

**REPORT ON THE JOINT WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE / ICOMOS  
ADVISORY MISSION TO  
STONEHENGE, AVEBURY AND ASSOCIATED SITES**



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**Chris Barker, Civil Engineer, ICOMOS  
Nathan Schlanger, Archaeologist, ICOMOS  
Marie-Noël Tournoux, Project Officer Europe and North America Unit, World Heritage  
Centre**



**ICOMOS**  
international council on monuments and sites



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose and objectives of the mission

The Advisory Mission concerning the proposed dualling and tunnelling of the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down in the perimeter of the Stonehenge World Heritage site was undertaken at the request of the Government of the United Kingdom (UK), the State Party. The overall goal of the project is to secure a solution that is beneficial to the World Heritage property Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites in the light of economic considerations and to set up an appropriate consultation process from the outset of the project. This is to ensure that a tunnel scheme under the Stonehenge landscape would enhance the World Heritage site and not impact adversely on its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and carrying attributes, and significantly improve the A303 traffic on one of the main routes from London and the southwest of England, thus benefitting the region. It is noteworthy that since the 1990s more than 50 proposals have been considered for improving the A303 in the area and removing it from the Stonehenge landscape, however the majority of these schemes would not have succeeded in the latter.

Following the December 2014 announcement by the UK Government that it would invest in a bored tunnel at least 2.9 km long to solve the long-running traffic problems along the A303 trunk road within the WH property, Highways England has commenced structuring their internal teams ahead of the extensive programme of assessment and consultation work necessary to successfully deliver a scheme through the statutory process that will both resolve the traffic issues and protect and conserve the Outstanding Universal Value. The removal of the damaging surface A303 from the World Heritage site has been a long-running ambition of the UK Government, due to the serious harm the current road is causing to OUV, not only through the noise, pollution and distraction of heavy traffic, but also due to the effective severance of the bulk of the WH property to the south of the current A303 from the northern part of the property containing Stonehenge and the other major ceremonial sites & monuments.

Historic England and the National Trust continue to work closely with Highways England in consultation with heritage stakeholders and with expert bodies such as the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS-UK. As a result of engagement with these organisations, Historic England and the National Trust were advised that an Advisory Mission would be a constructive way for UNESCO and its advisory bodies to engage with the potential road scheme at an early stage. For this reason Historic England, the National Trust, and the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS, the State Party) decided to engage in an early consultation process and upstream dialogue, in the belief that an initial Advisory Mission of this kind was an essential first step in a process of on-going engagement, including one or more further Advisory Missions as proposals evolve.

For the UK, the objective of the Advisory Mission was to seek technical assistance and the beginning of an on-going and pro-active relationship with ICOMOS-International and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to allow an open exchange of information and advice as Highways England's proposal emerges over the next few years. The objective was to establish at an early stage, before commencement of any design or option identification stage, a continuing channel of communications among the main stakeholders and expert bodies such as the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, to engage with the emerging proposal at key stages in its evolution, before a formal application for a Development Consent Order<sup>1</sup> is submitted.

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<sup>1</sup> A Development Consent Order or DCO is the application process by which Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) gain consent. Unlike other English planning proposals NSIP applications are considered by the central Planning Inspectorate rather than the local planning authority.

This Advisory Mission was planned as an early stage visit to familiarize the international advisors with the World Heritage property and the scope of potential road improvements. The October 2015 Mission took place before Highways England commenced the option identification stage for the project. The Mission had to operate on the understanding that no design proposal existed to be evaluated, but that this was an opportunity to gain an understanding of the landscape within which a road improvement might take place, and to consider the broad issues, constraints and opportunities that this may give rise to. It is anticipated that more additional Advisory Missions may be invited over the coming years to provide further advice as relevant information becomes available on the preferred length and route for the road improvement and the significance of heritage assets which may be affected within this part of the World Heritage property.

The Advisory Mission took place from 27 to 30 October 2015 and consisted in presentation meetings with the relevant authorities, detailed field visits and a stakeholder session. The mission did not visit the Avebury component of the World Heritage site, as the objective was really to focus on the A303 tunnel project, even though the discussions during the mission were related to the entire World Heritage site, in terms of conservation, management and impact. See Annex I-III for the Terms of Reference of the mission, the Programme and full list of participants.

## **1.2 Background of the mission**

The A303 is one of the main routes from London to the southwest of England. Sections have been upgraded to dual carriageway status, though one third of the road remains single carriageway. On the A303 between Amesbury and Winterbourne Stoke (the section including Stonehenge) traffic flows are above the capacity of the road and the Highways Agency (as it was then called) expressed concern about safety on both this road and the A344. The two roads pass through the Stonehenge property and land owned by the National Trust, with the A303 passing directly south and the A344 directly to the north of the main henge monument. As part of the development of the proposals, over 50 routes were considered by the Highways Agency. See Annex VIII for background information on the road improvement projects for Stonehenge and check [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonehenge\\_road\\_tunnel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonehenge_road_tunnel) for more information.

At the time of the inscription of the property in 1986, the World Heritage Committee 'noted with satisfaction the assurances provided by the authorities that the closure of the road which crosses the avenue at Stonehenge (A344 road) was receiving serious consideration as part of the overall plans for the future management of the property'. Reclaiming the land used by the road, providing the site with enough breathing space, has always been the major challenge of the past decades.

Closure of the A344 finally occurred in 2013. This took place together with the relocation of new and much improved visitor centre on the A344, about 1.5 km west of the Stonehenge monument. The stretch of road between the visitor centre and the monument is used only for visitor transport, and in the immediate proximity of the monument the land has been reclaimed and grassed over. This development has clearly brought much benefit to the World Heritage site in terms of visitor experience, recovery and enhancement of OUV. The A344 case illustrates well the benefit that the removal (tunnel) of the A303 could bring to the World Heritage site as a whole.

The current efforts of the UK government, its strategic decision to address the long running traffic problem and develop a project which would sustain the Outstanding Universal Value of the property should be highly commended. The planning of this Advisory Mission to identify a sound process which should enable the Stonehenge tunnel project to become a success in terms of impact assessment and in terms of project design, phasing, quality control and implementation, should be highlighted.

## 2 MISSION REPORT

Given the preliminary nature of the report and its advisory aims, the archaeological aspects mainly concern organisational issues in a broad sense, including procedures, interactions and coherence between various actors involved, and so forth. Some of the comments/recommendations proposed are of a fairly specific nature, while others are more prospective, serving as reminders or alerts to potential difficulties.

### 2.1 Context

#### **Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites**

The World Heritage property Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986. It is amongst the earliest properties inscribed on the List and the site reflects the changing history of conservation and interpretation approaches as well as World Heritage criteria and procedures. The site spreads out on a very large area, mainly agricultural land, a vast hilly landscape punctuated with a few settlements, and a series of main roads, secondary roads and earth roads.

*Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites<sup>2</sup> is internationally important for its complexes of outstanding prehistoric monuments. Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world, while Avebury is the largest. Together with inter-related monuments and their associated landscapes, they demonstrate Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and mortuary practices resulting from around 2000 years of continuous use and monument building between circa 3700 and 1600 BC. As such they represent a unique embodiment of our collective heritage.*

*The World Heritage property comprises two areas of Chalkland in southern Britain within which complexes of Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and funerary monuments and associated sites were built. Each area contains a focal stone circle and henge and many other major monuments. At Stonehenge these include the Avenue, the Cursuses, Durrington Walls, Woodhenge, and the densest concentration of burial mounds in Britain. At Avebury they include Windmill Hill, the West Kennet Long Barrow, the Sanctuary, Silbury Hill, the West Kennet and Beckhampton Avenues, the West Kennet Palisaded Enclosures, and important barrows.*

*Stonehenge is one of the most impressive prehistoric megalithic monuments in the world on account of the sheer size of its megaliths, the sophistication of its concentric plan and architectural design, the shaping of the stones - uniquely using both Wiltshire Sarsen sandstone and Pembroke Bluestone - and the precision with which it was built.*

*At Avebury, the massive Henge, containing the largest prehistoric stone circle in the world, and Silbury Hill, the largest prehistoric mound in Europe, demonstrate the outstanding engineering skills which were used to create masterpieces of earthen and megalithic architecture.*

*There is an exceptional survival of prehistoric monuments and sites within the World Heritage property including settlements, burial grounds, and large constructions of earth and stone. Today, together with their settings, they form landscapes without parallel. These complexes would have been of major significance to those who created them, as is apparent by the huge investment of time and effort they represent. They provide an insight into the mortuary and ceremonial practices of the period, and are evidence of prehistoric technology,*

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<sup>2</sup> Source, World Heritage Centre <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/373/>

*architecture and astronomy. The careful siting of monuments in relation to the landscape helps us to further understand the Neolithic and Bronze Age.*

### Criterion

The monuments of Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites were inscribed on the World Heritage List as cultural heritage under the following criterion (i) (ii) (iii).

*Criterion (i): The monuments of the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites demonstrate outstanding creative and technological achievements in prehistoric times.*

*Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world. It is unrivalled in its design and unique engineering, featuring huge horizontal stone lintels capping the outer circle and the trilithons, locked together by carefully shaped joints. It is distinguished by the unique use of two different kinds of stones (Bluestones and Sarsens), their size (the largest weighing over 40 t) and the distance they were transported (up to 240 km). The sheer scale of some of the surrounding monuments is also remarkable: the Stonehenge Cursus and the Avenue are both about 3 km long, while Durrington Walls is the largest known henge in Britain, around 500 m in diameter, demonstrating the ability of prehistoric peoples to conceive, design and construct features of great size and complexity.*

*Avebury prehistoric stone circle is the largest in the world. The encircling henge consists of a huge bank and ditch 1.3 km in circumference, within which 180 local, unshaped standing stones formed the large outer and two smaller inner circles. Leading from two of its four entrances, the West Kennet and Beckhampton Avenues of parallel standing stones still connect it with other monuments in the landscape. Another outstanding monument, Silbury Hill, is the largest prehistoric mound in Europe. Built around 2400 BC, it stands 39.5 m high and comprises half a million tonnes of chalk. The purpose of this imposing, skilfully engineered monument remains obscure.*

*Criterion (ii): The World Heritage property provides an outstanding illustration of the evolution of monument construction and of the continual use and shaping of the landscape over more than 2000 years, from the early Neolithic to the Bronze Age. The monuments and landscape have had an unwavering influence on architects, artists, historians and archaeologists, and still retain a huge potential for future research.*

*The megalithic and earthen monuments of the World Heritage property demonstrate the shaping of the landscape through monument building for around 2000 years from circa 3700 BC, reflecting the importance and wide influence of both areas.*

*Since the 12th century when Stonehenge was considered one of the wonders of the world by the chroniclers Henry de Huntington and Geoffrey de Monmouth, the Stonehenge and Avebury Sites have excited curiosity and been the subject of study and speculation. Since early investigations by John Aubrey (1626-1697), Inigo Jones (1573-1652), and William Stukeley (1687-1765), they have had an unwavering influence on architects, archaeologists, artists and historians. The two parts of the World Heritage property provide an excellent opportunity for further research.*

*Today, the property has spiritual associations for some.*

*Criterion (iii): The complexes of monuments at Stonehenge and Avebury provide an exceptional insight into the funerary and ceremonial practices in Britain in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Together with their settings and associated sites, they form landscapes without parallel.*

*The design, position and interrelationship of the monuments and sites are evidence of a wealthy and highly organised prehistoric society able to impose its concepts on the environment. An outstanding example is the alignment of the Stonehenge Avenue (probably a processional route) and Stonehenge stone circle on the axis of the midsummer sunrise and*

*midwinter sunset, indicating their ceremonial and astronomical character. At Avebury the length and size of some of the features such as the West Kennet Avenue, which connects the Henge to the Sanctuary over 2 km away, are further evidence of this.*

*A profound insight into the changing mortuary culture of the periods is provided by the use of Stonehenge as a cremation cemetery, by the West Kennet Long Barrow, the largest known Neolithic stone-chambered collective tomb in southern England, and by the hundreds of other burial sites illustrating evolving funerary rites.*

### **Synthesis of main issues**

The mission visit to the Stonehenge landscape encountered undulating chalk topography with eroded valleys generally draining towards the River Avon. The land surface comprised grassland and farmland used for cultivation and grazing with local areas of woodlands crossed by a congested A303 with slow moving traffic. The landscape is evidently rich in historic monuments with the main Stonehenge henge monument being of obvious interest to motorists as the traffic momentarily slows while adjacent.

The upgrade of the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down through the Stonehenge World Heritage property by relocating the existing road underground into a “tunnel of at least 2.9km” could readily adopt appropriate, well-established construction methods. Hence, with good design and construction controls, the tunnelled length of road would be expected to have a beneficial impact on the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). However, the siting and design of the tunnel portals, approach cuttings/embankments, entry/exit ramps and the temporary construction works have the potential to impact adversely impact on OUV. These latter aspects of the scheme, in particular, will require rigorous investigation, evaluation, iterative design and assessment to see whether and how it might be possible to protect the attributes of OUV within the World Heritage site and protect the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA).

### **What is at stake?**

What is at stake here is not a technical issue in terms of either engineering or archaeology. Technically speaking the situation is fairly standard. The challenge is the process, the setting up of governance, monitoring systems and operational mechanisms, which will allow for high quality results and international standards to ensure an outcome that respects OUV.

This means heritage quality control must be built into the process and built into a visa process or steering mechanism of some sort so that heritage quality control is present at every stage. Heritage expertise must not be reduced to a subcontracted heritage expert. What is needed is a monitoring process to evaluate in quasi real time the impact of the project on the OUV of the World Heritage site. The scoping, decision making and phasing of the project design must be tailor-made to fit the highly sensitive nature of the site. The aim must be to conserve OUV and improve the setting of the World Heritage site and the quality of life of all users of the road system, be they local users, national users or international users.

The main challenge will be the project design, and setting up a management process for a project in a very sensitive area. There is a need to build the necessary flexibility required to modify the project accordingly in case of chance findings into the project process and implementation processes. There is also a need to design a tailor-made system for its implementation, allowing for quasi-micro intervention to be built into the general implementation. In terms of design strategy, low key, unobtrusive design should be favoured so as to retaining a sense of place with exposed new engineering infrastructure. A major issue for commuters and especially for local inhabitants and people familiar with the site is the disassociation of people on the road from the landscape and monument; this should be

fully taken into account and addressed in the project design and communication and interpretation tools.

An important asset in the future planning of the tunnel (and in the briefing of the mission) has been the substantial report, "Preliminary Outline Assessment of the impact of A303 improvements on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Stonehenge Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage property", produced by Nicola Snashall BA MA PhD MIfA, National Trust, and Christopher Young BA MA DPhil FSA, Christopher Young Heritage Consultancy (henceforth Snashall & Young 2014). Snashall is currently the National Trust archaeologist at Stonehenge, and Young was formerly a senior archaeologist at English Heritage. This Snashall & Young report constitutes a substantial proactive engagement by archaeological heritage professionals with the planned tunnel project as reinitiated by Highways England in 2014. Rather than waiting for tunnel and road plans to be drawn, submitted and then assessed on archaeological heritage grounds, a careful attempt has been made to draw out the benefits and disadvantages of a range of possible options on various attributes of OUV in relation to differing placement and length. It is in this well documented and illustrated report (maps) that the important notion of a tunnel "at least 2.9km long" appears, corresponding to one of the options considered by the report's authors.



**Fig. 1 Map of Stonehenge and associated monuments, nomination area, 1985 scale 1: 25000.**  
**Source WHC. <http://whc.unesco.org/fr/list/373/>**  
**This map shows some of the main features of the site indicated in red, such as the Cursus, Stonehenge, the Avenue, Vespasian's Camp and Durrington Walls as well as long and round barrows.**

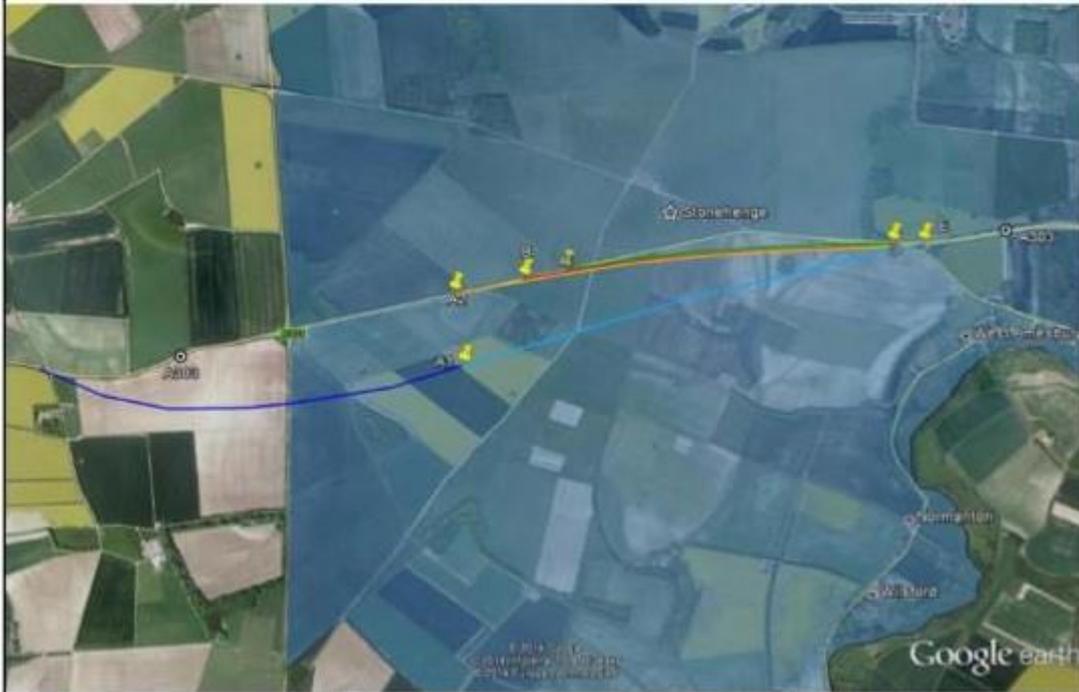


Fig. 2 Location map of the 4 different A303 tunnel options from the Snasha/1 & Young report, fig. 3, e, 28.



Fig. 3 shows a map of the 1.9 km option from the Snasha/1 & Young report, fig. 7, p. 34. "A.303 2.9 km bored tunnel (Tcta 2014, Appendix D, 2or'. Highlighted in blue by the authors are the two portals A1 and E. If the Eastern portal (currently proposed point 'F') was further to the east of the King's farrow ridges (point 'F') it would not cut through the Avenue and this would significantly reduce the adverse impacts on the Avenue which is a major feature of the World Heritage site.

## 2.2 Choosing the location of the tunnel portals

It has been clearly stated by the State-Party, and it is understood by all relevant bodies, stakeholders etc., that there are as yet no specific tunnelling plans or plans for the length of tunnel, and that the project is in its early stages. At the same time, as previously indicated, tentative and preliminary scenarios have been commissioned and made in the Snashall & Young report, alongside some projective maps (as reproduced in figure 2 and 3 here, respectively fig. 3, p. 28 and fig. 7, p. 34 in the Snashall & Young report). These scenarios served as a basis for discussion during the on-site mission, and consequently they are also taken into account and addressed in this report – on the understanding that these are but preliminary ideas, which may be quite distant from those finally chosen in the course of the process.

