



Meeting note

Project name	A303 Stonehenge
File reference	TR010025
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	30 January 2018
Meeting with	Highways England
Venue	Highways England offices
Attendees	The Planning Inspectorate Robert Ranger – Case Manager Susannah Guest – Infrastructure Planning Lead Richard Kent – Senior EIA and Land Rights Advisor James Bunten – Case Officer The Applicant Esther Gordon-Smith Will Spencer Steve McQuade Anna Eastgate Steve Finnie Ross Stuart Stuart Wilson
Meeting objectives	Project update, Scoping Opinion clarifications and outline of consultation approach meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Statutory Consultation approach

The Applicant provided the dates of their upcoming Statutory Consultation period – 8 February to 6 April 2018 – and queried the appropriate way to submit the suite of consultation documents as part of its duty to notify the Inspectorate, under s46 of the PA2008. The Inspectorate advised that the Applicant should provide the documents on either a cd or data-stick and discouraged them from providing only a web link. The Inspectorate advised that only the s46 notification will be published on its website.

The Inspectorate queried Wiltshire Council's (WC) input with regards to the drafting of the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC). The Applicant stated that WC had requested additional events in Warminster and Westbury, which had been added.

There was discussion regarding ongoing dialogue with National Trust (NT), UNESCO (and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)) via the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) with the Applicant confirming that key environmental consultees were aware of the timescales and progression of the application. The Inspectorate queried engagement with interest groups such as the Stonehenge Alliance (SHA). The Applicant noted that the SHA would be included in their Statutory Consultation, along with other non-statutory bodies who had confirmed interest.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to review its SoCC and check that the Statutory Consultation satisfied all the requirements contained within it. The Applicant confirmed a cross-check had already been conducted.

There was discussion regarding the inclusion of a map showing the Red Line Boundary (RLB) within the consultation suite of documents. The Applicant confirmed that the consultation booklet did not contain a plan identifying the RLB and that it would look into incorporating one before the booklet had been finalised.

The Applicant explained where the diversion roads and other works were located within the RLB and noted that the details were clearly explained in the consultation booklet. The Applicant set out that the suite of consultation documents issued would include a copy of the consultation booklet, SoCC and a web link to the PEIR.

The Applicant noted good ongoing relationship with WC and stated that the local authorities that bordered WC will also be consulted as part of its Statutory Consultation. There was discussion about how the Statutory Consultation period included the Easter Weekend; the Applicant noted that table top information would be available in the Stonehenge visitors' café to capture visitors' comments.

Scoping Opinion clarifications

There was discussion regarding dispersion modelling at the tunnel portal to be presented in the Environmental Statement (ES). The Applicant noted that it would continue to liaise with WC to provide further detail and clarify the approach within the ES as to if/ why such modelling may or may not be required.

The Applicant queried why the Inspectorate required further detail on the frequency of use of the diversionary route, including for abnormal / high sided loads. The Applicant clarified that there were very few instances over the last 5 years where abnormal loads using the existing A303 would be required to use the diversionary route had the tunnel (as proposed) been in place. The Applicant also explained their rationale around the potential frequency of the diversionary route such that there would be very few instances (below thresholds of assessment in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)) where complete tunnel closure of both portals would be required (and that at this stage it is very hard to quantify). The Applicant explained that several options could be explored before tunnel closure in its entirety, including single lane closures within the portal affected and or a contraflow of traffic within one of the portals where the other requires closure. The Inspectorate advised to that these should be explained within the ES to avoid doubt and to justify if/ why the use of the diversionary route does not warrant further consideration in terms of potentially significant environmental effects.

The Applicant stated that it is looking into drafting an explanation as to why potential PM2.5 effects would not require assessing within the ES after being queried by the Inspectorate in relation to several recent projects (including the Proposed Development).

There was discussion regarding the approach to assessing "residual" significance of effects with the Inspectorate advising that mitigation built into the scheme design and assessed as part of the ES should be clearly explained as such within the ES and differentiated from other forms of mitigation that may be proposed in response to significant effects identified (prior to implementation of mitigation) in the ES.

The Inspectorate requested an update on the Applicant's detailed survey work in respect of ecology. The Applicant explained that the bulk of the ecology surveys had been completed with further survey work scheduled for Spring 2018 and noted that Natural England (NE) had advised that additional reptile/ wintering bird survey work would not be necessary. The Inspectorate highlighted that if that agreement is included in a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) (or otherwise), signposting to this document or other evidence which records this should be presented as part of the ES.

The Applicant confirmed that the PEIR/ ES study area was based on the updated RLB when queried by the Inspectorate. The Applicant noted further detail on potential noise effects on ecology as a result of construction, eg pilling, would be included in the biodiversity chapter of the ES.

The Applicant provided an update on its assessment of ground conditions/ geology and on-site survey works which are due to commence in February 2018. These will inform the assessment in the ES and accompanying technical appendices. The Applicant noted that all survey work to date had been conducted following private agreement to access the land.

The Applicant stated that further explanation would be provided in the ES to set out dialogue between themselves and the Ministry of Defence (MOD), who have confirmed that its interests would not be affected by the Proposed Development. The Applicant also noted that following a late Scoping response from Public Health England (PHE), effects on human health as required under the EIA Regulations will be dealt with as appropriate in the relevant environmental aspect chapters instead of a standalone formal Health Impact Assessment. The Inspectorate noted that the late response from PHE meant that those comments were not incorporated into the Scoping Opinion. The Inspectorate also noted that section 6.11 of the Applicant's Scoping Report made reference to their proposed approach in terms of assessing Human Health as part of the EIA.

AOB

The Applicant acknowledged the environmental working group set up to engage with key environmental consultees such as the Environment Agency, English Heritage, Historic England, the National Trust, NE, WC and noted the next meeting was to discuss pre-consultation arrangements in the next few days. The Applicant also stated that it recently held a series of internal design meetings, to which key stakeholders were invited to attend.

There was discussion regarding the timescales once the application had been submitted with the Applicant confirming that it did not anticipate an expedited Examination period.

The Applicant provided an overview of its internal timescales to meet the Road Investment Strategy (RIS) objective of construction beginning in 2021 and therefore aimed to provide draft documents for review in June 2018 ahead of an anticipated submission date of September 2018. The Inspectorate outlined its scope for reviewing draft documents, and advised that should the Applicant decide to take advantage of the service, a period of about six weeks should be programmed for the Inspectorate to review and feed back.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- Post-consultation meeting to be scheduled for mid-April 2018.
- The Inspectorate to look into scope for a site visit.

