

From: [REDACTED]
To: [A303 Stonehenge](#)
Subject: Stonehenge World Heritage Site and its future: the urgent need to change the plans by National Highways.
Date: 02 April 2022 21:03:21

Dear Grant Shapps,

For the sake of this World Heritage Site please take note of the following information when reconsidering the plans by National Highways Development. You will surely see that it is imperative that you re-examine all the information, especially the new details that have come to light since October 2019.

The WHS is described in a "Statement of Outstanding Universal Value" published on the website of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre. It includes these statements:

"The World Heritage property Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites is internationally important for its complexes of outstanding prehistoric monuments. Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world, while Avebury is the largest. Together with inter-related monuments, and their associated landscapes, they demonstrate Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and mortuary practices resulting from around 2000 years of continuous use and monument building between circa 3700 and 1600 BC. As such they represent a unique embodiment of our collective heritage.

"There is an exceptional survival of prehistoric monuments and sites within the World Heritage property including settlements, burial grounds, and large constructions of earth and stone. Today, together with their settings, they form landscapes without parallel.

"The boundaries of the property capture the attributes that together convey Outstanding Universal Value at Stonehenge and Avebury. They contain the major Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments that exemplify the creative genius and technological skills for which the property is inscribed.

The information which you must take into account include the fact that National that Highways has not:

- made any changes to the Scheme to take the 2021 World Heritage Committee Decision into account;
- accounted for the fact that Stonehenge is "*a landscape that is considered **“the most archaeologically significant land surface without parallel”**. The whole Stonehenge landscape has an outstanding universal value that is of immense significance for all people for all time, and this transcends any consideration of sorting out a 21st century part-time traffic jam.*"

- acknowledged that the Secretary of State found the Scheme's impact on the proposed western cutting area would be "significantly adverse": ..
- *"The tunnel is too short: It is c.3km across a c.5km World Heritage Site. Whilst It improves the view from the stone monument the Expressway would cause a significant gash to the east and west of the WHS. "*
- fully assessed alternative routes less damaging to the World Heritage Site e.g., a southern bypass route would be cheaper even if there might be some problems with it, while a longer tunnel would reduce impact on the World Heritage Site;
- National Highways has not explored alternatives to hard engineering solutions in the context of safeguarding and enhancing the World Heritage Site – e.g. a package of measures to reduce road traffic, road emissions and improve access to the South West;
- updated the scheme construction costs; the cost estimates now being out of date means that -as with HS2 - the government is not keeping the public honestly informed
- taken in to account international concerns for climate change, which has significantly increased with the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report. The world must take urgent action to reduce emissions, not increase them as any new Stonehenge road scheme would.
- accepted the Environment Act 2021, which sets new ambitions around nature recovery.
- updated the carbon assessment and costs.

The government seems to have chosen to ignore these vital aspects.

No further damage should be done to the archaeological landscape of Stonehenge.

Future generations would be appalled at those who decided that road widening should be at the expense of England's most iconic World Heritage Site.

If A303 widening at Stonehenge is felt to be essential it should be done by means of a deep bored tunnel at least 4.5km long. Anything shorter would cause irreparable damage to this landscape, in breach of the World Heritage Convention.

Please listen and accept that the whole world needs you to instruct National Highways to follow UNESCO advice and make new plans.

Yours,

Sue Silver