### The western portal

One of the proposed locations of the western portal (A1 on figure 2, 3) was presented to the mission in detail during the on-site visits, and seems to present a number of advantages. This A1 location seems to be in a visually non-intrusive position in the landscape and avoids known archaeological features. The path of the A303 westwards will furthermore release the Winterbourne Stoke barrow group and render it accessible for visitors and research. This is highly beneficial for parts of the site and some of its attributes of OUV provided that the same standards and heritage procedures apply to the west of the A360. Indeed, the Stonehenge tunnel project should also consider the redesign and development of areas outside of the World Heritage site such as the Countess Roundabout and linking the smaller towns and villages.

However, the 1 km long approach road and the cuttings/embankments and entry/exit ramps to the west of the portal within the property have the potential to adversely impact on some attributes of OUV in terms of integrity of the overall Stonehenge cultural landscape and the visual links between monuments. This will need to be considered as proposals and HIAs are developed for option selection (as set out below). These latter aspects of the scheme, in particular, will require rigorous investigation, evaluation, iterative design and assessment if they are to protect the attributes of OUV within the World Heritage site and the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA).

### The eastern portal and The Avenue

The tentative proposals made by Snashall & Young 2014 conjecture an eastern tunnel portal location – Point E on figure 1, 2. The main drawback of this potential portal location, as partly discussed, is that it maintains the current state of affairs in which the A303 to its east cuts through the prehistoric "Avenue" – a major archaeological feature of the Stonehenge landscape, and clearly part of the World Heritage site's OUV.

Several quotes from Snashall & Young 2014 confirm this:

P. 29 (regarding a 4.5 Km)

*The eastern entrance to the tunnel would have started 600m east of the start of the 2.1km Published Scheme. This would have been to the east of the point at which the line of the Avenue crosses the present road, within the stretch, which is currently in a cutting.*

P. 36

*The Avenue east of King Barrow Ridge has been severed by the A303. It is probable that nothing survives beneath the footprint of the existing A303 but removal of the road would allow the line of the Avenue to be better appreciated.*

P.37

*The Avenue east of King Barrow Ridge would be positively affected only by the 4.5 km tunnel, included only for illustrative purposes. The remaining options, apart probably from the Published Scheme, would all place this part of the A303 in a cutting approaching the eastern tunnel portals and would remove any evidence which might remain on the road line plus any evidence, for example of the ditches, which survives on either side, in land to be taken into*

*the road cutting. This must be considered as a minor adverse impact on the Avenue given the degree of damage that has already occurred in this location. The significance of this impact on the Avenue as an attribute of Outstanding Universal Value would be moderate/large, according to the ICOMOS HIA methodology. Given the importance of the Avenue within the World Heritage property, this might count as a minor adverse impact on the World Heritage property as a whole.*

P. 40

*The four shorter tunnel options would not significantly reduce the adverse impacts on the Avenue east of King Barrow Ridge.*

It is not clear why the option of placing the eastern portal (currently at proposed point 'E') further to the east of the King Barrow ridges (point 'F') has so far not been considered (or is not being considered, except in the case of 4.5 km tunnel). Is it because of the costs incurred by lengthening the tunnel by approximately 250 metres? Because placing the tunnel entrance there will mean decommissioning a stretch of the A303 that is already dual carriageway? Or is it, beyond economic or logistical considerations, because some known heritage features (which ones?) might be situated on some other planned eastern portal and could be impacted, or cannot be mitigated?

Likewise, arguments have been advanced as to why the 'recovery' of the Avenue at the 'junction' with the A303 may not be a priority given its condition: the adjacent land has been extensively cultivated and has suffered ploughing damages, development works have taken place, the landscape is poorly legible, and generally the Avenue survives only as a buried archaeological feature (see Snashall & Young 204 and also "Guidance notes" quoted here (National Trust-Historic England)).

*For the new tunnel options, an eastern portal location was chosen which would provide benefit to the monuments on and around King Barrow Ridge, when compared to the eastern portal site for the 2.1km Published Scheme from 2004, which was close to the ridge itself. The chosen portal site is 200m further east on the present road alignment and would lead to tranquillity benefits for OUV in the King Barrow Ridge area. The new portal site would not, however, reconnect the Stonehenge Avenue, which was severed by the cutting of the 1960s Amesbury Bypass. In this part of the WHS intensive arable cultivation and episodes of development have degraded the legibility of the landscape. Ploughing has damaged or destroyed earthwork monuments. Here the Avenue survives only as buried archaeological remains; it is not possible for a visitor to the site to trace its course east of King Barrow Ridge. South of the current A303 the Avenue has been severed again by episodes of development and parts of the monument are built on.*

Depending on how tunnel proposals develop in relation to HIAs and options selection, this position may need to be rethought and reconsidered, with further deliberation given not only to the current state of visibility of the Avenue at this point, but also to the wider emphasis on the Stonehenge "cultural landscape" (see below), the proposed links between the Durrington Walls settlement and Stonehenge monument via the Avon river and the Avenue, and more generally the apparent benefits to OUV, including the integrity of the World Heritage site as a whole, by placing the tunnel portal further east. Also, taking a long-term view, the current proposed placement of the tunnel portal (at point E) which allows the A303 to bisect the Avenue will be – unlike the current state of affairs with a single carriageway – effectively irreversible, insofar as it will hardly be possible to dig a new tunnel further east to link up with the existing (i.e. planned) one and 'bypass' the tunnel portal. In terms of heritage considerations, it may well prove in the coming decades or beyond that the integrity of the Avenue is of primordial importance both in scientific terms, with new research methodologies (detection, mapping), and in heritage terms.

For all these reasons, it is strongly recommended that new detailed evaluation studies be undertaken to better grasp and carefully consider the issues surrounding the placement and design of the eastern portal of the tunnel scheme as proposed in Snashall & Young.

## **State of the art archaeological knowledge**

The mission wishes to underline the very high quality of research produced around Stonehenge over the past years, including such projects as the "Stonehenge Hidden Landscape", "Riverside project", SEIP, etc. These have led to a substantial increase in our understanding of the monuments and the landscape, also resulting in significant publications for both professional readership and public outreach. It appears evidently in the interests of all parties and stakeholders concerned to continue with these high standards. Specifically in terms of the A303 tunnelling and dualling, every effort must be made to ensure that preliminary studies, data collecting, evaluation, excavations and post-excavation work are all planned and undertaken in an integrated manner, reaching beyond the areas specifically impacted by the tunnel.

The inspector for ancient monuments of Historic England and the Archaeologist of the National Trust (the Historic England/National Trust partnership, currently Phil McMahon and Nicola Snashall) are the main interlocutors on archaeological and heritage management issues in the area, alongside the archaeologists of the Local Planning Authority, Wiltshire County Council. They are therefore well placed to take decisions regarding the archaeological operator(s) who will be called to intervene in the evaluation and excavation process, and it is crucial that they have a decisive (not only consultative) voice on all scientific and heritage related decisions.

## **Common methodologies and standards for archaeological operations**

It is recommended that the Historic England/National Trust partnership, as it develops, exercises its legal, scientific and patrimonial commitments in the most vigorous way possible. This includes, among others, questions of protocol for intervention and choice of operator(s).

### **Protocol**

Collaborations between agencies is recognised by all as an essential step for ensuring optimal conditions for archaeological research and heritage management ahead of the planned tunnel scheme. A detailed, comprehensive and flexibly applied protocol should be developed (even if building on precedents in the area or elsewhere).

This protocol should be developed in close coordination with the university and academic **research projects** recently at work in the Stonehenge area, and following existing practices of data collection and identification. This is important in order to a) ensure the smooth insertion of new data and information gathered within existing methodological and interpretative frameworks, while b) enabling a plurality of exploitation and interpretation of the data that is gathered and made available, including the use of new methodologies, and the development of innovative interpretative approaches.

This protocol should be developed in close coordination with **Wiltshire county archaeology** (WCA). As the Local Planning Authority responsible for the local Historic environment record (HER), Wiltshire archaeology must be implicated upstream to ensure that data generated before, during and after any archaeological interventions (paper records, electronic, GIS, etc., material remains, samples, etc.) is duly integrated, curated and made accessible. As required, expertise should be made available, from Historic England, from ADS York or other bodies. These standards should apply to all work undertaken within the World Heritage site, and also outside of it, notably in the planned dual-carriage way to the west of the A360.

Moreover, in order to ensure this proactive recording and curation, and in order to see it applied to the 'Stonehenge cultural landscape' as a whole (see below), adequate **funding** should be made available from the developer - Highways England - to the local authority responsible for HER, for the curation and conservation of finds, and for public outreach actions (see below for remainder of obligations).

## **Choice of operator(s)**

The document entitled "Proposed A303 improvement within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. Briefing on current position – October 2015" (Phil McMahon Historic England SW, 12 October 2015) states that:

*"HE/NT expect to continue to work very closely with Highways England to engage constructively on the scheme to ensure the protection and enhancement of the World Heritage Site, including – in due course – being involved in the appointment of the lead heritage consultants on the project."* (McMahon 2015 p. 4).

The mission considers that the phrasing of this sentence is somewhat weak, with mere 'expectations' to be involved in such a crucial heritage related decision as the choice of the operator(s) or unit(s). Notwithstanding the prevailing practices in developer-funded archaeology in England, the wholehearted and decisive involvement of HE/National Trust in these matters should be a *sine qua non* condition, including the ability to formulate requirements, veto proposals, orient others etc., in order to ensure that the heritage and archaeology dimensions of the project are clearly and consistently identified and managed for the benefit of the OUV of the World Heritage site in particular, and of heritage and archaeology in general, and not solely in view of the interests of the developer, funder or operator of the construction project. It is highly recommended to avoid a situation where heritage decisions are taken (or appear to be taken) with commercial or operational considerations foremost in mind.

The same comments apply in the framework of the welcome archaeological survey programme to the south of the A303 designed to identify previously unknown archaeological sites "to provide early intelligence to Highways England and encourage them to site the portals sensitively". This formulation is too weak and does not appear to fully reflect the responsibilities and scope for action of the State Party's heritage protection and management bodies. The decision of where to site the portals must be a collaborative one, rather than being the sole responsibility of Highways England. The length of the tunnel and the siting of the portals are the two key issues of this project.

## **Impact**

### **Medium and longer term prospects regarding English Heritage (English Heritage Trust and Historic England)**

The mission considers that the following administrative and organisational background information is relevant to the future prospects of the Stonehenge cultural landscape. English Heritage is the working name of the Historic Buildings and Monument commission for England, created by the National Heritage Act 1983. As of April 1, 2015, English Heritage has been split into two distinct entities, entitled respectively 'English Heritage Trust' (EHT) and 'Historic England' (HE). The ensuing organisational and financial issues remain of course the entire prerogative and responsibility of the State Party, but they also deserve some comments in view of their possible bearing on the World Heritage site and the planned tunnel scheme.

**English Heritage Trust (EHT)** is now the body that manages some 400 historic properties that are part of the national collection and that are open to the public. EHT has been awarded an £80M grant over an 8 year period by the government, on the premise that by 2021 it will be financially independent through visitors revenues, merchandising income etc. Under these conditions, it can be expected that Stonehenge and the Stonehenge visitor centre, managed by EHT, will come against considerable pressures to be as economically performing as possible (revenues and expenditures), not only for its own sake, but for the sake of English Heritage Trust and its many other, less visited "properties". Such pressure may result in lowering expenditure, such as specialized or expert personnel, maintenance, standards of archaeological curation, etc., and also in increasing revenues: by channelling in more visitors

for shorter times, by increasing fees, and by slashing free or reduced cost access (this notably applies to neighbouring communities - likely to increase with Military families' influx - to 'druids' during solstice and equinox days, and also educational groups, schools or universities). At the same time, there is a possibility that the local Wiltshire authorities may also seek to obtain some material benefits from the property, and that some arrangements will have to be reached on this with English Heritage Trust.

While this is a more general point that may impact on English Heritage properties over the coming decade, it is recommended to already enshrine now certain principles of access and public service in the Stonehenge management plan<sup>3</sup> or documents by English Heritage Trust. In addition, it is recommended to explore what implications there might be to a possible insolvency of English Heritage Trust by 2021 – whether bailout mechanisms might exist, or whether properties might have to be rented out or even sold to other bodies, such as local authorities, and indeed whether such a fate might possibly apply to Stonehenge itself.

**Historic England**, the other branch emanating from the split of English Heritage in April 2015, is the statutory public body that champions and protects England's historic environment. In principle, Historic England is funded by a grant in aid from the DCMS: recently, this budget has been reduced by 10% for the coming 4 years, while Historic England has been encouraged to increase its resilience and sustainability by developing a paid-for, revenue-generating 'Enhanced advisory service' added on to the statutory advice it provides. Stonehenge, as a World Heritage site and a scheduled monument, is part of the heritage assets under the direct oversight of Historic England.

With respect to these changes, it can be noted that the professional (archaeological) stakeholders who met during the mission professed some uncertainty as to the possible effects and implications of this restructuring into English Heritage Trust and Historic England. The professional community seems to be in a guarded 'wait and see' mode, both because of past experiences and trends towards a downgrading of financial and decision-making capacities in heritage management, and because the idea that 'nobody really knows' seems to prevail, and that decisions taken at high level are not fully thought-through or considered in terms of guidance and long-term responsibility.

It is worth recalling here that, in addition to **funding** the overall engineering and construction works of the tunnel and the A303 dualling, the developer (Highways England) will also have to fund – following the polluter/payer principle enshrined in UK archaeology since the 1990 reform – all the evaluation, excavation, and post-excavation phases in relation to the entire road and tunnel project. These elements include more precisely:

a) The environmental impact assessments, including Heritage Impact Assessments, (desktop and fieldwork), the on-site evaluations of all impacts on the heritage of the areas concerned – both inside the World Heritage site perimeter, and outside of it, in the link up to the existing A303 westward.

b) The excavation and post excavation work, including studies, analysis, publications, public outreach actions etc., as well as the fate of the archaeological finds, their adequate storage, the amplification of museum capacities in the region, including the Salisbury museum and the Devizes museum, the enhancement of HER at the county level, and so forth.

Hence the mission recommends that particular attention be paid to fully identifying needs for assessing direct and indirect costs and ensuring adequate funding in relation to the overall tunnel project and the activities or specific needs it will entail so that the State Party – DCMS,

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<sup>3</sup> Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Management Plan [http://www.stonehengeandaveburywhs.org/assets/2015-MANAGEMENT-PLAN\\_LOW-RES.pdf](http://www.stonehengeandaveburywhs.org/assets/2015-MANAGEMENT-PLAN_LOW-RES.pdf)

Historic England, English Heritage Trust and also National Trust, as an independent charity and major landowner in the WHS – can manage and adequately fund its World Heritage site.

Moreover, vigilance could also be exercised by the State Party to ensure that adequate management mechanisms are set up to address divergences or lack of common purpose between the State Party national bodies and local authorities with planning-process control, or indeed the diminishing possibilities (in terms of professional capacities, funding or legislation, such as NPPF) of the central government and its agencies (Historic England) to formulate and enforce statutory measures of heritage protection. This is notable in the light of the devolution of responsibilities in the central government and the corresponding roles taken on by local authorities and councils as part of the 2011 Localism Act, and has been highlighted by recent events regarding the Liverpool waterfront and the Edinburgh historic centre (both WH properties).

The State Party should take note that 2016 is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inscription of Stonehenge as a World Heritage property. This is a significant opportunity not only for celebration but also for the State Party to demonstrate its obligations and commitment to the World Heritage Convention.

## 2.3 The Stonehenge Landscape

### "Cultural landscape" and boundary issues

Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites has a very strong landscape value. There is no doubt that a 'Landscape' approach figures high in the research and management of the World Heritage site, as detailed notably in the 2015 Management Plan, and also in the thinking surrounding the projected tunnel scheme. Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites is not, however, inscribed as a "Cultural Landscape."<sup>4</sup> At the time of inscription in 1986, the category did not exist. Stonehenge does not need to be labelled a 'Cultural Landscape' for its archaeological landscape to thrive and be recognized and enhanced. Many major World Heritage archaeological sites have landscape values, without being recognized as Cultural Landscapes. The extent to which this state of affairs affects issues of OUV, including integrity and authenticity, needs to be clarified. Two areas that seem to be important here are the boundaries and archaeological impact assessment.

a) Regarding **boundaries**, it is clearly recognised that the World Heritage site boundaries as initially drawn are arbitrary, and do not encompass all of what researchers may wish to consider, at the present state of knowledge, as "the Stonehenge landscape". The 2015 Management Plan addresses this point in several sections (e.g. 7.53-4, p. 97, and also p. 26 ff.) in the context of a possible "boundary review", recalling the aim that "World Heritage site Boundary should capture all significant archaeological features and landscapes related to Stonehenge and its environs". At the same time, it is specified that, "significant changes affecting the definition of the OUV of the site would at present require a full re-nomination. The Government has specifically excluded a re-nomination of the site for the foreseeable future."

It is noteworthy that also the **Wiltshire core strategy**, devised by Wiltshire council, goes in this sense:

*The setting of the World Heritage Site beyond its designated boundary also requires protection as inappropriate development here can have an adverse impact on the site*

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4 In 1992 the World Heritage Convention became the first international legal instrument to recognize and protect cultural landscapes. The World Heritage Committee at its 16<sup>th</sup> session adopted guidelines concerning their inclusion in the World Heritage List. They are defined in Annex III of the *Operational Guidelines*.

*and its attributes of OUV. The setting is the surrounding in which the World Heritage Site is experienced. It includes a range of elements such as views and historical, landscape and cultural relationships. The setting of the World Heritage Site is not precisely defined and will vary depending on the nature and visibility of the proposal. A future setting study will provide further information and a preferred methodology for the assessment of proposed development for its potential impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Light pollution and skyglow which could adversely affect the site must be adequately addressed through the careful management of development" (6.147)*

b) Regarding **archaeological impact assessment**, the recent academic work done within the World Heritage site ("Stonehenge hidden Landscape", "Riverside project", SEIP etc.) has amply demonstrated the scientific and patrimonial coherence of such a 'landscape' perspective. This perspective applies also outside the World Heritage site boundary as it currently stands. Even if the reasoned choice is made not to extend the World Heritage site, it seems essential that relevant archaeological occurrences outside the WH property which relate to attributes within the boundary and which, depending on the length and siting of the proposed tunnel, might be impacted by the planned tunnel and road dualling scheme, whether currently listed (protected) or not, benefit in terms of research, legal protection and funding, from their inclusion within this broadly defined "Stonehenge landscape", with reference for example to articles 137 and 139 of the NPPF.

