

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [A303 Stonehenge](#)  
**Subject:** Planning Act 2008 and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 Re-determination of the Application by Highways England for an Order granting Development Consent for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down ("A303 Stonehenge")  
**Date:** 04 April 2022 15:22:35

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I am registered as an Interested Party and I have submitted my opinions on the scheme at various stages in the process. I am a private individual, retired Chartered Surveyor and amateur archaeologist.

At each stage I have expressed my objections to the proposed scheme, which are:

- The view of the stones from the A303 is an inherent part of this Heritage Asset. The land including the main monument was gifted to the Nation by Cecil and Mary Chubb and the scheme would effectively rob the Nation of the most widely experienced aspect of this gift.
- The view represents free advertising for the English Heritage visitor facility and it is absurd for EH to justify the scheme on visitor experience. The majority of visitors just want to see the stones but the more informed can experience the wider landscape of the World Heritage Site, without significant, if any, adverse effect from the A303.
- Stonehenge is a small part of a complicated prehistoric landscape. Even during the progress of the scheme, new discoveries were being made, which are only just beginning to be interpreted. There is reason to expect that discoveries of international importance will continue to be made.
- The adverse effect of the tunnel portals and ventilation shafts on the natural landscape has been deliberately misrepresented by simplistic computer graphics.
- The scheme has only evaluated two tunnel options. An independent highways engineer has described this as a 1980s solution to a 21st century problem. A surface route avoiding the World Heritage site was rejected by Highways England on archaeological grounds – there is no significant archaeology and this should be re-examined.
- It is widely experienced that major road schemes, allowing more traffic flow, often just exacerbate congestion elsewhere.
- The only way to make the scheme appear to break even, in value for money terms, was to add in £955m for heritage benefits, based on a very small sample of opinions about simplistic and questionable 'benefits'. The sample was not asked about the detrimental effect of the scheme. The Examining Authority did not accept this dubious calculation.
- The economy of the SW will suffer from the scheme for many years because of traffic delays and environmental damage from construction work and 'bottlenecks' elsewhere on the A303, (solutions presently unfunded).

### **What's New?**

So much has changed since options, other than the short tunnel, had been discounted. Highways England appear to have acted in the interests of the Civil Engineering industry by championing this scheme. It has not served public interest by ignoring changed circumstances.

**The economy** - the financial effect of the pandemic and now the increase in energy costs due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine were not the circumstances existing when this scheme was being forced through against very strong opposition. The future is uncertain and the economy could worsen. There has to be better ways of spending £1.7 billion (or substantially more if geological conditions require un-costed additional works) than on this high risk and unpopular scheme.

**Climate Change** - the effects of climate change are being experienced world-wide and there is much more public support for measures to address emissions and energy consumption.

At the local level (London), road users are charged to help reduce congestion. The creation of barriers to prevent 'rat-runs' through residential areas have been widely accepted and the expected increase in traffic on major roads has not materialised. Such schemes have used smart technology to allow local authorised traffic through. Cycle lanes that reduce the capacity for motor traffic seem to have resulted in fewer holdups not more. There is no obvious substantial objection to these measures and there is tangible support for the reductions of vehicle emissions.

On the A303 smart solutions could warn drivers of congestion and holdups due to sightseers in time to use another route (effectively what Google Maps already does but with roadside information).

An upgrade of the main rail network to the south-west and improvement to local public transport services to benefit the south-west would be far more in tune with Government promises to cut energy consumption and emissions.

Isn't the control of road use likely to be an inevitable and preferable solution to congestion on our roads, rather than this expensive and unpopular civil engineering vanity project?

**Historic Environment** – Recent sampling revealed thousands of prehistoric artifacts – the scheme would 'bulldoze' 99% of them away, contrary to Historic England's normal archaeological excavation conditions. The latest confirmation that a 2-kilometre diameter circle of pits within the World Heritage Site is another layer of prehistory that was unknown when the scheme started. Highways England dismissed this discovery as natural 'sinkholes' rather than keeping an open mind but excavations have proved that they were man-made but not yet understood.

Please include my personal views in your report to the Transport Secretary.

Laurence Elvin

