

From: [REDACTED]
To: [A303 Stonehenge](#)
Subject: A303 Stonehenge plans
Date: 04 April 2022 15:38:03

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wanted to add my comments about the A303 National Highways Scheme for your consideration.

Firstly, I cannot understand why National Highways (NH) has presented virtually the same scheme that was called in for re-consideration.

There have been no changes in the re-submitted scheme taking into account the World Heritage Committee decision in 2021 which made it clear Stonehenge was in danger of being placed on the World Heritage "in Danger List" if the NH scheme was not modified. The scheme has not been modified in any realistic manner. It is virtually the same scheme.

The re-submitted scheme makes no attempt to deal with the Secretary of State's (SoS) reservations about the proposed western cutting area which he pronounced as "significantly adverse". This is indefensible given the very real damage this cutting would inflict on the Stonehenge site. It smacks of a Department that does not accept the SoS's comments at all.

It is not clear to me that NH has made any effort to assess properly alternative routes that would be less damaging to the Stonehenge site. A southern by-pass route might bring with it extra problems but it would be cheaper. A longer tunnel would significantly reduce the impact on one of our few World Heritage sites.

Is this scheme really the only solution to safeguarding the Stonehenge site? Where is the detailed analysis of other measures like reducing road traffic, improving access to the south west stand reducing road emissions. In any event, the A303 Stonehenge scheme is only part of an incomplete and incompletely funded group of road improvements. Bearing in mind that our roads investment strategy should be reviewed, according to the Office of Rail and Road, and in the light of Coronavirus and climate change this scheme really does need a re-think.

It appears the construction costs have not been updated, even at the time of re-submission, and now this would be more relevant given our raging inflation and the impact of Brexit and other world events. The scheme has already been recognized as "low to poor value for money" by the National Audit Office in 2019.

The Carbon assessments and costs have also not been subject to updating. Nor is there any nod to the need to take urgent action to reduce our emissions, not add to them with a costly and unnecessary road scheme.

The Environment Act 2021 also places new regulatory constraints with regard to nature recovery which the NH seem to be blithely unaware of. It seems to me there is no case for the scheme on environmental grounds if the submissions of our environmental experts like the RSPB are taken into account. There is a strong

likelihood of contamination of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation.

Culturally the scheme would permanently desecrate huge parts of the exceptional archaeological landscape of the World Heritage Site. The tunnel which NH trumpets as being a safeguard for Stonehenge would in fact take it out of its inter-relationship with other nearby monuments if the landscape. This takes no heed of the loss of important archaeological remains still to be unearthed.

Please re-examine the Development Consent Order. Much has changed since the Examination in 2019 and it warrants a re-examination by an independent panel, even before the SoS re-determines the application for what is essentially the same road scheme.

Yours sincerely,

B.S.Hinsley

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