It would also be important to ensure that an agreement to a landscape approach is not only 'functional', but also sufficiently legally grounded, notably with regards to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). If the World Heritage site is to be considered as a landscape, consideration should be given to managing it through a landscape approach, not necessarily that of the painter, or the artist's view, but of the geographer's view point. This would mean a territorial planning approach to integrate the site, its values, and its archaeological attributes within a greater territory in order to consider how the WH property can be connected to its setting, notably to the towns and villages which are not within the boundary of the WH property but are related to the site in terms of functional interaction.

What is highlighted here is the urgent need to consider the management of the landscape of the World Heritage site as part of its wider surroundings, rather than focusing on a redefinition of the World Heritage site as a full-fledged cultural landscape. There is no need to launch into cultural landscape re-nomination, but there is definitely a need to think in terms of landscape management and territorial planning. It is urgent to assess cultural values, landscape values and viewpoints within a greater scale well beyond the current boundaries of the WH property and its buffer zone. It is crucial to encompass wider archaeological links in the landscape and to define archaeological and landscape sensitive zones.

### **Territorial planning and spatial planning**

This territorial and spatial planning approach would de facto involve linking cultural values to socio-economic and environmental values. It would imply a change of gear and an upgrade to a larger scale. The road project could be used not only to enhance the World Heritage site but also to extend work on management to a greater area outside the boundaries of the World Heritage site. Improvement of local traffic and incentives for local development could provide benefits to local communities but most of all it would be consistent with the overall policy of enhancing the landscape value of the World Heritage site and connecting it to its wider setting to allow different types of visitor practice.

This line of thinking implies developing traffic network studies at local and regional scales, developing a general traffic network analysis, engaging elements from paths and trails to trunk road networks. This should be connected to the socioeconomic studies of the demographics of the nearby towns and villages and also be related to World Heritage site visitor routes and access. In the medium term, this could lead to opening the Stonehenge

archaeological landscape and connecting it to the local villages and thus reviewing the current one entry, one car park approach. A larger scale approach does not imply that the current managers of the site must give right of path and access to all, but could allow further reflection with all stakeholders on modified visitor path needs, requirements and trends. Flowing, improved traffic may perhaps allow for more visitors to come to the site according to different patterns of time available to enjoy the site. More options to deal with visitors would allow ways to better balance local visits and international tourism.

This approach could help to further define the vision for the Stonehenge area for the coming ten years and allow adequate socioeconomic studies to be undertaken to better understand what might be the “Stonehenge landscape” of the future. This implies studying the possible growth pattern of the local towns and villages, population growth, and business growth patterns in order to foresee needs in terms of traffic and future development to ensure that the road project, including the possible location of the tunnel, relates to the need to possibly rethink and redesign the roundabouts and access routes, major road transit network and local road traffic network, which must also be enhanced to ensure that the A303 is not an impediment to local traffic and that roads can connect to local villages and small businesses. This would be putting heritage to work for local development.

Such a wider approach should be an opportunity to redevelop the traffic network at a county level.

It implies multi-stakeholder engagement and perhaps the setting up of a specific coordinating cell (legal framework to be further defined) to ensure proper coordination. The stake here is the need to not only inform local communities but also involve them in developing a shared vision, based on the enhancement of an exceptional archaeological site, linking to the upgrading of infrastructure for both national and local benefits.

### **Tourism strategy**

In line with landscape scale management of the World Heritage site and its wider setting, a large-scale tourism strategy could allow the development of new possibilities for all types of visitors, through developing routes and entry points to the greater landscape area, and mitigating restricted visits with entry fee and visitor centre access, thus linking the World Heritage site to the greater landscape and territory.

Comparisons with other large-scale World Heritage sites in Western Europe would certainly be fruitful (Pont du Gard, Roman Aqueduct, World Heritage Site (France)<sup>5</sup>, or networks such as the French Grands Sites de France<sup>6</sup> or the Man and Biosphere programme of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves<sup>7</sup>).

### **Process**

Highways England presented to the mission the five stage options and development phase process map for development consent order (DCO) schemes (See Anne X). The mission was advised that the DCO process has been introduced by the UK State Party in 2008 to streamline the decision-making process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP), such as the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down dualling through the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. This process map details the sequence and interrelationship of activities to be undertaken for:

- Pre-application (option identification, option selection, design (with consultation));

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<sup>5</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/344/> and <http://www.pontdugard.fr>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.grandsitedefrance.com/en.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/>

- Statutory application acceptance, examination and recommendation by the Planning Inspectorate;
- Secretary of State decision; and
- Construction preparation up to Notice to Proceed.

The timeline for application submission to the Planning Inspectorate is up to 3 years and 8 months and up to Notice to Proceed a total of 5 years and 5 months.

The mission was informed that the DCO process removes the previous need to obtain several separate consents, including planning permission, and is designed to be a much quicker process than applying for these separately. As a consequence, schemes are required to be fully scoped and refined before application submission to the Planning Inspectorate and there is very little scope for change after the application submission.

The mission noted that the process map was generic and not specific to a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project within a World Heritage Site and the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA). The mission strongly recommends that the process map be amended to show the significant heritage activities to be undertaken including the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for assessing impacts of proposed changes to OUV, in accordance with the ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011) before any decisions are taken or applications made. The mission was disappointed that an organogram of the key project parties was not available and stresses to the State Party the criticality of heritage being influential and effective from the outset.

The mission noted the recognition by Highways England, Historic England and the National Trust that the DCO process will require collaborative involvement with heritage stakeholders and that communication will be critical to successfully demonstrate the protection of attributes of OUV. The mission welcomed an invitation to subsequently visit the completed A3 Hindhead Tunnel project in England on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The open dialogue of these stakeholders seeking to learn relevant lessons from that project was encouraging. We recommend collaborative working, involving continuous engagement (meetings, workshops, reviews) from the outset by all parties rather than end of stage assessments.

## **2.4 Management and institutional cooperation and framework**

The mission highlighted that a significant challenge for the State Party is to have ‘heritage professionals’ and ‘road engineers’ effectively communicating proactively rather than reactively within the timescales of the DCO process. To iteratively develop a fully scoped and refined scheme that protected the attributes of OUV and the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA), the mission advises that this iterative process between engineering design and impact assessment of attributes of OUV can be assisted by recent advances in technology as discussed below.

The DCO process is controlled by Stage Gate Assessment Reviews (SGAR) at the end of each stage. This governance could also readily incorporate heritage assessments. The ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties* (2011) recommends a Scoping Report (sets out the scope of work necessary for a HIA) to be agreed with all relevant parties. This report produced at the commencement of the DCO process could also be used to establish project mechanisms, which allow heritage values to be built into the project design process. It is recommended that the following HIA be aligned with the DCO process being produced during option identification so as to appropriately influence the option identification stage. The HIA should then be developed for option selection so as to influence refinement of the selected option and subsequent design.

For this project, it is recommended that Highways England also directly retain a suitable fulltime heritage professional (archaeologist) to advise it, ensure obligations are fulfilled and facilitate effective collaboration of all parties.

The mission wishes to underline the importance of Heritage Impact Assessments, as it is an important issue, and as Heritage Impact Assessments mechanisms or processes can serve, more broadly, to set up sound governance and define a shared vision for the larger Stonehenge surroundings. The issue is a monitoring and project design mechanism, which allows building heritage values into the project design and thus developing a full DCO process suite that is tailor-made for the project. This in itself should probably form part of a next advisory phase if the State Party wishes to invite a further UNESCO WHC/ ICOMOS advisory mission.

This should also lead to further reflection on defining how the main stakeholders work together, under which framework. Is there need to define specific memorandums of understanding or to develop a specific management body?

In a future stage, those authorities in charge of WH management should consider conducting a detailed assessment of all the weak points within the current DCO process and consequently define the checks and balances mechanisms necessary to ensure quality control at all stages of the process.

Digital 3D virtual visualisations are now an established tool portraying landscapes, including the Stonehenge landscape, to assist in the research, communication and preservation of cultural heritage. This technology is also being used in infrastructure projects to assist in design, consultation and whole life asset management and is known as Building Information Modelling (BIM). While such visualisations are often produced to communicate content at a particular point in time e.g. end of construction, the mission urges the State Party to use such innovative technology from the outset, from the iterative option identification and selection process. This can provide a more robust consideration of 'what if' scenarios and assessment of impact on OUV, feeding back into the design process to achieve maximum protection and enhancement of the attributes of OUV. This technology can also then be used for construction control and validation.

The development of virtual reality design with immersive technology in engineering is able to transform the design process. Visualisations can combine construction sequencing, day/night road operation with aural and luminance attributes. The mission strongly recommends that the State Party consider the current best practice with this technology available to the industry for the protection and enhancement of OUV at the Stonehenge World Heritage site. As representing best practice, visualisations should conform to the objectives of the draft London Charter for the Computer-Based Visualisation of Cultural Heritage. The charter was published by King's College in 2009, establishing internationally-recognised principles for the use of computer-based visualisation by researchers, educators and cultural heritage organisations.

There are an increasing number of infrastructure projects utilizing digital technology for iterative design and consultation. A few are highlighted below:

- The A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Improvement was a Highways England early BIM Adopter Project in 2014 ([A556 hyperlink](#)).
- For the High Speed 2 rail project in the UK, landscape, construction and operational impact maps (noise contours and zones of visibility) were produced in 2014 to make understanding easier and improve decision making on visual and aural impacts ([HS2 maps hyperlink](#)).
- High Speed 2 and Heathrow Airport have also used sound simulations during the consultation stage ([HS2 Sound demonstrations hyperlink](#)) and ([HS2 sound simulations hyperlink](#)) to demonstrate impact of major projects and also impact of mitigation measures.

- Sound simulations have also been used in consultation for a proposed wind farm in Tasmania ([King Island Windfarm hyperlink](#)).
- High Speed 2 has also used visualisations to show particular construction sequencing ([HS2 construction sequence hyperlink](#)).

Highways England advised the mission of the importance of infrastructure as a 'whole life asset' from feasibility to planning / design, construction, operation / maintenance / improvement, and disposal / change in use. The mission stressed the importance of the State Party's commitment to the 'protection and transmission to future generations' of OUV at Stonehenge and that this timescale requires longer-term thinking than typical infrastructure design with a World Heritage site. The whole asset life design of the scheme within the World Heritage site should not be limited by 25 year traffic predictions but incorporate 'asset resilience' and 'future proofing' that do not negatively impact OUV into the design to avoid future potential development / improvements that would negatively impact OUV and the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA).

The mission recommends that the State Party undertakes studies addressing potential changes in visitor numbers and behaviour that may occur by the opening up of the landscape with a tunnel scheme and ensures appropriate asset resilience to mitigate negative impacts on OUV and in the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA).

The mission urges the State Party to adopt international best practice in landscape architecture to design mitigation measures as may be required for visual, noise and luminance factors, appropriate to the protection and enhancement of the attributes of OUV. A landscape architect should be an active and influential member of the design team, having significant beneficial influence on the appearance of tunnel portal and approaches, route selection, signage and mitigation measures

The mission urges the State Party to challenge the default adoption of Highways England design codes, specifications, norms and usual practice and to seek departures where such requirements have a negative impact on OUV. The mission recommends that the State Party reviews international best practice of highway and tunnel design (e.g. signage, gantries, lighting, fire, safety and mitigation measures, etc.) where appropriate to achieve protection and enhancement of OUV. The State Party should also take account of International Charters related to heritage best practices.

The mission stresses the importance of developing a temporary construction works scheme (e.g. construction facilities, traffic diversions, plant, storage, spoil removal, parking, access roads, fencing, drainage, etc.) in parallel and compatible with the permanent design and procurement so that impact on OUV is assessed for the whole life of the asset. Also, the temporary construction sites within the World Heritage site and its surrounding buffer zone shall be minimised for essential activities only. It is recommended that the State Party seeks out and implements efficiencies in logistics and construction processes to minimise negative impacts on OUV within the World Heritage site.

The mission also stresses the importance of managing, identifying and mitigating construction impacts (dust, ground movements, pollution, accidental damage, hydrogeological changes, monitoring) in parallel and compatible with the permanent design and procurement so that impact on OUV is assessed for the whole life of the asset.

### **Security and safety dimensions**

Another aspect that needs to be specifically included in long-term planning is that of security and safety. This applies at two levels:

- 1) Issues of solstice and equinox dates, with related 'pilgrimages', crowd control, waste, trampling, vandalism etc., over large areas of the World Heritage site;
- 2) Challenges in relation to terrorist threats, and direct negative impact both on persons gathering in open or accessible public spaces, and on tangible heritage.

On both counts, it is recommended that the potential benefits or drawbacks of the planned tunnel scheme also be evaluated in the light of these security and safety issues, so that potential measures taken on security matters (surveillance, access, routes control etc.) can be assessed upstream with regards to their potential incidence on archaeology, OUV and heritage management.

### **International monitoring**

In view of the above challenges, it is strongly recommended that the State Party formally establishes a technical assistance mechanism, calling upon and inviting international expertise which could be provided by UNESCO WHC/ ICOMOS. Technical assistance provided via advisory missions, funded by the State Party throughout all phases of the project and interacting with key parties could provide DCMS and the project with expert international advice to report on compliance with obligations under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention on quality control, and provide guidance and international perspective, which includes the following:

#### **Strategic planning strategy**

Developing a vision for a larger landscape site. A tunnel for whom? Impact at the local and national level. For what? Connecting local traffic to national traffic. Building in local development.

#### **Governance**

Setting up an adapted monitoring process, including different stakeholders. Defining sound decision making processes; definition of terms of references.

#### **Archaeological quality control**

- 1) The finalisation of the intervention protocols;
- 2) The choice of operator(s) for the evaluation processes;
- 3) The decisions regarding those archaeological entities to be 'preserved by record' – that is, excavated so as to free the grounds and enable construction work to go ahead;
- 4) The choice of the operator(s) for undertaking this excavation work, and
- 5) The validation of the final excavation reports;
- 6) The agenda for in situ preservation.

#### **Engineering**

International technical engineering advice on key aspects such as alignment, tunnel portals, cuttings, groundwater, temporary works, mitigation measures and design resilience. This advice would be heritage-based to minimise negative impacts of the road improvement and to protect and enhance OUV.

The purpose or function of such technical assistance is both: 1) internally, to offer its external informed advice on various aspects of the process, and also 2) externally, to demonstrate to a range of stakeholders and interested parties that due care is being taken in national and local development matters, strategic planning, and all archaeological matters, and that heritage values and the flexibility needed for the heritage assessment are built into the project process, so that operational or financial decisions are based on heritage requirements.

### **3 MISSION CONCLUSIONS**

The Advisory Mission concerning the proposed dualling and tunnelling of the A303 from Amesbury to Berwick Down across the centre of the Stonehenge Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage site was undertaken at the request of the Government of the United Kingdom (the State Party). The overall goal of the road project is to secure a solution that is beneficial to the World Heritage property, in the light of economic considerations, and to set up an appropriate consultation process from the outset of the project.

Although no precise plans have been made available at this early stage of the project, preliminary suggestions of a tunnel “at least 2.9 km long” have been made in a commissioned report by Snashall & Young 2014.

The mission considers that the project for the relocation of the existing road underground into a “tunnel of at least 2.9k” could readily adopt appropriate well-established construction methods and spatial planning approaches. Hence, with good design and construction controls, and respecting essential archaeological and heritage management measures, the tunnelled length of the road would be expected to have a beneficial impact on the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). However, the siting and design of the tunnel portals, approach cuttings/embankments, entry/exit ramps, mitigation measures and the temporary construction works have the potential to adversely impact OUV. These latter aspects of the scheme, in particular, will require rigorous investigation, evaluation, iterative design and assessment if they are to protect the attributes of OUV within the World Heritage site and the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA).

The A303 road improvement project has the potential to become a best practice case regarding the governance of the project, the design, implementation and management of heavy infrastructure within a World Heritage property. However, it will be necessary to build in heritage requirements within all aspects of the TOR and project design, and to “think upstream” in terms of spatial planning, in order to build in heritage requirements at every point within a larger-scale landscape strategy. Such a strategy could use the World Heritage site as a booster and entry point for promoting local development.

### **4 MISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**

The mission is hereby proposing a range of recommendations. These recommendations pertain to several levels, and also at a range of time scales: some can have short term implementation (e.g. establishing an expert role for future missions) while others have relevance on the longer term (e.g. ensuring institutional stability).

In addition, of course, the recommendations proposed here do not bear on any specific dualling or tunnelling plans, which do not exist as yet. It is self-evident that more specific recommendations will have to be made by future missions, as the project advances and plans become more precise.

#### **4.1 Priority Recommendations**

The mission considers the following recommendations as priorities for State Party implementation at the outset of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process:

1. Establish a heritage-centred steering mechanism to ensure proper quality control at all stages of decision making, project design and implementation. This should include a

scientific committee, a board of experts for monitoring and quality control at each phase to be defined. Set up a multidisciplinary team to work on a first DCO process including a monitoring and quality control process. Establish relevant sets of partnerships and MOUs between key institutions. Ensure a commitment to necessary human and financial resources.

2. Consider funding and calling upon the guidance of expert advisory joint UNESCO WHC and ICOMOS International technical mission(s) and giving them a role within the upstream process as referred to in the Terms of Reference of the Mission. These missions should be involved throughout all phases of the project and interact with key parties. They should provide guidance and international best practice and perspectives and quality control to DCMS and the project managers, including on compliance with obligations under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.
3. Amend the generic DCO process map to show the significant heritage activities to be undertaken, including Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for assessing impacts on OUV from proposed changes, in accordance with the ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments (2011).
4. Produce an organogram of the key project parties and individuals involved in the project for effective communication to ensure the criticality of heritage being influential and effective from the outset.
5. Produce a Scoping Report following the ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments (2011) that sets out the scope of work necessary for a HIA to be agreed upon with all relevant parties. This report produced at the commencement of the DCO process would also establish project mechanisms which would allow heritage and OUV to be built into the project design process.
6. Establish and incorporate into the project process from the outset current best practice in innovative technology available to the industry in Building Information Modelling (BIM), digital 3D virtual visualisations and virtual reality design with immersive technology in order to inform the iterative option identification and selection process. This would provide a more robust consideration of 'what if' scenarios and assessment of impact on OUV feeding back into the design process to achieve maximum protection and enhancement of the attributes of OUV.
7. Ensure the design is procured with the involvement of a landscape architect to adopt international best practice in landscape architecture to design mitigation measures as may be required for visual, noise and luminance factors appropriate to the protection and enhancement of the attributes of OUV. The landscape architect should be an active and influential member of the design team, having significant beneficial influence on the appearance of tunnel portal and approaches, route selection, signage and mitigation measures.

#### **4.2 Critical recommendations**

The mission considers the following recommendations as critical for State Party implementation during the DCO process;

1. Align the HIAs with the DCO process being produced during option identification so as to appropriately influence the option identification stage. The HIAs should then be developed for option selection so as to influence refinement of the selected option and subsequent design.

