

07/09/2022

Submission by Anthony Vallis to the Secretary of State for Transport

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Proposals for the A303 Road Improvement Scheme from Amesbury to Berwick Downs. As per my earlier submissions to the Planning Inspectorate dated 18/02/2021, 04 April 2022 and 04/08/2022

Dear Sirs

Having a heart-felt concern for the security of the WHS at Stonehenge, I am interested to see that the tunnelling scheme has been challenged by UNESCO who now suggest that alternative proposals to exclude tunnelling solutions should now be considered. This directive I welcome as it gives us pause to reconsider much more affordable and more archaeological-friendly schemes that will allow the public the opportunity to see the beauty of the Stone structure as they drive past the site.

I see no option to avoid the A303 trunk road/dual carriageways from crossing within the curtilage of the WHS site proper and thus have suggested the best compromise solution to consider and having several road crossing tunnels effectively retains the site as one workspace

The scheme I propose by-passes the WHS Stonehenge structure, arcing through the WHS site, around the south-eastern and southern sides of the stone structure at a minimum distance of 1200m. My concerns were firstly, to preserve as many of the artefacts as reasonably possible, next to convey the A303 across the WHS site in its least obstructive manner and then to accommodate the needs and well-being of the present local wildlife and human communities.

Simple road-crossing tunnels of varying sizes should be incorporated to cater for the migration of creatures crossing the route of the A303 highway. Local farmers and humans residing nearby should be provided with suitable tunnels to cross the A303. Road junctions with other local roads (the A360 and B3083) should both have full motorway type access junctions to allow unhampered continuous travel to traffic along the A303.

The highlight of the scheme is the tiered gallery for the public traveller to view the stone henge by way of a traveller's lay-by/refuge parking area. This will be approx. 400m long on both sides of the A303 set between access and exit slip lanes. The mean height of each carriageway and parking lane should be set 300mm higher than its inner adjacent lane structure. This format will arc around the South-Eastern to the Southern aspect of the henge's view. Its mean level should be engineered to allow the after-dark view of Stonehenge to be silhouetted against the sky-glow from the light generated by the distant Larkhill military settlement. The black silhouette exudes an almost magical image of the structure. This sighting is more reliable than trying to view the 'solstice sunrise' but requires the special planning of a nighttime visit. (And is only slightly less spectacular).

The provision of this viewing area will generate interest to the traveller making a formal visit to the site to see the structure at close range and learn more about the whole WHS. Why should we allow this beautiful monument to be screened from view by a concrete tunnel? Let us be proud of our Stonehenge, and of our ability to present this magnificent asset.

Should you require further details of my proposed scheme I shall be pleased to provide more information as per your request.

Yours faithfully

Anthony Vallis : [REDACTED]