



# Department for Transport

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Date: 20 June 2022

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To: National Highways

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Dear Sir/Madam

## **Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

Application by National Highways (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the construction of a new two-lane dual carriage way for the A303 between Amesbury and Berwick Down in Wiltshire.

### **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS FROM THE APPLICANT**

#### **1. Consortium of Stonehenge Experts**

The Secretary of State notes in response to his consultation letter dated 24 February 2022 that the [Consortium of Stonehenge Experts](#) identified that four assets are not included in the Applicant’s assessment.

The Applicant is asked to confirm to the Secretary of State whether these assets have been included in the assessment and, if so, to specify in the material where the assessment of those assets is set out. If an assessment has not been undertaken, the Applicant is asked to provide the necessary assessment on these assets so the Secretary of State can appropriately consider them.

#### **2. Conclusion on alternative routes**

The Secretary of State notes that a number of consultees have raised the issue that it is not clear how the Applicant has arrived at the conclusion that the alternative

tunnel routes would only have minimal additional heritage benefits over the Development.

The Applicant is asked to explain fully the basis on which they reached this conclusion. The explanation should include full detail of reasoning, the matters considered and any methodology that was used and, where applicable, be cross-referenced to the examination material or subsequent information provided to the Secretary of State. The Applicant should also provide any additional documents that are relevant to understand the conclusion that the Applicant reached on this matter.

The Applicant is also asked to confirm whether the assessment of the heritage impact of alternative routes has been updated to take into account the 7 additional monuments that were added to the heritage baseline and provide any additional documents that are relevant.

### **3. Information and assessments**

The Applicant is asked to comment on the consultation responses from the consultation of 29 April 2022 where further information and/or assessments are sought. In particular, responses from: [Stonehenge Alliance](#); [Consortium of Stonehenge Experts](#); [Wiltshire Council](#); [International Council in Monuments and Sites UK](#); [Historic England](#).

The Applicant is asked to provide additional information and/or assessments or other documents where it is necessary to deal with the matters raised in the consultation responses.

### **4. Stonehenge Alliance**

The Secretary of State notes that Stonehenge Alliance has identified that biodiversity baseline surveys and reports and issues relating to adverse impacts of tunnelling through chalk bedrock have not been provided.

The Applicant is asked to respond on the accuracy of this statement, and if the statement is correct, the Applicant is asked to provide the Secretary of State with all relevant information, surveys and reports on this matter.

### **5. Environmental Statement on heritage matters**

The Secretary of State notes that Wiltshire Council has sought clarification as to how the Applicant reached its conclusion that the updated baseline assessment does not alter the outcome of the 2018 cultural heritage assessment within the Environmental Statement. The Applicant is asked to provide further information on the methodology of approach that was applied to the newly assessed assets so as to allow interested parties the opportunity to consider and provide further responses on whether the outcome of the assessment set out in the 2018 Environmental Statement on heritage matters has changed. The Applicant is asked to provide any additional evidence and

documents that are relevant to fully understand any change in the assessment of heritage assets.

## **6. Newly assessed assets**

The Secretary of State notes that Historic England in its response to the consultation of 24 February 2022 has asked for clarification on whether the newly assessed assets have been considered where they form part of asset groups.

The Applicant is asked to provide clarification on this matter. If the Applicant has undertaken that consideration the Applicant should provide any additional information or documents in relation to that consideration.

**The deadline for any response is 27 June 2022.**

Responses to the matters outlined in this letter should be submitted by email to: [A303Stonehenge@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:A303Stonehenge@planninginspectorate.gov.uk). If you will have difficulty in submitting a response by the consultation deadline, or difficulty submitting a response by email, please inform the Case Team.

The responses will be published on the project webpage for the A303 Stonehenge DCO on the Planning Inspectorate's website as soon as possible after the above deadline at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-west/a303-stonehenge/>

This letter is without prejudice to the Secretary of State's decision whether or not to grant development consent for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down and nothing in this letter is to be taken to imply what that decision might be

Yours faithfully

Kevin O'Hanlon