2. Implement the State Party's commitment to the 'protection and transmission to future generations' of OUV at Stonehenge and acknowledge that to do this requires longer term thinking than typical infrastructure design in non-World Heritage Sites. The whole asset life design of the scheme within the World Heritage Site should not be limited by 25 year traffic predictions but incorporate 'asset resilience' and 'future proofing' in design that do not negatively impact OUV to avoid future potential development / improvements that would negatively impact OUV and the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA).
3. Undertake studies addressing potential changes in visitor numbers and behaviour that may occur by opening up the landscape with a tunnel scheme and ensure asset resilience appropriate to mitigate negative impacts on OUV and in the surrounding Archaeological Priority Area (APA).
4. Challenge the default adoption of Highways England design codes, specifications, norms and usual practice and seek departures where such requirements have a negative impact on OUV.
5. Review and implement international best practice for highway and tunnel design (e.g. signage, gantries, lighting, fire, safety and mitigation measures, etc.) where appropriate to achieve protection and enhancement of OUV.
6. Take account of International Charters related to heritage best practices and spatial planning (e.g. Historic urban landscape approach, Washington Charter, La Valette principals).
7. Develop temporary construction works scheme (e.g. construction facilities, traffic diversions, plant, storage, spoil removal, parking, access roads, fencing, drainage, etc.) in parallel and compatible with the permanent design and procurement so that impact on OUV is assessed for the whole life of the project.
8. Seek out and implement efficiencies in logistics and construction processes to minimise negative impacts on OUV within the World Heritage Site.

#### **4.3 Important recommendations**

The mission considers the following recommendations, in the area of archaeological heritage management, are important for the State Party to take on board and implement, in view of the wider-ranging and longer term issues raised by the project.

1. Ensure that relations between the responsible archaeological heritage management agencies and relevant actors are clarified and, as appropriate, formalised (periodic meetings, strategic planning, pooling of resources etc.) These include firstly the relations between Historic England (HE) and the National Trust (NT) (and their respective archaeological officers), and secondly interactions between these and the English Heritage Trust (EHT) and Wiltshire Council Archaeology (WCA) – each with their own remits and interests in the World Heritage site and the dualling/tunnelling project.
2. As part of this clarified collaboration between agencies and actors, ensure that interactions with the developer and funder of the project – Highways England – are carried out in a univocal and coordinated manner by the archaeological heritage parties, and conversely that funding or archaeological oversight and operations reaches all the actors concerned, including Wiltshire Council Archaeology.

3. Ensure particularly that the Historic England/National Trust (English Heritage Trust + Wiltshire Council Archaeology) archaeological heritage partnership, as it develops, exercises its legal, scientific and patrimonial commitments in the most vigorous and proactive ways possible. The wholehearted and decisive involvement of the archaeological partnership in these matters should be a sine qua non condition, including the ability to formulate requirements, veto proposals, orient others etc., in order to ensure that the heritage and archaeology dimensions of the project are clearly and consistently managed for the benefit of the OUV of the World Heritage site in particular, and of heritage and archaeology in general. This includes, among other things, questions of protocol of intervention (research design, sampling and excavations methodologies, recording, databases, archiving, etc.) and the choice of operator(s) to undertake these evaluations and excavations. This last point is crucial – it is strongly recommended that the choice, briefing and control of archaeological operators (i.e. contractors paid for by the developer) remains under the proactive control and close supervision of the archaeological partnership Historic England/National Trust (English Heritage Trust + Wiltshire Council Archaeology).
4. In view of the ongoing uncertainties surrounding the operations of both Historic England (HE) and English Heritage Trust (EHT) – both newly created in April 2015, with reduced budgets and strong pressures for self-sustainability – and in view of prevailing political and economic conditions, confirm the commitment of the State Party (the UK government, DCMS) to the protection and enhancement of archaeological heritage at the Stonehenge World Heritage site for the coming decades. More specifically, the State Party should formulate medium and long-term scenarios in case of further reductions in the funding and capacities of Historic England, and in its ability to exercise its statutory missions as an expert body. Likewise, it should enshrine certain principles of access and public service in the Stonehenge management plan, in the eventuality of an insolvency or restructuration of the English Heritage Trust (EHT) after 2021.
5. Review some elements of its communication strategy, and specifically handle with care and sensitivity any claims regarding the "£1.2 billion investment in heritage" that is represented by the Stonehenge part of the A303 expansion. This is not only objectively questionable since the investment is in the dualling/tunnelling infrastructure, but also likely to be misunderstood and raise (among stakeholders, professionals and the general public) questions as to "why is so much money being spent on heritage?" or on the contrary "why do no other sites or monuments benefit as well from this windfall?"

## 5 REFERENCES

Nicola Snashall, Christopher Young, (2014) *Preliminary Outline Assessment of the impact of A303 improvements on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Stonehenge Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage property*, National Trust, and Christopher Young, Christopher Young Heritage Consultancy

National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

A556: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aKxsQZyJKk>

HS2 maps: <http://hs2maps.com/>

HS2 sound simulations: <https://hs2ltd.wordpress.com/> and [http://www.arup.com/Soundlab?sc\\_lang=en-GB](http://www.arup.com/Soundlab?sc_lang=en-GB)

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King's College (2009). London Charter for the Computer-Based Visualisation of Cultural Heritage. Version 2.1. <http://www.londoncharter.org/>

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UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/>

UNESCO *Historic urban landscape Recommendation* <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>

UNESCO World Heritage Centre (2015) *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, 2015* <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites

World Heritage Centre *Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites*:  
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/373>

Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Management Plan  
[http://www.stonehengeandaveburywhs.org/assets/2015-MANAGEMENT-PLAN\\_LOW-RES.pdf](http://www.stonehengeandaveburywhs.org/assets/2015-MANAGEMENT-PLAN_LOW-RES.pdf)

Pont du Gard

World Heritage Centre *Pont Du Gard, Roman aqueduct* <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/344/>

Pont du Gard <http://www.pontdugard.fr>

Grands Sites de France network <http://www.grandsitedefrance.com/en.html>

## 6 ANNEXES

- I. Programme
- II. List of participants
- II. Summary of information provided by the State Party.

### Background document

- IV. Statement of Outstanding Universal Value
- V. World Heritage Committee Decisions
  - World Heritage Committee Decision 37COM 8E - *Adoption of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value*
  - World Heritage Committee Decision 35COM 7B.116 - *Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom) (C 373bis)*
  - World Heritage Committee Decision 33COM 7B.129 - *Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom) (C 373)*
- VI. Extracts from SOC Reports (as provided by State Party)
- VII. A brief history of road improvement efforts at Stonehenge
- VIII. Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project Summary of works and progress October 2015
- IX. Highways England Organogra





**ICOMOS Advisory  
Mission to the Stonehenge component of the Stonehenge, Avebury  
and Associated Sites World Heritage Site**

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Date	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2015 (Day 2)
Location	Tisbury Hub, Stour Rm & Heartspace
Start time	9.30am

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<b>Timings</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Lead</b>
<b>9.00am</b>	<b><i>Arrival and refreshments for 9.30am</i></b>	
9.30am	Welcome and introductions	All
9.50am	Opening Statement	CS
10.00am	Governance of the World Heritage Site (WHS)	SS/BT
10.10am	WHS Inscription and Statement of Universal Value (SOUV)	HO-J
10.20am	English Planning Policy and WHS Management Guidance	PM
10.30am	History of attempts to improve the A303	PM
10.40am	Recent major development within WHS - Stonehenge Environmental Improvement Project (SEIP) and closure of the A344	HS
<b>10.50am</b>	<b><i>Break</i></b>	
11.10am	Summary of changes in Archaeological knowledge of the WHS since 2004	NS
11.20am	Summary of Historic England and National Trust engagement with A303	CG
11.30am	Preliminary assessment work to date	IS/NS
11.40am	Highways England – Roads investment Strategy (RIS) and the Development Consent Order (DCO) process	A P-D
11.50am	Questions and answers	All
12.10pm	What's next – rest of the visit	PM

**12.30pm**      **Lunch**

**1.15pm**      Depart to WHS landscape for orientation and familiarisation of the northern part of A303

- starting with visit to Coneybury King Barrow for panorama across WHS, then to Stonehenge Visitor Centre to take visitor transit system or walk to Stonehenge to view removed part of A344 and environmental improvement project – familiarisation with WHS landscape north of A303 (Avenue, Greater Cursus, Durrington Walls & Woodhenge)
- opportunity for advisors to explore the facilities at the Visitor Centre including the permanent and temporary exhibitions

**5.00pm**      Wash up and transfer to accommodation

## ICOMOS Advisory Mission to the Stonehenge component of the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site

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Date            29<sup>th</sup> October 2015 (Day 3)  
Location        Tisbury Hub, Stour Rm & Heartspace  
Start time      9.00am

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Timings	Topic	Lead
<b>8.45am</b>	<b><i>Arrival and refreshments for 9.00am start</i></b>	
9.00am	Presentation on HE led research project in landscape south of current A303	PM
9.30am	Depart for tour of southern part of WHS landscape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– revisit Coneybury King Barrow in light of road briefing – Byway 11 and Normanton Down – Byway 12, Lake Down, Wilsford – all key locations for understanding the character and condition of the landscape, the monuments and their inter-relationships and Stonehenge</li> </ul>	
1.15pm	Transfer to Tisbury Hub for lunch	
<b>1.45pm</b>	<b><i>Lunch</i></b>	
2.30pm	Archaeological Stakeholder sessions (20min slots) <p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– David Dawson, Wiltshire Museum</li> <li>– Alex Gibson, Prehistoric Society</li> <li>– John Lewis, Society of Antiquities</li> <li>– Prof. Vince Gaffney, Bradford University</li> <li>– Prof. Mike Parker-Pearson, University College London</li> <li>– Dr. Josh Pollard, University of Southampton</li> <li>– David Jacques, University of Buckinghamshire</li> <li>– ICOMOS UK (<i>by phone, tbc</i>)</li> <li>– Julian Richards, Director &amp; Author of Stonehenge Environs Project</li> <li>– Jane Grenville, Council for British Archaeology (CBA) (<i>by phone, tbc</i>)</li> </ul>	
5.50pm	Stakeholder sessions close	



**ICOMOS Advisory  
Mission to the Stonehenge component of the Stonehenge, Avebury  
and Associated Sites World Heritage Site**

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Date	30 <sup>th</sup> October 2015 (Day 4)
Location	Tisbury Hub, Stour Rm & Heartspace
Start time	9.00am

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<b>Timings</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<b>8.45am</b>	<b><i>Arrival and refreshments for 9.00am</i></b>
9.00am	Stakeholder Sessions (20min slots)
	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Janice Hassett (+1), Stonehenge Traffic Action Group (STAG)</li> <li>– George McDonic, Stonehenge Alliance</li> <li>– Kate Fielden, CPRE Wiltshire</li> <li>– Roy Gillett, Pagan Round Table</li> </ul>
<b>10.20am</b>	<b><i>Break</i></b>
10.30am	Stakeholder Sessions (20min slots)
	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Dr Andrew Shuttleworth, Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council</li> <li>– Carole Slater &amp; Alan Harris, Shrewton Parish Council</li> <li>– Amesbury Town Council representative</li> <li>– John Glen, MP Salisbury</li> </ul>
<b>12.00pm</b>	<b><i>Break</i></b>
12.10pm	Stakeholder Sessions (20min slots)
	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Roger Fisher, WHS Partnership Panel</li> <li>– Fleur de Rhé Phillipe</li> </ul>
12.50pm	Working lunch and afternoon wash up
2.30pm	Close and depart

<b>ICOMOS Mission - attendees list</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Position</b>
Nathan Schlanger	representing ICOMOS	Archaeologist
Chris Barker	representing ICOMOS	Geotechnical Engineer
Marie-Noël Tournoux	representing the World Heritage Centre	Project Officer Europe and North America Unit
Henry Owen-John	Historic England	Head of International Advice
Phil McMahon	Historic England	Inspector of Ancient Monuments
Chris Smith	Historic England	National Planning Director
Heather Sebire	English Heritage Trust	Properties Curator West
Kate Davies	English Heritage Trust	Stonehenge General Manager
Andrew Page-Dove	Highways England	SW Regional Director
Brian Gash	Highways England	Major Projects
Gareth Davies (Day 2)	Mott MacDonald	Consultant Engineer
Chris Pound (Day 3)	Mott MacDonald	Consultant Engineer
Keith Nichol	Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)	Head of Cultural Diplomacy
Beth Thomas	World Heritage Site Co-Ordination Unit	World Heritage Site Co-Ordinator
Sarah Simmonds	World Heritage Site Co-Ordination Unit	World Heritage Site Co-Ordinator
Melanie Pomoroy-Kellinger	Wiltshire Council	County Archaeologist
Fleur de Rhé-Phillipe	Wiltshire Council	Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Skills and Strategic Transport
Ian Wilson	National Trust	Assistant Director of Operations, SW
Ingrid Samuel	National Trust	Historic Environment Director
Cassandra Genn	National Trust	Senior Project and Stakeholder Manager (SW Infrastructure)
Janet Tomlin	National Trust	General Manager, Avebury & Wilts. Landscape
Nicola Snashall	National Trust	Archaeologist (Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site)
Sarah North	National Trust	Project Support
<b><u>Stakeholder Sessions (Thurs / Fri)</u></b>		
David Dawson	Wiltshire Museum	
Alex Gibson	Prehistoric Society	
John Lewis	Society of Antiquities	
Prof. Vince Gaffney	Bradford University	
Dr. Josh Pollard	University of Southampton	
David Jacques	University of Buckinghamshire	
Andy Rhind-Tutt	Amesbury Museum and Heritage Trust	
Julian Richards	Director & Author of Stonehenge Environs Project	
Jane Grenville <i>(phone)</i>	Council for British Archaeology (CBA)	
Janice Hassett, husband and Cllr Ian West	Stonehenge Traffic Action Group (STAG)	
George McDonic	Stonehenge Alliance	
Kate Fielden	CPRE Wiltshire	
Roy Gillett	Pagan Round Table	
Dr Andrew Shuttleworth	Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council	
Carole Slater & Alan Harris	Shrewton Parish Council	
John Glen	MP Salisbury	
Phil Sheldrake	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	
Roger Fisher	WHS Partnership Panel	
Richard Crook	National Farmers Union (NFU)	
Fleur de Rhé Phillipe	Wiltshire Council	
Alan Creedy	Wiltshire Council	

Below is a brief summary of the documents sent to the team by the State Party in preparation for their mission to Stonehenge:

- 1. Information to be Provided in Advance of the Advisory Mission**
  - Describes contents of packet based on outline set out in the mission's TOR
- 2. Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site Management Plan Summary 2015**
- 3. WHS Nomination-Document**
  - Scan of the original nomination for Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites WHS
- 4. Decision: 37.COM/8E 5 (Phnom Penh, 2013)**
  - Adoption of retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value
- 5. Decision: 31 COM 7B.104 (Christchurch, 2007)**
  - Decision requesting the approved visitor centre project, regretting lack of progress in "A303 Stonehenge Improvement" scheme, and requesting SP to provide WHC with a report on the selection process for the "A303 Stonehenge Improvement" scheme by 1 February 2008.
- 6. Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project**
- 7. A brief history of road improvement efforts at Stonehenge**, Historic England 11 October 2015
  - Provides a detailed timeline from the 1960s until December 2014
- 8. Guidance Notes**
  - Summary of an early stage assessment of impacts on the OUV of Stonehenge prepared by National Trust and English Heritage
- 9. Preliminary Outline Assessment of the impact of A303 improvements on the Outstanding Universal Value of the Stonehenge Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage property**
  - Complete report on the OUV impact assessment prepared by English Heritage and the National Trust (December 2014)
  - Summary of works and progress of SEIP, a partnership project between English Heritage and the National Trust, as of October 2015
- 10. Stonehenge & Avebury WHS Unit TOR**, February 2014
- 11. Governance Structure**
  - Chart depicting proposed Stonehenge and Avebury governance structure, April 2013
- 12. Stonehenge & Avebury WHS Terms of Reference**
  - TOR describing respective roles in the partnership between WHS local steering committees and the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel, as well as the responsibilities of the Chair
- 13. Maps**
  - Maps (from the WHS 2015 Management Plan) depicting the site's archaeology, designation, landscape, access, etc.



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'Éducation,  
la science et la culture

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# World Heritage

# 37COM

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WHC-13/37.COM/8E

Paris, 17 May 2013

Original: English / French

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-seventh session Phnom

Penh, Cambodia  
16-27 June 2013

Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda: Establishment of the World Heritage List  
and of the List of World Heritage in Danger

8E: Adoption of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value

## SUMMARY

This Document presents the Draft Decision concerning the adoption of one hundred ninety-six retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value submitted by fifty-eight States Parties for properties which had no Statement approved at the time of their inscription on the World Heritage List.

Due to the large number of Statements (totalling nearly 900 pages for translation), these Statements are reproduced in the Annex in the original language they were submitted by the State Party concerned. Some translations have commenced and the Statements will be finalized and uploaded after the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee, subject to availability of funds.

The annex contains the full text of the retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value concerned in the original language submitted.

Draft Decision: 37 COM BE, see Point II.

the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act. The Old Town, New Town, Dean Village and West End Conservation Areas provide adequate protection by covering the majority of the World Heritage property, whilst around 75% of buildings within the property are category A, B or C listed buildings.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) is the primary policy guidance on the protection and management of the historic environment in Scotland. Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) sits alongside the SHEP and includes the Government's national planning policy on the historic environment. It provides for the protection of World Heritage properties by considering the impact of development on the Outstanding Universal Value, authenticity and integrity. Local policies specifically protecting the property are contained within The City of Edinburgh Local Plan and cite the Management Plan as a material consideration for decisions on planning matters. The immediate setting of the property is protected by a Skyline Policy that has been adopted by City of Edinburgh Council. This defines key views across the city with the aim of providing planning control that will safeguard them. This control of tall buildings that might impact on the city centre provides appropriate protection to the setting of the property, safeguarding its world-renown silhouette and views from the property outwards to such crucial topographic features as Arthur's Seat and the Firth of Forth. The Skyline policy combined with existing listed buildings and conservation area designations provides a comprehensive and sophisticated tool to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. This method of protection is being monitored on an ongoing basis.

Management of the property is indirectly influenced by a large number of organisations, communities and interest groups. The Management Plan was the subject of detailed stakeholder engagement, the results of which informed its vision, objectives and actions. The property is a living capital city centre. It has a rich cultural and intellectual life, which is part of its Outstanding Universal Value and which is vital to sustain. This rich cultural life, in such a magnificent setting, attracts tourists in great numbers. An Edinburgh Tourism Strategy acknowledges the value of World Heritage status in its strategic priorities for managing a world class city.

Historic Scotland and the City of Edinburgh Council work closely on the management of the property. Edinburgh World Heritage was established by the City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Scotland through a merger between the Edinburgh New Town Conservation Committee and the Edinburgh Old Town Renewal Trust. Its role includes promoting the property, grant dispersal and community engagement across the property. It is also a key partner in the execution of the Management Plan. The World Heritage Site Co-ordinator is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Management Plan.

