

From: [REDACTED]
To: [A303 Stonehenge](#)
Subject: Anxious submissions re considerations of Stonehenge Planning Inspectorate
Date: 04 April 2022 23:19:38

Dear colleagues in conservation,

You will have surely read many times the entirely valid anxieties associated with the National Highways proposal re a practical way to get traffic - including on many past occasions our own vehicle - past one of the most remarkable world-venerated landscapes in Britain, namely Stonehenge in its vibrant setting amid a wealth of ancient antiquities, earthworks, and at least a thousand ancient burial mounds.

I offer then these thoughts as a former museum professional (Director of Education & Interpretation with the National Museum of Wales) and as the previous maker of the most widely used children's educational history programmes on British television (plus as it happened the Inset-supporting materials for the government's initial History curriculum).

From this standpoint, I can only endorse the need for us to look again, and ask that you re-examine the task of putting the transiting vehicles in an appropriate place. (Believe me I loved, back in the 70s, driving west to east, and pointing out to our children those remarkable stone tributes to ancient belief and observation. But I also knew even back then that our polluting Volkswagen Beetle should not have intruded on that landscape!)

So yes - to reiterate -

- National Highways has not apparently acknowledged the 'significantly adverse' impact of the proposed western cutting;
- it has not fully assessed alternative less damaging routes;
- it has not explored alternatives to hard engineering solutions, nor updated the construction costs (including climate emission changes and carbon costs), and faced the appropriate challenges of the 2021 Environment Act.

But then you already know all these incontrovertible assertions from other submissions.

Perhaps you might indeed share the idealistic wish that would see the present A303 revert to something like the moorland track of Thomas Hardy's reddleman. Certainly our generation can not any longer justify earth-moving major roads through this landscape, a place which once-violated is never-recoverable. Today this World Revered Site is dominated by the multiple reddlemen of commerce, logistics and passing tourism. We need to send the road another way.

I admit to being surprised that Professor Mike Parker Pearson was quite so pragmatic in stating, in interview, merely that the tunnel proposal is too short at three kilometres. We should listen to him thoroughly though, and take heart from his observation that the World Heritage Site is not only more than 5 kilometres across, but that a tunnel would constitute a massive constructional earthwork which would belittle and dwarf the heritage into insignificance. Surely then a southern bypass should be the least intrusive solution?

Our ancestors venerated this charged, monumental, and unique world landscape.

Here, in their distant centuries, our past generations accumulated their own mystery and reverence for the landscape which enfolds Stonehenge's climactic stones. Here they hand-made their cursuses, and buried here their families in respectful mounds. Nowadays, in our theme-parked country, we so often distort the evidence of history with intermingled Druids, dinosaurs, and other time-insulting diversions that must surely confuse our present and future ability to find the evidence and slowly learn about, and from, our history. Clearly, there is only one 'diversion' that a sensitive generation could allow - that of properly re-routing the A303.

A spectacular machine-devastated hewn gully for drivers is not the answer. We *must* listen to the archaeologists and the conservators. Future generations will surely respect us for quelling the hubris of the combustion engine. Please choose to send us passers-by around.

Ian Fell.

