Submission  
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**Attachments:** [19.01 Chippindale Stonehenge planning.docx](#)

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To Stonehenge inquiry administrators

1

Thank you for notification of hearings in August.

Many months ago, I declared I wanted to make a submission. I still do.

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I have been ill and out-of-action for some periods, and so was not able to reply or respond to earlier e-mails about hearings.

My interest and special expert knowledge concerns heritage, especially the history of attitudes to Stonehenge in recent centuries – that is, how our concept of Stonehenge has come about, therefore how we understand it today, therefore how we plan for the future – the purpose of your enquiry.

3

I respectfully suggest I have unmatched expertise in these matters. As long ago as 1984, one of the best-regarded of British publishers, Thames & Hudson, published my book «Stonehenge complete». It was the first full-length study of Stonehenge not in terms of clues to its prehistoric past, but of our contemporary understanding over the many centuries since its recognition in medieval times upon to the present day. The first edition was well received and awarded the Colt Hoare Prize for the best archaeology book of the year. It has never been out of print, and is now in a much-revised and updated 4th edition.

I am semi-retired, still very active in archaeological research. I was Reader (research professor) in Archaeology at the reputed University of Cambridge – a post given in recognition of my having a consistent record of research at a world level of importance, my Stonehenge studies included. I am now Reader Emeritus, Emeritus meaning an honorary post awarded to a University teacher who is formally retired and in practice still very active.

I attach my original statement, whose content explains why I think I can and should contribute to your enquiry.

I was a signatory to the joint submission from the expert Stonehenge group. That was a collected statement by a collective group, mostly concerned with research into prehistoric Stonehenge and its landscape. Therefore I see my own not as a duplication, but as a complement with its own relevant viewpoint.

4

I therefore request that I be permitted to contribute to the hearings. My submission concerns heritage, with its consequences for the landscape and visual consequences of the proposed

improvement.therefore it seems to me that my. contribution matches the subjects to be addressed on 21 August 2019.

I therefore request the opportunity to attend and contribute on that day.

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**Contribution offered to the Stonehenge A303 inquiry**

January 2019

In 1983 I published *Stonehenge complete*, the first full study of historic Stonehenge – that is, not of the prehistoric place, but of its understanding since it was rediscovered almost 800 years ago. The book earned a national prize as the best archaeology book of the year, and has never been out of print. It remains the definitive study. I say this not to show off, but to indicate I still have unmatched, even unique expert knowledge of Stonehenge in the long term.

The past, our known history benefits us in the present by showing what before was got right and what wrong. With it, we can avoid repeating mistakes.

The current A303 proposal is bad, as it makes two major errors, both proven by history.

**Mistake 1: a narrow definition of Stonehenge, as essentially the famous stone setting**

Visitors today look first to the central standing stones, the things Stonehenge is world-famous for. That stone setting is just 35 metres across. They overlook the fainter, other, less astonishing traces around it. As early as the mid 17th century, and strongly from the mid 18th century to the present, field researchers have noticed, studied and excavated those traces and come to a better definition of what is Stonehenge. Not just those stones, not just other stones near by, Stonehenge is now rightly seen as an extensive landscape, going out a matter of kilometres in several directions to include, among other places: the very much earlier settlement of Blick Mead, recently damaged by preparatory work for the new A303 and imperilled by the present plan; the earlier complex of features near Winterbourne Stoke roundabout, which the western approaches to the planned tunnel would badly damage, and the enormous and complex “henge” site at Durrington Walls.

One of many ways this was recognized was the definition by Government of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site as that extended area, when it was successfully nominated in 1986.

The length of the tunnel is fixed **by respect for the central stones *alone***, defined so the A303 will not be visible from that spot point. This definition of Stonehenge is wrong. It has been obsolete since before AD 1750!

A planning analogy would be this: an English country house has at its core a fine English Palladian mansion, plus Victorian additions to the house itself, varied stables and a model farm, formal gardens, and beyond those a made picturesque landscape, complete with follies, water features, ornamental lakes, neo-classical temples. Good planning practice today would care for it all, spread across several square kilometres. It would not say, “Anything of this can safely be wrecked or imperilled, just as long as the early central mansion is not interfered with.”

**Mistake 2: a false hope that a minimal-cost approach will in the future be seen as correct**

The fame of Stonehenge continues to grow, as it has for decades and centuries, and so has the number of visitors. Even before its new visitor centre opened in 2013, numbers were climbing fast: from 1,010,000 in 2010 up to 1,582,500 in 2017. This interest and the respect for this most famous of ancient places, which that number shows, is likely to grow.

Expectations also do strongly grow that the highest standard of care be given to this place of world importance, and that a Government is willing to invest sufficient public money to treat Stonehenge with fitting respect. Tunnels are expensive, so the plan evidently has been designed **not primarily to protect Stonehenge**, in the correct larger and full definition of what Stonehenge is, but instead **to minimize the tunnel length and so reduce its cost**.

A relevant precedent is the previous visitor provision close by the stones: designed late 1960s in a way to minimize cost; built 1969-1970; recognized as a mistake late 1970s; seen as an inept and nasty embarrassment by English Heritage, and denounced by MPs as a “national disgrace” mid 1980s; 2013 finally replaced with good and expensive new facilities after many years’ searching for a sustainable long-term approach.

Notice the time from that **cheapskate** “solution” to recognizing it was a matter of **national shame** was only some 15 years. The present cheap-as-can-be tunnel scheme is so bad one can be sure it will in turn become a matter of shame and embarrassment more quickly. I would guess perhaps before it is even completed.

**For these proven reasons from history, the present scheme should not be approved.**