Property	Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites
State Party	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Ref. No.	373bis
Date of inscription	1986-2008

**Brief synthesis**

The World Heritage property Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites is internationally important for its complexes of outstanding prehistoric monuments. Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world, while Avebury is the largest. Together with inter-related monuments, and their associated landscapes, they demonstrate Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and mortuary practices resulting from around 2000 years of continuous use and monument building between *circa* 3700 and 1600 BC. As such they represent a unique embodiment of our collective heritage.

The World Heritage property comprises two areas of Chalkland in southern Britain within which complexes of Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and funerary monuments and associated sites were built. Each area contains a focal stone circle and henge and many other major monuments. At Stonehenge these include the Avenue, the Cursuses, Durrington Walls, Woodhenge, and the densest concentration of burial mounds in Britain. At Avebury they include Windmill Hill, the West Kennel Long Barrow, the Sanctuary, Silbury Hill, the West Kennet and Beckhampton Avenues, the West Kennel Palisaded Enclosures, and important barrows.

Stonehenge is one of the most impressive prehistoric megalithic monuments in the world on account of the sheer size of its megaliths, the sophistication of its concentric plan and architectural design, the shaping of the stones - uniquely using both Wiltshire Sarsen sandstone and Pembroke Bluestone - and the precision with which it was built.

At Avebury, the massive Henge, containing the largest prehistoric stone circle in the world, and Silbury Hill, the largest prehistoric mound in Europe, demonstrate the outstanding engineering skills which were used to create masterpieces of earthen and megalithic architecture.

There is an exceptional survival of prehistoric monuments and sites within the World Heritage property including settlements, burial grounds, and large constructions of earth and stone. Today, together with their settings, they form landscapes without parallel. These complexes would have been of major significance to those who created them, as is apparent by the huge investment of time and effort they represent. They provide an insight into the mortuary and ceremonial practices of the period, and are evidence of prehistoric technology, architecture and astronomy. The careful siting of monuments in relation to the landscape helps us to further understand the Neolithic and Bronze Age.

Criterion (i): The monuments of the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites demonstrate outstanding

creative and technological achievements in prehistoric times.

Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world. It is unrivalled in its design and unique engineering, featuring huge horizontal stone lintels capping the outer circle and the trilithons, locked together by carefully shaped joints. It is distinguished by the unique use of two different kinds of stones (Bluestones and Sarsens), their size (the largest weighing over 40 t) and the distance they were transported (up to 240 km). The sheer scale of some of the surrounding monuments is also remarkable: the Stonehenge Cursus and the Avenue are both about 3 km long, while Durrington Walls is the largest known henge in Britain, around 500 m in diameter, demonstrating the ability of prehistoric peoples to conceive, design and construct features of great size and complexity.

Avebury prehistoric stone circle is the largest in the world. The encircling henge consists of a huge bank and ditch 1.3 km in circumference, within which 180 local, unshaped standing stones formed the large outer and two smaller inner circles. Leading from two of its four entrances, the West Kennel and Beckhampton Avenues of parallel standing stones still connect it with other monuments in the landscape. Another outstanding monument, Silbury Hill, is the largest prehistoric mound in Europe. Built around 2400 BC, it stands 39.5 m high and comprises half a million tonnes of chalk. The purpose of this imposing, skilfully engineered monument remains obscure.

Criterion (ii): The World Heritage property provides an outstanding illustration of the evolution of monument construction and of the continual use and shaping of the landscape over more than 2000 years, from the early Neolithic to the Bronze Age. The monuments and landscape have had an unwavering influence on architects, artists, historians and archaeologists, and still retain a huge potential for future research.

The megalithic and earthen monuments of the World Heritage property demonstrate the shaping of the landscape through monument building for around 2000 years from *circa* 3700 BC, reflecting the importance and wide influence of both areas.

Since the 12th century when Stonehenge was considered one of the wonders of the world by the chroniclers Henry de Huntington and Geoffrey de Monmouth, the Stonehenge and Avebury Sites have excited curiosity and been the subject of study and speculation. Since early investigations by John Aubrey (1626-1697), Inigo Jones (1573-1652), and William Stukeley (1687-1765), they have had an unwavering influence on architects, archaeologists, artists and historians. The two parts of the World Heritage property provide an excellent opportunity for further research.

Today, the property has spiritual associations for some.

Criterion (iii): The complexes of monuments at Stonehenge and Avebury provide an exceptional insight into the funerary and ceremonial practices in Britain in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Together with their settings and associated sites, they form landscapes without parallel.

The design, position and interrelationship of the monuments and sites are evidence of a wealthy and highly organised prehistoric society able to impose its concepts on the environment. An outstanding example is the alignment of the Stonehenge Avenue (probably a processional route) and Stonehenge stone circle on the axis of the midsummer sunrise and midwinter sunset, indicating their ceremonial and astronomical character. At Avebury the length and size of some of the features such as the West Kennel Avenue, which connects the Henge to the Sanctuary over 2 km away, are further evidence of this.

A profound insight into the changing mortuary culture of the periods is provided by the use of Stonehenge as a cremation cemetery, by the West Kennel Long Barrow, the largest known Neolithic stone-chambered collective tomb in southern England, and by the hundreds of other burial sites illustrating evolving funerary rites.

#### Integrity

The boundaries of the property capture the attributes that together convey Outstanding Universal Value at Stonehenge and Avebury. They contain the major Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments that exemplify the creative genius and technological skills for which the property is inscribed. The Avebury and Stonehenge landscapes are extensive, both being around 25 square kilometres, and capture the relationship between the monuments as well as their landscape setting.

At Avebury the boundary was extended in 2008 to include East Kennel Long Barrow and Fyfield Down with its extensive Bronze Age field system and naturally occurring Sarsen Stones. At Stonehenge the boundary will be reviewed to consider the possible inclusion of related, significant monuments nearby such as Robin Hood's Ball, a Neolithic causewayed enclosure.

The setting of some key monuments extends beyond the boundary. Provision of buffer zones or planning guidance based on a comprehensive setting study should be considered to protect the setting of both individual monuments and the overall setting of the property.

The survival of the Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments at both Stonehenge and Avebury is exceptional and remarkable given their age - they were built and used between around 3700 and 1600 BC. Stone and earth monuments retain their original design and materials. The timber structures have disappeared but postholes indicate their location. Monuments have been regularly maintained and repaired as necessary.

The presence of busy main roads going through the World Heritage property impacts adversely on its integrity. The roads sever the relationship between Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments, notably the A344 which separates the Stone Circle from the Avenue. At Avebury, roads cut through some key monuments including the Henge and the West Kennel Avenue. The A4 separates the Sanctuary from its barrow group at Overton Hill.

Roads and vehicles also cause damage to the fabric of some monuments while traffic noise and visual intrusion have a negative impact on their settings. The incremental impact of highway-related clutter needs to be carefully managed.

Development pressures are present and require careful management. Impacts from existing intrusive development should be mitigated where possible.

#### **Authenticity**

Interventions have been limited mainly to excavations and the re-erection of some fallen or buried stones to their known positions in the early and mid-twentieth century in order to improve understanding. Ploughing, burrowing animals and early excavation have resulted in some losses but what remains is remarkable in its completeness and concentration. The materials and substance of the archaeology supported by the archaeological archives continue to provide an authentic testimony to prehistoric technological and creative achievement.

This survival and the huge potential of buried archaeology make the property an extremely important resource for archaeological research, which continues to uncover new evidence and expand our understanding of prehistory. Present day research has enormously improved our understanding of the property.

The known principal monuments largely remain *in situ* and many are still dominant features in the rural landscape. Their form and design are well-preserved and visitors are easily able to appreciate their location, setting and interrelationships which in combination represent landscapes without parallel.

At Stonehenge several monuments have retained their alignment on the Solstice sunrise and sunset, including the Stone Circle, the Avenue, Woodhenge, and the Durrington Walls Southern Circle and its Avenue.

Although the original ceremonial use of the monuments is not known, they retain spiritual significance for some people, and many still gather at both stone circles to celebrate the Solstice and other observations. Stonehenge is known and valued by many more as the most famous prehistoric monument in the world.

There is a need to strengthen understanding of the overall relationship between remains, both buried and standing, at Stonehenge and at Avebury.

#### **Protection and management requirements**

The UK Government protects World Heritage properties in England in two ways: firstly, individual buildings, monuments and landscapes are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, and secondly through the UK Spatial Planning system under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Acts. The individual sites within the property are protected through the Government's designation of individual buildings, monuments, gardens and landscapes.

Government guidance on protecting the Historic Environment and World Heritage is set out in National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 07/09. Policies to protect, promote, conserve and enhance World Heritage properties, their settings and buffer zones are also found in statutory planning documents. The protection of the property and its setting from inappropriate development could be further strengthened through the adoption of a specific Supplementary Planning Document.

At a local level, the property is protected by the legal designation of all its principal monuments. There is a specific policy in the Local Development Framework to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property from inappropriate development, along with adequate references in relevant strategies and plans at all levels. The Wiltshire Core Strategy includes a specific World Heritage Property policy. This policy states that additional planning guidance will be produced to ensure its effective implementation and thereby the protection of the World Heritage property from inappropriate development. The policy also recognises the need to produce a setting study to enable this. Once the review of the Stonehenge boundary is completed, work on the setting study shall begin.

The Local Planning Authority is responsible for continued protection through policy development and its effective implementation in deciding planning applications with the management plans for Stonehenge and Avebury as a key material consideration. These plans also take into account the range of other values relevant to the site in addition to Outstanding Universal Value. Avebury lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a national statutory designation to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape.

About a third of the property at both Stonehenge and Avebury is owned and managed by conservation bodies: English Heritage, a non-departmental government body, and the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds which are both charities. Agri-environment schemes, an example of partnership working between private landowners and Natural England (a non-departmental government body), are very important for protecting and enhancing the setting of prehistoric monuments through measures such as grass restoration and scrub control. Much of the property can be accessed through public rights of way as well as permissive paths and open access provided by some agri-environment schemes. Managed open access is provided at Solstice. There are a significant number of private households within the property and local residents therefore have an important role in its stewardship.

The property has effective management plans, coordinators and steering groups at both Stonehenge and Avebury. There is a need for an overall integrated management system for the property which will be addressed by the establishment of a coordinating Stonehenge and Avebury Partnership Panel whilst retaining the Stonehenge and Avebury steering groups to enable specific local issues to be addressed and to maintain the meaningful engagement of the community. A single property management plan will replace the two separate

management plans.

An overall visitor management and interpretation strategy, together with a landscape strategy needs to be put in place to optimise access to and understanding of the property. This should include improved interpretation for visitors and the local community both on site and in local museums, holding collections excavated from the property as well as through publications and the web. These objectives are being addressed at Stonehenge through the development of a visitor centre and the Interpretation, Learning and Participation Strategy. The updated Management Plan will include a similar strategy for Avebury. Visitor management and sustainable tourism challenges and opportunities are addressed by specific objectives in both the Stonehenge and Avebury Management Plans.

An understanding of the overall relationship between buried and standing remains continues to be developed through research projects such as the "Between the Monuments" project and extensive geophysical surveys. Research Frameworks have been published for the Site and are regularly reviewed. These encourage further relevant research. The Woodland Strategy, an example of a landscape level management project, once complete, can be built on to include other elements of landscape scale planning.

It is important to maintain and enhance the improvements to monuments achieved through grass restoration and to avoid erosion of earthen monuments and buried archaeology through visitor pressure and burrowing animals.

At the time of inscription the State Party agreed to remove the A344 road to reunite Stonehenge and its Avenue and improve the setting of the Stone Circle. Work to deliver the closure of the A344 will be complete in 2013. The project also includes a new Stonehenge visitor centre. This will provide world class visitor facilities including interpretation of the wider World Heritage property landscape and the removal of modern clutter from the setting of the Stone Circle. Although substantial progress is being made, the impact of roads and traffic remains a major challenge in both parts of the World Heritage property. The A303 continues to have a negative impact on the setting of Stonehenge, the integrity of the property and visitor access to some parts of the wider landscape. A long-term solution remains to be found. At Avebury, a World Heritage Site Traffic Strategy will be developed to establish guidance and identify a holistic set of actions to address the negative impacts that the dominance of roads, traffic and related clutter has on integrity, the condition and setting of monuments and the ease and confidence with which visitors and the local community are able to explore the wider property.

Property	<b>Studley Royal Park including the Ruins of Fountains Abbey</b>
State Party	<b>United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</b>
d. W	<b>J72bis</b>
Date of inscription	<b>1986- 2012</b>

#### **Brief synthesis**

Situated in North Yorkshire, the 18th century designed landscape of Studley Royal water garden and pleasure grounds, including the ruins of Fountains Abbey, is one harmonious whole of buildings, gardens and landscapes. This landscape of exceptional merit and beauty represents over 800 years of human ambition, design and achievement.

Studley Royal Park is one of the few great 18th century gardens to survive substantially in its original form, and is one of the most spectacular water gardens in England. The landscape garden is an outstanding example of the development of the 'English' garden style throughout the 18th century, which influenced the rest of Europe. With the integration of the River Skell into the water gardens and the use of 'borrowed' vistas from the surrounding countryside, the design and layout of the gardens is determined by the form of the natural landscape, rather than being imposed upon it. The garden contains canals, ponds, cascades, lawns and hedges, with elegant garden buildings, gateways and statues. The Aislabies' vision survives substantially in its original form, most famously in the spectacular view of the ruins of Fountains Abbey itself.

Fountains Abbey ruins is not only a key eye catcher in the garden scheme, but is of outstanding importance in its own right, being one of the few Cistercian houses to survive from the 12th century and providing an unrivalled picture of a great religious house in all its parts.

The remainder of the estate is no less significant. At the west end of the estate is the transitional Elizabethan/Jacobean Fountains Hall, partially built from reclaimed abbey stone. With its distinctive Elizabethan facade enhanced by a formal garden with shaped hedges, it is an outstanding example of its period.

Located in the extensive deer park is St Mary's Church, a masterpiece of High Victorian Gothic architecture, designed by William Burges in 1871 and considered to be one of his finest works.

**Criterion (i):** Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey owes its originality and striking beauty to the fact that a humanised landscape was created around the largest medieval ruins in the United Kingdom. The use of these features, combined with the planning of the water garden itself, is a true masterpiece of human creative genius.

**Criterion (iv):** Combining the remains of the richest abbey in England, the Jacobean Fountains Hall, and Burges's miniature neo-Gothic masterpiece of St Mary's, with the water gardens and deer park into one harmonious whole, Studley Royal Park including the ruins of Fountains Abbey illustrates the power of medieval monasticism and the taste and wealth of the European upper classes in the 18th century.

**Decision : 37 COM 8E**

# **Adoption of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-13/37.COM/8E and WHC-13/37.COM/8E.Add,
2. Congratulates States Parties for the excellent work accomplished in the elaboration of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for World Heritage properties in their territories;
3. Adopts the retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value, as presented in the Annex of Document WHC-13/37.COM/8E, for the following World Heritage properties:
  - Andorra: Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley;
  - Argentina: Cueva de las Manos, Río Pinturas; Jesuit Block and Estancias of Córdoba; Quebrada de Humahuaca; Iguazu National Park;
  - Australia: Shark Bay, Western Australia; Greater Blue Mountains Area; Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens; Willandra Lakes Region; Kakadu National Park;
  - Austria / Hungary: Fertő / Neusiedlersee Cultural Landscape;
  - Bangladesh: The Sundarbans; Ruins of the Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur;
  - Belgium : La Grand-Place, Brussels;
  - Belgium / France: Belfries of Belgium and France;
  - Bolivia: Fuerte de Samaipata; Tiwanaku: Spiritual and Political Centre of the Tiwanaku Culture; Historic City of Sucre; Jesuit Missions of the Chiquitos;
  - Brazil: Serra da Capivara National Park;
  - Chile: Humberstone and Santa Laura Saltpeter Works; Rapa Nui National Park; Churches of Chiloé; Sewell Mining Town; Historic quarter of the Seaport City of Valparaíso;
  - China: Huanglong Scenic and Historic Interest Area; Mount Huangshan; Mountain Resort and its Outlying Temples, Chengde; Ancient City of Ping Yao; Classical Gardens of Suzhou; Summer Palace, an Imperial Garden in Beijing; Ancient Villages in Southern Anhui – Xidi and Hongcun; Longmen Grottoes; Yungang Grottoes; Yin Xu; Imperial Tombs of the Ming and Qing Dynasties; Historic center of Macao; Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor;
  - Colombia: Port, Fortresses and Group of Monuments, Cartagena; Historic Centre of Santa Cruz de Mompos; San Agustín Archaeological Park; National Archeological Park of Tierradentro;
  - Costa Rica: Area de Conservación Guanacaste;
  - Cuba: Trinidad and the Valley de los Ingenios; Desembarco del Granma National Park; Alejandro de Humboldt National Park; Old Havana;
  - Cyprus: Choroikoitia; Painted Churches in the Troodos Region;
  - Denmark: Kronborg Castle;
  - Ecuador: City of Quito; Historic Centre of Santa Ana de los Ríos de Cuenca; Galápagos Islands;

- El Salvador: Joya de Cerén Archaeological Site;
- Ethiopia: Aksum; Fasil Ghebbi;
- Finland / Sweden: High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago;
- Guatemala: Archeological Park and Ruins of Quirigua; Antigua Guatemala;
- Germany: Classical Weimar; Messel Pit Fossil Site; Roman Monuments, Cathedral of St Peter and Church of Our Lady in Trier; Aachen Cathedral; Cologne Cathedral; Hanseatic City of Lübeck; Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar; Museumsinsel (Museum Island), Berlin; Old town of Regensburg with Stadtamhof; Speyer Cathedral; Town Hall and Roland on the Marketplace of Bremen; Town of Bamberg;
- Greece: Mount Athos;
- Honduras: Maya Site of Copan;
- Hungary: Old Village of Hollókő and its Surroundings; Millenary Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma and its Natural Environment; Early Christian Necropolis of Pécs (Sopianae); Tokaj Wine Region Historic Cultural Landscape; Hortobágy National Park - the Puszta; Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue;
- Hungary / Slovakia: Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst;
- India: Sun Temple, Konârak; Group of Monuments at Hampi; Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya; Elephanta Caves; Great Living Chola Temples; Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus); Mountain Railways of India;
- Indonesia: Ujung Kulon National Park; Komodo National Park; Lorentz National Park; Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra; Sangiran Early Man Site;
- Iran (Islamic Republic of): Pasargadae; Takht-e Soleyman;
- Ireland: Archaeological Ensemble of the Bend of the Boyne;
- Italy: Venice and its Lagoon;
- Japan: Yakushima; Shirakami-Sanchi; Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area; Shiretoko; Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu Cities); Shrines and Temples of Nikko; Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range; Itsukushima Shinto Shrine; Himeji-jo;
- Latvia: Historic Centre of Riga;
- Lao People's Democratic Republic: Town of Luang Prabang;
- Lithuania: Vilnius Historic Centre;
- Luxembourg: City of Luxembourg: its Old Quarters and Fortifications;
- Malaysia: Kinabalu Park;
- Mauritius: Aapravasi Ghat;
- Mexico: Pre-Hispanic City of Teotihuacan; Historic Centre of Morelia; Earliest 16th-Century Monasteries on the Slopes of Popocatepetl; Historic Monuments Zone of Querétaro; Historic Fortified Town of Campeche; Franciscan Missions in the Sierra Gorda of Querétaro; Agave Landscape and the Ancient Industrial Facilities of Tequila; Whale Sanctuary of El Vizcaino; Ancient Maya City of Calakmul, Campeche; Archaeological Monuments Zone of Xochicalco; Historic Monuments Zone of Tlacotalpan; Pre-Hispanic City of Chichen-Itza; Historic Centre of Zacatecas; Historic Centre of Oaxaca and Archaeological Site of Monte Albán; Sian Ka'an; Luis Barragán House and Studio; Rock Paintings of the Sierra de San Francisco; Archaeological Zone of Paquimé, Casas Grandes; Historic Centre of Puebla; Historic Town of Guanajuato and Adjacent Mines; Pre-hispanic town of Uxmal; Hospicio Cabañas, Guadalajara; Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California; Historic Centre of Mexico City and

