

## AVEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

### A303 Stonehenge DCO application: response to National Highways' further information requested by the Secretary of State for Transport on 20.6.22

#### Redetermination Consultation 4

We have read The Avebury Society's response to National Highways' further information requested by the Secretary of State for Transport on 20 June 2022, which the Society submitted online to yourselves on 2 August 2022.

We note the Society's comment about National Highways' recognition that their tunneling proposal would result in adverse impacts on the monuments at Avebury owing to greater visitor footfall (see [National Highways Redetermination 4.3](#) and [National Highways Redetermination 4.4](#), both at paras. 6.1.3, item k) and agree with it.

The likelihood of adverse impact on Avebury was the first of three observations made by Avebury Parish Council in its submission dated June 2019. The submission was a response to Highways England (as then it was), which in reply to earlier input from the Council had denied that there would be these impacts (see HE remarks at 46-651). We are pleased to see that National Highways now recognizes the validity of our concerns and that other organisations have also raised them.

Given the environmental and archaeological impact of both the tunnel lengths floated, not to mention the at best very modest benefit-cost outcomes derived from the controversial methodology deployed, we think that consideration should be given to more imaginative and cost-effective solutions that in addition take into account the most recent developments in actual and likely mobility flows.

In any case benefits cannot be secured for the southern part of the WHS at the expense of the northern part. The WHS must be considered as a whole even if it is one that is composed of two separated parts. Pre-pandemic Avebury was attracting an estimated 350,000 visitors per year. Recent survey data indicates that the A4361, which passes sinuously through the site and bisects the village, carries some 4,000 vehicles per day in both directions. Higher footfalls and more vehicles resulting from constricted access to Stonehenge whilst work progresses will degrade Avebury further. The site's authenticity and outstanding universal value will inevitably be compromised. Whatever solution is preferred to the perceived challenges to the south of the WHS, it should not adversely impact the northern part of the WHS nor must it risk compromising the WHS designation.

*3 August 2022*