- Xochimilco; Pre-Hispanic City and National Park of Palenque; El Tajin, Pre-Hispanic City;
- Netherlands: Ir.D.F. Woudagemaal (D.F. Wouda Steam Pumping Station); Schokland and Surroundings; Droogmakerij de Beemster (Beemster Polder); Rietveld Schröderhuis (Rietveld Schröder House);
  - Nicaragua: Ruins of León Viejo;
  - Nigeria: Sukur Cultural Landscape;
  - Norway: Rock Art of Alta; Urnes Stave Church; Bryggen;
  - Oman: Archaeological Sites of Bat, Al-Khutm and Al-Ayn;
  - Pakistan: Taxila; Historical Monuments at Makli, Thatta; Rohtas Fort; Buddhist Ruins of Takht-i-Bahi and Neighbouring City Remains at Sahr-i-Bahlol;
  - Panama: Darien National Park; Archaeological Site of Panamá Viejo and Historic District of Panamá;
  - Paraguay: Jesuit Missions of La Santísima Trinidad de Paraná and Jesús de Tavarangué;
  - Peru: City of Cuzco; Chavin (Archaeological Site); Historic Centre of Lima; Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu;
  - Philippines: Historic town of Vigan;
  - South Africa: uKhahlamba / Drakensberg Park;
  - Switzerland: Abbey of St Gall; Benedictine Convent of St John at Müstair; Old City of Berne; Three Castles, Defensive Wall and Ramparts of the Market-Town of Bellinzona;
  - Thailand: Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex; Thungyai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries; Historic Town of Sukhothai and Associated Historic Towns; Ban Chiang Archaeological Site;
  - Turkey: Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia; Nemrut Dağ; Great Mosque and Hospital of Divriği; Hierapolis-Pamukkale;
  - United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: Blaenavon Industrial Landscape; Blenheim Palace; Canterbury Cathedral, St Augustine's Abbey, and St Martin's Church; Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd; City of Bath; Durham Castle and Cathedral; Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast; Heart of Neolithic Orkney; Ironbridge Gorge; Maritime Greenwich; New Lanark; Old and New Towns of Edinburgh; Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites; Studley Royal Park including the Ruins of Fountains Abbey; Tower of London; St Kilda; Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey and Saint Margaret's Church;
  - Uruguay: Historic Quarter of the City of Colonia del Sacramento;
  - Uzbekistan: Itchan Kala;
  - Venezuela : Coro and its Port; Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas;

4. Decides that retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for World Heritage properties in Danger will be reviewed by the Advisory Bodies in priority;

5. Further decides that, considering the high number of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value to be examined, the order in which they will be reviewed by the Advisory Bodies will follow the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting, namely:

- World Heritage properties in the Arab States;
- World Heritage properties in Africa;
- World Heritage properties in Asia and the Pacific;

- World Heritage properties in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- World Heritage properties in Europe and North America;

6. Requests the World Heritage Centre to harmonise all sub-headings in the adopted Statements of Outstanding Universal Value where appropriate and when resources and staff time allow to carry out this work;

7. Also requests the State Parties, Advisory Bodies and World Heritage Centre to ensure the use of gender-neutral language in the Statements proposed for adoption to the World Heritage Committee;

8. Further requests the World Heritage Centre to keep the adopted Statements in line with subsequent decisions by the World Heritage Committee concerning name changes of World Heritage properties, and to reflect them throughout the text of the Statements, in consultation with States Parties and Advisory Bodies;

9. Finally requests the States Parties to provide support to the World Heritage Centre for translation of the adopted Statements of Outstanding Universal Value into English or French respectively, and finally requests the Centre to upload these onto its web-pages.

**Decision : 35 COM 7B.116**

## **Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom) (C 373bis)**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-11/35.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **33 COM 7B.129**, adopted at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009),
3. Acknowledges the measures taken in the resolution of the road closure and the visitor facilities issues, in particular the approval of the English Heritage Full Planning Application by Wiltshire Council in June 2010;
4. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with details of the location and plans of the proposed visitor centre for evaluation by ICOMOS;
5. Notes that the funding for the implementation of the development project has almost been ensured;
6. Also requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed about any development related to the road closure and the visitor facilities and to report any implementation activities within the Periodic Reporting exercise to be launched in 2012.

**Decision : 33 COM 7B.129**

## **Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom) (C 373)**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-09/33.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **32 COM 7B.114**, adopted at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008),
3. Regrets that the State Party continues to make little progress in the urgent resolution of the significant A344 road closures and visitor facility issues at the property, despite assurances made as long ago as 1986;
4. Requests that the State Party keeps the World Heritage Centre informed of any progress, particularly the Ministerial announcement, as it occurs;
5. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2011** a report on progress made on the road closure and visitor facilities, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011.

## SOC Reports and Committee decisions (extracts)

- 1986:

"Closure of the road which crosses the avenue at Stonehenge was receiving serious consideration as part of the overall plans for the future management of the site".

- 16 COM 1992:

The ICOMOS Representative mentioned the problem of tourist pressure and the deviation of the road A-344. A more detailed report will be submitted at the next session of the Committee at Santa Fe.

- 18 COM 1994:

Decision: This site which was inscribed in 1986 is threatened by the path of the A303 motorway through the southern part of the site. At the request of the Observer of the United Kingdom, a communication prepared by the concerned authorities was brought to the attention of the Bureau. Two proposals for the organization of the site will be discussed on 8 July 1994 at a meeting organized by The English Heritage and the National Trust, in which the representatives of the Ministry of Transportation and international experts will participate. The first foresees the construction of a tunnel which would be dug under the site. The second foresees the creation of an access bridge for visitors at the eastern end of the site which would be linked to an observation station on the top of the hill dominating Stonehenge. The first option is by far the most costly.

The Bureau took note of this information and expressed the wish that a satisfactory project could be undertaken as soon as possible.

- 22 COM 1998:

In response to an enquiry by the Secretariat, the Department for Culture, Media and Sports of the United Kingdom, provided information on the most recent planning proposals for Stonehenge. It is now proposed that a new visitor's centre be located at 'Fargo North', which lies to the west of the Stones, that the A344 road, which currently passes close to the Stones, be closed and that the A303 road become a tunnel over a length of two kilometres.

Decision: The Bureau expressed its satisfaction with the management and presentation proposals for the Stonehenge World Heritage site. It stressed, however, the **need for the closure of the road passing close to the monument**, foreseen when the site was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986 and for the completion of a management plan with the minimum delay.

- **24 COM 2000:**

Information: A Management Plan for the Stonehenge World Heritage site, prepared under the direction of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Group (comprising national and local organizations) and chaired by an English Heritage Commissioner was received. Furthermore, The Department for Culture, Media and Sport provided a detailed response to letters of concern that had been received at the Secretariat with regard to **the planning for the site, particularly the solution proposed for the A303 road (cut-and-cover tunnel of two kilometers long)**.

Both the Management Plan and the above-mentioned response have been transmitted to ICOMOS for review and advice.

Action Required

The Bureau may wish to examine information that will be provided at the time of its session and take the appropriate decision thereupon.

Decision:

ICOMOS congratulated the Government of the United Kingdom for this management plan for what is a very complex site. It recommended that careful evaluation and assessment be undertaken in each stage of the process of implementation.

The Bureau congratulated the Government of the United Kingdom for the preparation of this high-quality management plan and took note of the intention of the Government to follow the recommendation made by ICOMOS.

- **25 COM 2001:**

Conservation issues:

The Secretariat has received numerous letters of concern about the impact the proposed solution will have on the site. The Secretariat received information from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom underlying that **in order to improve the site's**

setting, the Government proposes to remove both roads from the immediate vicinity of the monument. In this regard, it is proposed that the A303 road run through a 2km tunnel near the stone circle, whilst the other road (A344) should be closed and converted to grass. It is also proposed that the present rather poor visitor facilities and car park should be removed and that a new visitor centre (with car parking and interpretative facilities) should be build a short distance away, outside the site. However, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport underlined in its letter that all these proposals will be subject to examination under normal planning procedures and that full consideration will be given to the overall archaeological and environmental implications. ICOMOS informed the Secretariat that it was in full agreement with the proposals and that the cut-and-cover tunnel is a feasible project that will not cause any damage to the archaeology and the environment on the site.

Draft decision:

The Bureau may wish to adopt the following decision :

"The Bureau notes the information transmitted by the State Party concerning the planning and the protection of the site of Stonehenge as well as the views of ICOMOS that this will not cause any damage to the site. The Bureau also notes the views of the State Party and ICOMOS on Silbury Hill which is part of the World Heritage site. It requests the State Party to work in close consultation with the Centre and ICOMOS regarding the planning and protection of the site and to present a progress report to the Bureau at its next session in April 2002."

- 27 COM 2003:

*WHC:*

In 2000, ICOMOS confirmed that they were in full agreement with the proposals for a 2 km cut-and-cover tunnel. Since the last report to the Bureau, work has continued on the development of the scheme designs for the roads and for the visitor centre. Work includes full environmental impact assessments.

In 2002, a full appraisal of the options for the length and method of constructing the tunnel was undertaken. On the basis of this appraisal, Ministers decided that their preferred option was for a 2.1 km bored tunnel rather than the previously proposed 2 km cut-and-cover tunnel. This longer tunnel using less intrusive construction techniques will minimize the impact of the road scheme on the World Heritage site. The estimated cost of the longer bored tunnel is £183m (US\$ 298m), some £30m (US\$ 49m) more than the original 2 km cut-and-cover tunnel. Ministers concluded that the 2.1 km tunnel met the requirements of the World Heritage site Management Plan.

/COMOS:

Following the 24th session of the World Heritage Committee in December 2000, ICOMOS received additional information concerning the different options for the tunnel project. This information has caused ICOMOS to modify its point of view on the initial solution of the State Party (2km cut-and-cover tunnel). It has adopted a position in favour of the longer tunnel project (4.5km) and welcomes that the State Party has opted for a bored tunnel solution. It considered such a solution to correspond best to the aim of protecting the exceptional value of the Stonehenge landscape.

Decision:

The World Heritage Committee [48],

1. Taking note of the changes made to the construction technique for the tunnel,;
2. Welcomes the State Party's decision to construct a bored tunnel, which is less damaging for the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage property than a cut-and-cover tunnel;
3. Noting that the Environmental Impact Assessment of the road improvements to the A303 are available on the web site [www.highways.gsi.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gsi.gov.uk),
4. Requests the State Party to provide a progress report to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2004 in order that the World Heritage Committee can examine the state of conservation of the property at its 28th session in 2004.

- 28 COM 2004:

Information :

The State Party did not provide a progress report by the deadline of 1 February 2004 as the Public Inquiry on the road improvement at Stonehenge finished on 11 May 2004. Subsequently, the World Heritage Centre received a progress report from the State Party on 7 May 2004 and its revised version on 28 May 2004:

Stonehenge: As has been previously reported to the World Heritage Committee there are proposed infrastructure projects relating to the roads and visitor facilities at the World Heritage property. The A303 Stonehenge Improvement scheme aims to upgrade the A303 trunk road as well as to remove the A344 road. In July 2003 the Highway Agency with the support from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and English Heritage, submitted a proposal which involves 2.1 km of bored tunnel and 3.6 km of four-lane dual carriageway, which mainly replaces existing dual carriageway that runs through the World Heritage property. The bored tunnel scheme for A303 will (1) put trunk road traffic underground and therefore out of

sight of the Stonehenge monument, (2) be less damaging to the underground archaeological deposit compared to the earlier proposal of "cut and cover tunnel scheme", and (3) be in line with the objectives of the Stonehenge World Heritage site Management Plan (English Heritage 2000). This is the result of continuous effort undertaken by the State Party which examined over 50 alternative routes with a significant amount of public consultations over twenty years since the inscription of the property in 1986. On 13 June 2003 a representative of the World Heritage Centre attended the Public Exhibition on the A303 Stonehenge Improvement at Amesbury.

The proposed scheme was subject to a Public Inquiry from 17 February to 11 May 2004. Details of the Public Inquiry, including daily transcripts, can be seen at [www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/stonehenge](http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/stonehenge) and [www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk).

According to the State Party, the Public Inquiry focused on the obligation of the State Party under the Convention, the justification for the inscription of the site on the World Heritage List and whether the proposed scheme was in accordance with the Management Plan. The proposal is controversial and a wide range of views and alternative proposals were placed before the Inspector. Concerns raised by ICOMOS-United Kingdom, the National Trust, the Council of British Archaeology include possible damage that road cutting would have on underground archaeological deposit and on access across large parts of the site as well as increase in traffic and noise pollution. Some of the opponents to the current scheme prefer options with an extended tunnel up to 4.5 km or alternative road routes. ICOMOS United Kingdom in particular stated in their closing statement to the Public Inquiry that they do not support the proposed scheme, any of the alternative routes including a 4.5 km tunnel, nor the alternative suggestion by the National Trust of an addition of 200 m at the eastern end of the tunnel and 600 m at the western end.

The total cost of the proposed project is over US\$450 million, the estimated cost of the road scheme is over US\$350 million and the visitor centre with access scheme is some US\$100 million. The Government of the United Kingdom acknowledges that a longer tunnel would provide additional cultural benefits but there are other environmental issues and additional costs of some US\$ 300 million.

ICOMOS as well as other organisations and individuals have written to the World Heritage Centre to express their concern on the impact of the A303 scheme on the World Heritage site. The decision on whether to proceed with the scheme is expected by early 2005.

Decision:

The World Heritage Committee

1. Noting that the State Party did not provide a progress report by the deadline of 1 February 2004 as requested by the World Heritage Committee at its 27th session in 2003 (Decision 27 COM 78.82), but it was only provided on 7 May and its revised version on 28 May 2004,
2. Notes the progress with the A303 Stonehenge Improvement Road and the proposals for a new visitor centre;
3. Welcomes the opportunity given to the public to make their views known in the decision making process concerning the A303 road construction through a Public Inquiry;
4. Requests that the Inspector's Report of the A303 Stonehenge Improvement Inquiry and details of the Visitor Centre planning application be provided to the World Heritage Centre;
5. Further requests the State Party to provide an update report by 1 February 2005 to the World Heritage Centre in order that the World Heritage Committee can examine the state of conservation of the property at its 29th session in 2005.

- 29 COM 2005:

The State Party submitted the state of conservation report on 31 January 2005. According to the national authorities, the Inspector's Report and recommendations following the Public Inquiry (17 February to 11 May 2004) on the A303 Stonehenge Improvement, originally expected in September 2004, still has not been published.

ICOMOS is concerned that about lack of progress in resolving the upgrading of the A303 trunk road, since this is essential before the A340 road, which crosses the property very close to the Stones, can be closed.

Decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document *WHC-05/29.COMnB.Rev*,
2. Recalling its Decision 28 COM 158.102, adopted at its 28th session (Suzhou, 2004),
3. Expresses its concerns on the fact that no progress in resolving the controversy over the "A303 Stonehenge Improvement" scheme has been made;
4. Takes note of the planning application for the visitor centre;
5. Requests once again that the Inspector's Report of the A303 Stonehenge Improvement Inquiry be provided to the World Heritage Centre upon publication;

6. Requests the State Party of the United Kingdom to provide the World Heritage Centre with an updated report by **1 February 2007**, for examination by the Committee at its 31st session (2007).

• **31COM 2007:**

a) *A303 scheme:*

The State Party submitted a state of conservation report dated 29 January 2007. According to the National Authorities, **the Inspector's report published in January 2005 recommended that the A303 be improved with a 2.1 km bored tunnel within the World Heritage site**, according to the lines of the scheme previously endorsed by the World Heritage Committee. **Due to the costs of this scheme, the government later announced that the options for the improvement of the road would be reviewed.** Five options were considered, including the preferred tunnel scheme supported by the Inspector. The results of the review were presented to the Government in July 2006 and the final decision adopting one of the proposed options is awaited.

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **29 COM 78.88**, adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),
3. Commends the national authorities for having improved the protection of archaeological sites by reversion of arable to grassland;
4. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with the approved project for the visitor centre, and encourages the State Party to advance the implementation of the visitor centre in order to preserve and improve the integrity of the property;
5. **Regrets that there has been no progress made in the implementation of the "A303 Stonehenge Improvement" scheme, and urges the State Party to find an appropriate solution compatible with the outstanding universal value of the property;**
6. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with a detailed report by **1 February 2008** on progress made in the selection process of the "A303 Stonehenge Improvement" scheme, for examination by the Committee at its 32nd session in 2008.

• **32COM 2008:**

On 30 January 2008, the Head of the Policy, Strategy and Resources Unit of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport reported to the World Heritage Centre that **the Government of the**

United Kingdom had announced on 6 December 2007 that the proposed 2.1 km bored tunnel scheme for improvement of the A303 road overlooking the Stonehenge ancient monument had been cancelled because of the increased estimated costs (more than USD 975 million). This meant that it would no longer be possible for English Heritage to build the proposed new visitor centre, outside the World Heritage property, since its planning consent was dependent upon implementation of the A303 road scheme. It would also further delay the planned closure of the A344 road, which cuts the avenue very close to the Stones.

A thorough review of visitor management and access to the Stonehenge World Heritage property (including the proposed closure of the junction of the A344 road with the A303) is being carried out by English Heritage and other stakeholders. This work is being overseen by a high-level project board, chaired jointly by the Minister for Culture and the Minister of Transport. It is intended that proposals for a visitor centre and the draft revised management plan should go out for public consultation in the summer of 2008, with the objective of having the visitor improvements in place by 2012.

Although work on improving visitor facilities, and on closing the A344 minor road, is to be welcomed, the State Party should be encouraged to consider longer term measures to improve the landscape of the Stonehenge part of the World Heritage property.

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document *WHC-08132.COM/78*,
2. Recalling Decision 31 COM 78.104, adopted at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007)
3. Also recalling that at the time of the inscription of the property in 1986 the Committee noted with satisfaction the assurances provided by the authorities of the United Kingdom that the closure of the road which crosses the avenue at Stonehenge (A344 road) was receiving serious consideration as part of the overall plans for the future management of the property;
4. Regrets that further delays have taken place in the long overdue improvements to visitor access to the Stonehenge part of the property, to its presentation to visitors, and to the setting of the monuments;
5. Urges the State Party to address the issues above in priority;
6. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2009, a progress report on the closure of the road, visitor management and access, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session in 2009.

- 33 COM 2009:

On 31 January 2009, the State Party submitted its report. It had announced in December 2007 that it intended to deal with progress on the closure of the road, visitor management and access

as a matter of priority. A Project Board chaired jointly by the Minister for Culture and the Minister for Roads was then quickly formed to oversee the development of the revised management plan for the property, and to develop firm proposals for environmental improvements, new visitor facilities and the closure of the A 344 road past Stonehenge itself, stating its commitment to complete these improvements by 2012.

*b) management plan:*

Facilitated by English Heritage a revision of the management plan had been carried out by the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Committee during 2008. The revision process involved a wide stakeholder group through the Stonehenge Advisory Forum, and included a three-month public consultation period involving an exhibition, a questionnaire, a website, and a mailing to local residents. Published in January 2009, the stated priorities for the period 2009 - 2015 including to:

- Maintain and extend permanent grassland to protect buried archaeology, and to provide an appropriate setting for upstanding monuments;
- Remove or screen inappropriate structures or roads, in particular the A344, and keep the A303 improvements under review ;
- Enhance the visitor experience by 2012 by providing improved interim facilities

The World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS acknowledge that **progress has been made, but that this has principally been administrative, involving the production of a revised management plan, consultation procedures, the setting up of developmental groups, and Ministerial consideration.** Little physical progress to resolve the concerning issues has occurred on the ground in the property. **A revised target date of 2012 has now been set to achieve them,** with promises to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of progress as it occurs.

Decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-09/33.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **32 COM 78.114**, adopted at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008),
3. **Regrets that the State Party continues to make little progress in the urgent resolution of the significant A344 road closures and visitor facility issues at the property, despite assurances made as long ago as 1986;**
4. Requests that the State Party keeps the World Heritage Centre informed of any progress, particularly the Ministerial announcement, as it occurs;

5. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2011 a report on progress made on the road closure and visitor facilities, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011.

- 35 COM 2011:

On 1 February 2011 the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property which sets out the progress made in the resolution concerning the closure of road A 344 and the issues related to the relocation of the visitor facilities.

*a) Closure of A 344 trunk road*

After Wiltshire Council granted the full planning permission, English Heritage presented to the Secretary of State for Transport applications for stopping and grassing over parts of road A 344 which runs immediately adjacent to the property between the main A303 road and Byway 12, some half a kilometre to the north, and the B 3086 road (near the proposed visitor centre) which are currently subject to public consultation and might become the subject of a public inquiry. These two public inquiries may take place at the same time. The visitor centre cannot be finalized until these road issues have been resolved.

Conclusion:

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies acknowledge the specific measures taken to ensure the implementation of the Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project, in particular concerning the visitor centre and closing of road A344 between Stonehenge Bottom and Byway 12. However, the efforts put forth have been, as in previous years, rather administrative, whereas no physical progress has occurred on the site.

They are concerned that no details have been provided for the visitor centre scheme in terms of precise location within the property or details of its design. Nor has an impact assessment been supplied.

They note that the implementation of the planned projects depends partly on approval of traffic orders and mainly on the funding which remains to be secured and call upon the State Party to secure funding in order to start and complete the on-site works as planned.

No further report is requested for the next Committee session as the progress in the implementation of the projects will be outlined within the forthcoming Periodic Reporting Exercise for Europe and North America to be launched in 2012. The State Party is requested, however, to keep the World Heritage Centre informed about any progress or modification related to the road closure and the visitor facilities issues.

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-11/35.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision 33 **COM 78.129**, adopted at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009),
3. **Acknowledges the measures taken in the resolution of the road closure and the visitor facilities issues, in particular the approval of the English Heritage Full Planning Application by Wiltshire Council in June 2010;**
4. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with details of the location and plans of the proposed visitor centre for evaluation by ICOMOS;
5. Notes that the funding for the implementation of the development project has almost been ensured;
6. Also requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed about any development related to the road closure and the visitor facilities and to report any implementation activities within the Periodic Reporting exercise to be launched in 2012.



which acknowledge the need to protect the World Heritage Site from damaging developments beyond as well as within it. See, for example, Policy AS in the KeMet Local Plan Deposit Draft. This reads:

The inclusion of part of the Plan area within the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites, World Heritage Site, is a material consideration in determining planning applications for development within the designated area. The importance of the designation is that it underlines the need, normally, to give precedence to the protection of the archaeological features of the World Heritage Site and their settings.

## 2.3 Current Development Proposals

### *Stonehenge*

There are three sets of development proposals affecting Stonehenge at present. Like everything else associated with the monument they are all likely to be controversial. Two of them are of major significance and are related: one is minor. The major proposals are:

1. for the Department of Transport to up-grade the A303 to dual carriageway as it passes Stonehenge;
2. for English Heritage and the National Trust to set up a major new visitor centre;
3. to move the entrance to the car park so that it is less dangerous and less easy for visitors to see Stonehenge by dodging the traffic and peering over the fence.

For many years the visitor facilities at Stonehenge have been woefully inadequate for the number of visitors to the site. What is more the access to them is via a main road which causes great damage and disturbance to the setting of Stonehenge. Following an investigation, in January 1985 English Heritage announced proposals to close the road past the monument, to remove the current visitor facilities and to build a new centre to the north of the monument at Larkhill. Difficulties over land acquisition and access to the new site, which was strongly supported in consultation, led to lengthy negotiations with the Ministry of Defence and an unsuccessful planning application to the local authority.

In 1993, following the appointment of an architect, there was a second consultation exercise in which the site at Larkhill was again strongly endorsed as the best one for a new visitor centre.

By that time, the Department of Transport had announced plans to up-grade the A303. Because of the sensitivity of the ~~site~~ and specifically because it is a World Heritage ~~Site~~—the Department undertook an unprecedented programme of archaeological and other investigations of possible routes to get the A303 past Stonehenge as a dual carriageway in the least archaeologically and environmentally damaging way. This led to a consultation about two preferred routes; one on the line of the present road in cut-and-cover tunnel past Stonehenge, and one some distance to the south of

Stonehenge itself, steering the least archaeologically damaging course through the World Heritage Site.

There was near-universal opposition to the route on the line of the existing road, because of the limited length of the tunnel, the archaeological damage which would be caused by constructing it and the intrusiveness on the landscape of the entrance and cutting providing access to it. At the same time there was considerable disquiet at the prospect of a new large road being driven through an unspoilt valley in an archaeologically rich World Heritage Site.

This led English Heritage and the National Trust to express the view that only a long bored tunnel could provide an environmentally and archaeologically satisfactory solution to this problem. They have further concluded that such a solution provides an opportunity to build a visitor centre just outside the World Heritage Site. No further work is being done on the Larkhill site while the proposal for the long tunnel plus visitor centre is investigated in detail and attempts are made to cost it.

As a consequence of the further considerable delay which will now elapse before any new visitor centre is built, English Heritage has been undertaking certain changes in the existing visitor facilities, improving the shop and ticket selling arrangements, introducing guided tours.

These proposals have received more attention and effort than any which affect other UK World Heritage Sites. Their fate demonstrates a number of aspects of the way in which the World Heritage Site is regarded and looked after.

- Despite a firm commitment on the part of English Heritage in April 1984 to give the highest priority to achieving adequate visitor facilities at Stonehenge, there is no chance of such facilities being in place before the end of the century.
- The status of Stonehenge as a World Heritage Site has been an important factor influencing the approach to it of the agencies involved, in particular the Department of Transport which, as has been said, has devoted unprecedented care to its proposals for the A303.
- Central government has taken the view that the normal planning processes, informed by the material consideration of the World Heritage Site status, should be used to resolve the issues without any direct involvement or commitment to a given solution on the part of Government. For example, the use of power of compulsory purchase to provide an access route to the Larkhill site was explicitly rejected. Similarly, the objections on the part of the military to the use of the public highway through Larkhill garrison as an access route were allowed to stand. Having established an agency with the statutory responsibility for the protection of ancient monuments, it is understandable that this should be the Government position (especially when the Secretary of State for the Environment was the minister who decided the outcome of planning appeals). At the same time, this

attitude of passivity sits somewhat oddly with the positive obligations placed on state parties by the World Heritage Convention.

The consequence of these factors taken together is that in the absence of a positive policy from Government the paradoxical consequence of the extreme sensitivity of Stonehenge as a site and its status as a World Heritage Site is to make it harder rather than easier to solve its problems. Looking ahead, a solution of the kind now being pursued by English Heritage and the National Trust depends on the following:

- Resolution of the technical problems of a bored tunnel of the requisite length.
- Resolution of the logistical problems of building such a tunnel (removal of spoil, creation of construction camp, arrangements for diversion of roads during construction, and so on).
- Resolution of archaeological and geophysical problems associated with the tunnel (there is already a report pointing out the potential damage to geophysical surveying activity as a result of the likely electricity associated with the tunnel).
- Adoption of the long tunnel solution by the Department of Transport and the finding of the necessary funds from the roads budget.
- Design of a visitor centre and car park which are environmentally and archaeologically acceptable and provide practical access to Stonehenge for the likely number of visitors.
- Successful raising of the funds to construct the visitor centre and facilities.
- The granting of planning permission following what would no doubt be a contentious public inquiry relating both to the road and to the visitor centre proposals.

*This* list of problems is difficult to overcome technically and financially. Given the failure over a decade to achieve the solution of a visitor centre at Larkhill, the prospect for overcoming them administratively and politically as well seems remote without some special machinery involving ministerial commitment from more than one Government department. Without that the prospect is for indefinite continuation of the present arrangements. They disfigure the setting of the monument, perpetuate traffic next to it and provide totally inadequate facilities for visitors. Not only is this situation unsatisfactory in itself, it also produces a dangerous temptation to expand the development on the present site and thus produce more disfigurement. This temptation should be strongly resisted if the environment of the World Heritage monument is not to deteriorate further in the next decade.

### *Avebury*

The controversial development proposals affecting Avebury, of which there have been several in recent years, have been killed off, and there are no such proposals current or in the offing. There is, however, an unresolved question



Mr Francesco Bandarin  
Director  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre  
7 Place de Fontenoy  
75352  
PARIS 07 SP  
FRANCE

Your Ref  
Our Ref  
  
30 January 2008



Dear Francesco

STONEHENGE, AVEBURY AND ASSOCIATED SITES WORLD HERITAGE SITE- STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT JANUARY 2008

In July 2007, the World Heritage Committee again considered issues in the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site at its 31<sup>st</sup> session in Christchurch, New Zealand. The Committee took the following decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision 29 COM 78.88, adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),
3. Commends the national authorities for having improved the protection of archaeological sites by reversion of arable to grassland;
4. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with the approved project for the visitor centre, and encourages the State Party to advance the implementation of the visitor centre in order to preserve and improve the integrity of the property;
5. Regrets that there has been no progress made in the implementation of the "A303 Stonehenge Improvement" scheme, and urges the State Party to find an appropriate solution compatible with the outstanding universal value of the

property;

6. Requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with a detailed report by 1 February 2008 on progress made in the selection process of the "A303 Stonehenge Improvement" scheme, for examination by the Committee at its 32nd session in 2008.

2. This report provides the World Heritage Centre with the detailed report requested in the decision. Apart from the two matters raised in the Committee's decision, this report also updates the Committee on two other matters which have previously been reported to them. These are progress on grassland reversion at Stonehenge and on dealing with the problems of subsidence in Silbury Hill at Avebury.

### A303 Stonehenge Improvement and new Visitor Centre

3. As previously reported to the Committee, the Government announced in 2005 that it planned to commission a review of options for the A303 Stonehenge improvement after a substantial increase in the estimated cost of the proposed 2.1 km bored tunnel scheme. The approved budget for the scheme when it was taken to Public Inquiry in 2004 was £223m (\$435m). The latest reported cost estimate is £540m (\$1 054m) which reflects a number of factors including unexpectedly poor ground conditions, more stringent requirements for tunneling work and rapid inflation in construction costs.

The review identified a shortlist of possible options, including routes to the north and south of Stonehenge. A copy of the review can be found at

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pip/consult/condocs/a303/a303main.htm>

4. After careful consideration the Government announced on 6 December, 2007, that due to significant environmental constraints across the whole of the World Heritage Site, there are no acceptable alternatives to the 2.1 km bored tunnel scheme. However, when set against wider objectives and priorities, Ministers concluded that allocating more than £500m (\$975m) for the implementation of this scheme could not be justified and would not represent best use of taxpayers' money. The approved scheme was therefore cancelled.

5. This decision to cancel the approved scheme has been welcomed by a number of environmental groups, including ICOMOS UK who all welcomed the decision to cancel the project and urged the Government to go for small-scale improvements across the World Heritage Site. This reflects the views on the 2.1 kms tunnel expressed by ICOMOS to the World Heritage Committee in 2003 and 2004.

6. The decision means that in the short to medium term use of the existing A303 must continue. It also means that it is no longer possible for English Heritage to build their proposed new visitor centre since its planning consent was dependent on the implementation of the A303 road scheme. A thorough review of visitor management and access to the World Heritage Site is therefore required.

7. The Government have therefore asked English Heritage to work with other stakeholders

to review the World Heritage Site Management Plan and to consider alternative options for environmental improvements of the World Heritage Site, including the development of new visitor facilities for Stonehenge, in the light of the decision on the A303 improvement. This further work will include examination of the case for closing the junction of the A344 with the A303 as part of the investigation of options for improving the setting of Stonehenge, taking into account the wider heritage and environmental needs, to which the Government remains committed, for this iconic World Heritage site. Ministers attach a very high priority to this work. A high-level Project Board, chaired jointly by the Minister for Culture and the Minister for Transport, has been established to oversee and to guide the process.

8. The revision of the World Heritage Site Management Plan is fundamental to identifying a way forward. The work will be carried out by the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Committee, representing the landowners and key decision-taking and regulatory bodies within the World Heritage Site. The Stonehenge World Heritage Site Advisory Forum, a wider stakeholder group, will be fully involved through a series of workshops and the whole process will be facilitated by English Heritage, the Government's official advisor on the historic environment in England. Work on the revision of the Management Plan has now begun.

9. Ministers have made clear that they believe that the revision of the Management Plan should focus on those areas of it that need change and not on the greater part where existing policies have been working successfully, for example on reversion of arable land to grassland. The Minister for Culture has also stated that she believes that the broad vision of the Management Plan still stands as do many of the key objectives, including those dealing with the status of the plan, the need to screen or remove existing inappropriate structures and the provision of a world-class visitor centre though the means of delivering some of these objectives will have to change.

10. Ministers are keen to have improvements in place by 2012 and have asked for the draft revised Management Plan to go out to public consultation this summer. The revised Management Plan should then be finalized and sent to UNESCO by the end of January 2009 (the programme for achieving this is attached).

11. At the same time, work led by English Heritage is in hand to develop practical proposals and options for environmental improvements including a new visitor centre. Subject to satisfactory arrangements being made and the outcome of the necessary Environmental Impact Assessment, these proposals could include the closure of the A344 past the site, as requested by the World Heritage Committee when the site was inscribed in 1986. As well as preparing the ground for the project which has to be completed by 2012, this work will inform the policy considerations for the Management Plan, which will ultimately condition the location of the new visitor centre.

12. While it is disappointing that the road scheme should have to be cancelled for economic reasons after so many years of work, with the consequent loss of the new visitor centre, the UK Government believes that the new situation does provide opportunities for improvements to the Stonehenge part of the World Heritage Site which will be a substantial contribution to sustaining the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site. It

believes too that it will be possible to provide these improvements within the next four years and is urging all concerned to work together collaboratively to find a solution. The UK Ministers for Culture and Minister for Transport are jointly chairing the Stonehenge Project Board which oversees this work and which met for the first time two working days after the 6 December announcement.

#### Grassland reversion

13. Previous reports have noted the success in persuading farmers in both parts of the World Heritage Site to convert some of their arable land to traditional chalk grassland. Last year *we* reported that 660 hectares of the World Heritage Site had been reverted to grassland, some 13.5% of the whole, in addition to what was already down to grass. In the last 12 months, there have been further substantial improvements.

#### Silbury Hill

14. In previous years *we* have reported on what has been done to stabilize Silbury Hill since an eighteenth century shaft from the top of the hill -the largest man-made mound in Europe- opened up again in 2000. English Heritage carried out extensive investigations of the reasons for this collapse and showed them to be complex and related to the state of other investigative shafts and tunnels dug into Silbury Hill in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Last year it was stated that investigations of the cause of the collapse and the state of conservation of the hill were complete and that plans had been prepared for the lasting protection of the mound. It was expected that work would start during 2007 and this has happened. The tunnels have been re-entered, all existing backfill has been removed, and archaeological recording has been undertaken, producing much new information. Backfilling of the tunnels with manually placed pure chalk and a pumped chalk paste made with over 99% chalk will be completed in the next few weeks. The temporary capping on the summit will be removed and replaced with chalk. The slumping hollows on the side of the hill will also be filled with chalk. The whole project should be completed during spring 2008.

Mandy Barrie  
Head of Policy, Strategy & Resources Unit

cc UK Permanent Delegation to UNESCO  
UK UNESCO National Commission, Culture Committee  
English Heritage

## Annex: Programme for revision of World Heritage Site Management Plan

### Phase One: Initial Stages

1. Initiation of process by Committee
2. AF Workshop to discuss the issues that need to be covered in the Management Plan and how they should be addressed

### Phase Two: Development of First Draft

3. First draft of the Plan is produced
4. AF workshop on first draft
5. First draft amended as necessary to take account of workshop views
6. Committee considers first draft and comments as necessary

### Phase Three: Development of Consultation Draft

7. Consultation draft is produced based on Committee's views
8. AF workshop on consultation draft
9. Consultation draft amended as necessary to take account of workshop views
10. Committee considers consultation draft, makes any necessary changes and agrees that it should be issued for public consultation

### Phase Four: Public Consultation

11. Public consultation for three months
12. Analysis of results of public consultation
13. AF workshop on results of public consultation
14. Committee considers final draft of plan in light of public consultation and AF comments and agrees final draft

### Phase Five: Final Stages

15. Final draft submitted to DCMS for endorsement
16. Plan published and sent to UNESCO
17. UNESCO World Heritage Committee response received
18. Committee agree any final changes to Management Plan as result of UNESCO observations





*that the closure of the road which crosses the avenue at Stonehenge (A344 road) was receiving serious consideration as part of the overall plans for the future management of the property;*

Noted

4. *Rgr\_\_tthat further delays have taken place in the long overdue improvements to visitor access to the Stonehenge part of the property, to its presentation to visitors, and to the setting of the monuments;*

The United Kingdom has made considerable progress in its endeavours to expedite improvements on all these matters in the context of the cancellation of the previous scheme in December 2007. As a first step, the World Heritage Site Management Plan for the Stonehenge part of the World Heritage Site has been revised to provide the strategic context for improvements in all these aspects.

The revision of the Management Plan has been carried out over 2008 by the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Committee which is made up of those owning and managing lands within the Stonehenge part of the World Heritage Site and of those bodies with statutory responsibilities in the property. The process has been facilitated by English Heritage and has also fully involved the wider stakeholder group through the Stonehenge Advisory Forum. There was also a three-month public consultation including an exhibition, a questionnaire, a website and a mailing to local residents.

The Plan has now been completed and published in January 2009. It contains aims and policies dealing with all these issues, together with a detailed Action Plan. Copies of the completed Management Plan and summary are attached. For further copies, please contact: [stonr:il engc-v·Jhklic:;gish: !x:!'it. g?. .;rg. uk](mailto:stonr:il engc-v·Jhklic:;gish: !x:!'it. g?. .;rg. uk)

The Plan's overall vision is to care for and safeguard this special area and its archaeology and to provide a more tranquil, biodiverse and rural setting for it, allowing present and future generations to enjoy it and the landscape more fully. We will also ensure that its special qualities are presented, interpreted and enhanced where necessary, so that visitors can better understand the extraordinary achievements of the prehistoric peoples who left us this rich legacy.

The primary purpose of the Management Plan is to guide all interested parties on the care of the World Heritage Site by sustaining its Outstanding Universal Value. This will ensure the effective protection, conservation, and presentation of the World Heritage Sites for present and future generations. It will also ensure that all decisions affecting the World Heritage Site move towards the achievement of the Vision.

The priorities of the Management Plan for 2009- 2015 are to:

- maintain and extend permanent grassland to protect buried archaeology from ploughing and to provide an appropriate setting for upstanding monuments;
- remove the woodland and scrub cover from key monuments;

- remove or screen inappropriate structures or roads, in particular the A344; and keep the A303 improvements under review
- enhance the visitor experience by 2012 by providing improved interim facilities;
- improve the interpretation of the WHS and increase access to selected monuments;
- continue to encourage sustainable archaeological research and education to improve and transmit our understanding of the WHS;
- encourage the sustainable management of the WHS, balancing its needs with those of farming, nature conservation, access, landowners and the local community.

5. Urges the State Party to address the issues above in priority;

Noted

6. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2009, a progress report on the closure of the road, visitor management and access, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session in 2009.

The State Party announced in December 2007 that it intended to deal with these issues as a matter of priority. A Project Board, chaired jointly by the Minister for Culture and the Minister for Roads was formed immediately to oversee the development of the revised Management Plan for the property (see above) and also to develop firm proposals for environmental improvements including new visitor facilities and the closure of the A344 road past Stonehenge itself.

As well as overseeing the development of the Management Plan (now complete- see above), the ministerial Project Board also established a Project Implementation Group, made up of the principal stakeholders, to develop proposals for Environmental Improvements. These will include the construction of new visitor facilities at an appropriate distance from Stonehenge itself along with the closure and removal of existing facilities (except for adaptation of the existing underground facilities to provide a security base) and the closure of the A344 past Stonehenge. The State Party has stated its commitment to complete these improvements by 2012.

The Stonehenge Project Board met this week and made an agreed recommendation to Government Ministers on the way forward for the project, which will now be carefully considered. Ministers hope to make an announcement shortly and we will keep the World Heritage Centre updated on progress.

2. Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party

*[Note: conservation issues which are not mentioned in the Decision of the World Heritage Committee or any information request from the World Heritage Centre]*

Architecture and Historic  
Environment

The World Heritage Committee agreed a Statement of Significance for the World Heritage Site at its 32nd meeting in Quebec. That statement, reproduced in section 3.3 of the Management Plan, is at the heart of our strategic approach to Stonehenge. The Management Plan has further identified attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Stonehenge part of the property, and also assesses its authenticity and integrity for management purposes.

The conservation works to Silbury Hill were completed on 6th May 2008. An archaeological monograph setting out the repair methods and the associated archaeological discoveries is in preparation.

3. In conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, please describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) within the protected area (core zone and buffer zone and/or corridors) that might be envisaged.

None beyond what is described above

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Peter Marsden  
Head of World Heritage

Cc H.E Mr Peter Landymore, UK Permanent Delegate to UNESCO  
UK National Commission for UNESCO  
ICOMOS

Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
Culture Division

2-4 Cockspur Street  
London SW1Y 5DH  
t: +44 (0)20 7234 2299  
e: [culture@gsi.gov.uk](mailto:culture@gsi.gov.uk)

Id 020 7211 2341  
fax 020 7211 2029  
Peter.marsden@gsi.gov.uk  
[culture.gsi.gov.uk](http://culture.gsi.gov.uk)



Francesco Bandarin  
Director  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre  
7 place de Fontenoy  
75352  
07 SP  
France

Your Ref  
Our Ref  
  
1 February 2011

Dear Francesco

STATE OF CONSERVATION OF STONEHENGE, AVEBURY AND ASSOCIATED SITES (UNITED KINGDOM) (C:373)

I refer to the World Heritage Committee Decision (33 COM 7B.125) adopted at its 33rd session in 2009, concerning the State of Conservation of Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom) (Seville, Spain, 2009).

In accordance with paragraph 175 of the Decision, I am pleased to submit to the World Heritage Centre the report on the State of Conservation of Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites for its 34th session in June of this year.

I am pleased to inform you that the World Heritage Committee (34th session, 2010) has adopted Decision 34 COM 7B.129.

(Note: This information is for your information only. It does not constitute an official statement of the World Heritage Committee.)

Decision: 33COM7B.129

33 COM 7B.125

1. Having examined Document WHC-09/33.COM/7B

Recalling Decision 32 COM 7B.114, adopted at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008),

- Having noted the report on the State of Conservation of Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom) submitted to the World Heritage Centre for its 33rd session in 2009, and the Decision adopted at its 33rd session (Seville, Spain, 2009),

The UK cannot accept that the State Party continues to make little progress on this issue. As the Committee will know from previous reports to the World Heritage Centre (31st January 2009, 19th May 2009, 19th October 2009 and 1st February 2010), significant progress has been made in recent years. Stonehenge is one of our most important World Heritage properties and we remain committed to working with English Heritage and others to improve the setting of this important monument and to its ongoing protection and conservation.

The UK Government considers that delivery of the present scheme (the Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project (SEIP)) which is being taken forward by a partnership led by English Heritage would fulfil UNESCO's requirements for the conservation of this World Heritage property. This £27m scheme includes the building of new visitor facilities with enhanced exhibition and education space at Airman's Corner, 1.5 miles west of Stonehenge, and the closure of the A344 which runs immediately adjacent to the monument. There will be significant improvements to Stonehenge's landscape setting, with the stone circle finally being able to reconnect with its ancient processional Avenue. A business case for the project has been approved by Government and, subject to securing the necessary funding, it is anticipated that the project will be completed in 2013.

## Background

In December 2007 the government made a commitment to work with key stakeholders to (i) review the Management Plan for the World Heritage property as the over-arching strategic document for the site; and (ii) to consider alternative options for new visitor facilities (including the case for closing the A344), that did not involve any diversion of the A303(T). A new Stonehenge Project Board, chaired jointly by the then Minister for Culture and Minister for Transport, was set up to oversee these *two* initiatives.

In response to the first part of this government directive, English Heritage, working closely with key stakeholders, reviewed the World Heritage property Management Plan on behalf of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Committee. Following extensive public consultation a new Management Plan was published in January 2009 and sent to the World Heritage Centre on 31st January 2009. The 2009 Management Plan has been agreed by key stakeholders as the framework guiding future management and decision-making within the Stonehenge World Heritage property. In July 2009, the plan was endorsed by Wiltshire Council as supplementary guidance and a material consideration in determining planning applications that affect the property.

In response to the second part of the directive, the government established a Project Implementation Group, chaired by English Heritage, to take forward the new SEIP. The aim of the SEIP is to deliver, within the framework of the Management Plan 2009, environmental improvements including new visitor facilities and interpretation of the World Heritage property, in keeping with Stonehenge's World Heritage status. It was proposed by the Project Implementation Group (and agreed by the Stonehenge Project Board) that these improvements should be secured through two initiatives:

- The improvement or relocation of the visitor facilities and parking, with better interpretation of the Stonehenge WHS;
- The closure of the A344 where it runs adjacent to the Stones.

Fulfilling these two objectives would also allow improvement of access to the WHS, and traffic regulation orders would also be sought to remove motorised vehicles from other public rights of way within the property.

4. *Req1.1 \$tthat the State Party keeps the World Heritage Centre informed of any progress, particularly the Ministerial announcement, as it occurs;*

Noted.

5. *As requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2011 a report on progress made on the road closure and visitor facilities, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session in 2011.*

In October 2009 English Heritage submitted a Full Planning Application for the new visitor centre and associated works to Wiltshire Council to secure elements of the SEIP. The proposals contained in the planning application were designed to ensure that other aims and objectives of the WHP Management Plan would not be frustrated and could be pursued independently at a later date subject to funding availability. The Application reference number is S/2009/1527 (Full Planning Application for New Visitor Centre and Decommissioning Works).

The planning application scheme includes the following elements:

- The new visitor centre, parking and associated facilities at Airman's Corner (about 2.5km west of the Stonehenge monument);
- The removal of the existing visitor facilities and parking at the Stones, with retention of a small security hub and emergency visitor toilets (landscaped to appear as below ground level and minimise visual impact);
- The stopping up and grassing over of the A344 between Stonehenge Bottom and Byway 12 (subject to a separate stopping up order);
- The realignment, closure and planting of a section of the B306 North of Airman's Corner;
- The replacement of the current tarmac crossroads at Airman's Corner with a roundabout.

Full planning permission was granted by Wiltshire Council on 23rd June 2010. Wiltshire Council, the local highways authority, has advertised a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to ban vehicles (with some exceptions)

on the A344 between Airman's Corner and Byway 12 and on other rights of way within the WHS. Because of the number of objections to the TRO, Wiltshire Council has elected to hold a public inquiry, probably in the early part of 2011.

As part of the SEIP the Highways Agency made a commitment to undertake improvements at Longbarrow roundabout and works to the A303(T) carriageway at Stonehenge Bottom, both of which are required as a result of stopping up the A344. The Highways Agency remains committed to these works, and supportive of the proposed Section 247 Order, in principle, subject to confirmation of the necessary funding.

Following the granting of planning permission, English Heritage prepared applications for stopping up part of the A344 near Stonehenge and part of the B3086 at Airman's Corner. These applications are made to the Secretary of State for Transport under the provision of Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These applications have now been subject to public consultation and the government are considering whether or not a public inquiry is needed, only four objections having been received. If an inquiry is required, it will be held in tandem with the public inquiry into the TRO.

Subject to satisfactory outcomes for the remaining statutory consent procedures, as outlined above, it is hoped that construction will commence early in 2012 with completion and the opening of the new Visitor Centre expected in July 2013. While the government is no longer able to commit public funding to the scheme, it has approved proposals for an alternative funding strategy by English Heritage to raise the £27million required for the project. English Heritage has recently secured a grant of £10 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the cost of the project.

## 2 Other current conservation issues identified by the State Party

*[Note: conservation issues which are not mentioned in the Decision of the World Heritage Committee or any information request from the World Heritage Centre]*

There are currently no other major conservation issues within the World Heritage property. English Heritage have recently commissioned a condition survey of known archaeological sites within the property which will update previous condition surveys and provide a revised baseline for assessment of the condition of the property for the next round of Periodic Reporting. Natural England are carrying out a survey of the impact of burrowing animals on the World Heritage property. English Heritage have also commissioned further work on the research framework for the property

## 3 In conformity with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, please describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) within the protected area and its buffer zone and/or corridors that might be envisaged.

None beyond those described above.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Marsden". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Peter Marsden  
Head of World Heritage

Cc HE Matthew Sudders, UK Permanent Delegate to UNESCO  
UK National Commission for UNESCO  
ICOMOS  
English Heritage

## A brief history of road improvement efforts at Stonehenge

Historic England 11<sup>th</sup> October 2015

1960s – Amesbury Bypass dual carriageway and Countess roundabout built. Dual carriageway ends at King Barrow Ridge east of Stonehenge

1979 Department of Transport consider scheme to turn A303 into dual carriageway

January 1985 Department of Transport discloses ‘no current plans to convert the A303 to a dual carriageway before the end of the century.

November 1986 Stonehenge inscribed as a World Heritage Site. The then Department of the Environment agrees to close the A344 “as soon as is practicable”.

April 1993 Department of Transport consults on alternative routes to improve A303 between Amesbury and Berwick Down. In the vicinity of Stonehenge, two options are put forward: Grey, swinging to the south, and Yellow, involving on-line upgrading. DoT subsequently finds results of this consultation ‘inconclusive’

July 1994 At international conference hosted by English Heritage and the National Trust, DoT minister Steven Norris announces that Grey and Yellow routes are withdrawn.

September 1995 Highways Agency publishes new consultation, reinstating the Yellow and Grey routes as options for discussion, putting forward a new Purple route running to the north of Stonehenge, and dismissing various long tunnels as both ‘unaffordable’ and not free from ‘other environmental problems’.

November 1995 Highways Agency host ‘planning conference’ to discuss the A303 Amesbury - Berwick Down (Stonehenge section). The result is a consensus in favour of the Green Tunnel (a long bored tunnel from east of the Stonehenge Avenue and King Barrow Ridge to the west of the A360 and Longbarrow Roundabout).

September 1996 The DoT confirm that northern routes around Stonehenge will not be pursued. They also announce that they consider the green tunnel is “not an affordable solution” and that “the scheme will now be moved to the longer term roads programme.” This appeared to leave only the yellow and grey routes on the table.

21 October 1997 A proposal for improved visitor facilities for Stonehenge is linked to suggestions for upgrading the A303 (dual carriageway and 2km cut-and-cover tunnel) with concomitant improvements to Longbarrow Roundabout and Airman’s Corner – all of which disregard local planning policies, as well as almost all of the key (‘action’) resolutions of the November 1995 Highways Agency planning conference.

July 1998 A proposal that the A303 alongside the stones will be upgraded to a dual carriageway and hidden from the monument in a 2 km cut-and-cover tunnel. This would open up the possibility of closure of part of the A344 which intruded severely on the World Heritage Site.

December 2002 Plans for a 2km cut & cover tunnel are dropped as being “too damaging for this precious landscape”. The DoT announces plans for a 2.1km bored tunnel for the A303.

February - May 2004 Public inquiry into the proposal to improve the A303 at Stonehenge with a 2.1km bored tunnel.

July 2005 The Minister for Transport announces the outcome of the A303 Stonehenge Improvement Public Inquiry. The Inspector’s report is satisfied with the Published Scheme for a short (2.1km) bored tunnel. At the same time, because of the increase in the estimated costs of the tunnel scheme, the Minister announces a review of the options for road improvements to re-examine whether the scheme still represented value for money and the best option for delivering improvements.

January 2006 The Highways Agency announces a public consultation on five alternative options for the A303 Stonehenge Road Improvement Scheme.

6 December 2007 Announcement by the Government that plans for 2.1km tunnel through the Stonehenge World Heritage Site have been withdrawn.

13 May 2009 Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) announces its decision to develop new visitor facilities for Stonehenge at Airman’s Corner 2.5km (1.5 miles) west of the current visitor centre and with good access to the Stones. These new facilities, along with the proposed closure of the A344, would greatly improve the monument’s setting and its presentation to visitors.

June 2011 – Public inquiry into stopping up orders for A344 and secondly for Traffic Regulation Orders on BOATs (Byways open to all traffic) within WHS – stopping up of part of A344 approved but Traffic Regulation Orders for byways rejected.

June 2013 – A344 junction with A303 stopped up as part of the Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project.

January 2014 – Government announces Feasibility Study into potential road improvements on 6 trunk routes with serious congestion issues, as part of its Strategic Roads Investment Programme. The A303, including the Stonehenge section, is one. Results of the study are to be announced in the Chancellor’s Autumn Statement.

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2014 – Autumn Statement announces that the Government will invest in a tunnel of “at least 2.9km in length” to resolve the traffic issues within the Stonehenge section of the A303 whilst protecting the OUV of the WHS

## Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project

The Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project (SEIP) was a partnership project between English Heritage and the National Trust with the support of the Highways Agency, Wiltshire Council, Natural England Wiltshire Museum and the Salisbury Museum. The project was largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, commercial income and philanthropic donations, within the framework provided by the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Plan.

The project has delivered improvements to the landscape setting of the Stonehenge monument, the Avenue and other attributes of OUV including the Cursus Barrows. In addition it has created a new, sensitively designed and environmentally sustainable visitor centre providing a gateway to the Stones and the wider World Heritage Site, where for the first time visitors can view finds from across the World Heritage Site. Landscape improvement works to restore a sense of dignity to the setting of one of the world's most loved ancient monuments are nearing their final stages.

The new visitor centre was opened at Airman's Corner in December 2013 and a new transport service now connects the visitor centre with the Stones for those who prefer not to walk.

The works included decommissioning a section of the A344.

### Project Objectives

- Improve the landscape setting of Stonehenge, by reducing noise and visual intrusion from inappropriate structures and roads
- Significantly enhance the visitor experience through the provision of improved, environmentally sustainable, visitor facilities
- Enhance the interpretation of the WHS and improve access to selected monuments
- Enhance the education/ learning experience, thereby improving understanding of the WHS

### Excavations of the Avenue in the roadbed of the A344

As part of the SEIP the section of the A344 that severed Stonehenge from the Avenue was carefully removed by archaeologists and is now being restored to grass.

It was not known if any archaeology would survive underneath the modern roadbed but archaeologists found remains of the Avenue ditches. Small sections of the ditches have been excavated ahead of their return to grass.

The work to remove the roadbed of the A344 and remove the previous car park and visitor facilities was carried out by Vinci UK and the archaeological mitigation was carried out by Wessex Archaeology on behalf of English Heritage under the guidance of the Stonehenge Archaeological Working Group.

The Visitor Centre has been open for almost two years and continues to welcome a growing number of visitors (1.3million in 2014).

## Summary of Major Improvements delivered by the Project

Reuniting Stonehenge & its Avenue as a result of the closure of the A344 and reinstatement to grass of the old roadbed between the junction with the A303 and a point west of the Avenue. The closure of the remaining portion of the A344 east of Airman's corner to regular traffic

The removal and laying to grass of the old Stonehenge car park and visitor facilities delivering improvements to the setting of, and visual relationships between, a number of attributes of OUV including Stonehenge, the Avenue, the Cursus Barrows, Amesbury G42 long barrow and the Cursus

Improvement of the condition of a number of attributes of OUV through a planned programme of tree felling: this included components of the Cursus barrow group within Fargo Plantation and Amesbury G42 long barrow

Construction of a new state of the art visitor centre telling the story of the Stonehenge WHS, enabling the display of artefacts from within the WHS and providing education facilities.

Enhanced visitor experience and interpretation within the northern part of the WHS. This included the creation of a new visitor drop-off point at Fargo Plantation and the installation of a new interpretive scheme featuring interpretation panels designed to complement the visitor centre exhibition and located at key points within the landscape.

Heather Sebire

Property Curator (West)

October 2015

