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4<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Dear Dr Rössler,

State of Conservation Report for the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World  
Heritage Site: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

In accordance with Decision 43 COM 7B.95, we submit a State of Conservation Report for the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site. We have used the format stipulated as far as possible. I can confirm that we are content for the report to be posted on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website.

Kind regards,

Enid Williams  
World Heritage Policy Adviser



**STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT  
BY THE STATES PARTIES**  
(in compliance with paragraph 169 of the *Operational Guidelines*)

**STONEHENGE, AVEBURY AND ASSOCIATED SITES (UNITED KINGDOM)  
C373bis**

**1. Executive Summary of the report**

In accordance with Decision 43 COM 7B.95, the United Kingdom State Party has produced a State of Conservation Report (SOCR) for the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site.

This SOCR updates the Committee on the proposed A303 improvement scheme since the submission of the State Party's 2019 SOCR, and responds to the 2019 Committee decision. This report includes detail on the progress of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process, which was in progress during the Committee meeting in 2019. This report sets out the methods employed to ensure that the historic environment continues to be fully and properly taken into account throughout the assessment and determination of the DCO application, including information on the extensive documentation and additional information presented to the DCO Examination held between April and October 2019.

This report outlines the legally binding safeguards which have been built into in the DCO documentation that, in the event that the scheme is consented, will ensure that heritage advice and considerations can play a full and important role in the construction, operation and maintenance of the Scheme. As requested by the Committee, the 2019 Decision (43 COM 7B.95) was relayed to all key parties involved in the DCO Examination.

This report also provides an update on other initiatives and projects relating to the site, including progress towards: establishing new management and governance arrangements for the site, the property setting study, boundary review, landscape scale strategies and upcoming condition survey, as well as an update on measures taken to address other considerations such as cultivation and burrowing animals.

This report is structured according to the format set out in the *Operational Guidelines*. The clauses of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) decisions are given in italics and indented. The response of the State Party is not indented and does not use italics. It commences with a response to paragraph 4, with paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 following.

**2. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee's Decision, paragraph by paragraph.**

1. *Having examined Document WHC/19/43.COM/7B,*
2. *Recalling Decision 42 COM 7B.32, adopted at its 41st session (Manama, 2018),*
3. *Commends the State Party for the design refinements which have occurred to the A303 route Amesbury to Berwick Down upgrading project within the property, including an additional land bridge and longer covered section, as well as the proposed legacy*

*benefits which have been incorporated within the project, and notes the additional investigations and assessments undertaken by the State Party to consider longer tunnel, further land bridge and cut-and-cover options and resulting alternative western portal locations;*

*4. Notes with concern, that although the current scheme, which is now subject to the Development Consent Order (DCO) examination process, shows improvement compared with previous plans, it retains substantial exposed dual carriageway sections, particularly those at the western end of the property, which would impact adversely on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, especially its integrity, and therefore encourages the State Party to not proceed with the A303 route upgrade for the section Amesbury to Berwick Down project in its current form;*

As noted by the World Heritage Committee, the DCO examination process was already underway by the time of the Committee decision. This report provides an update on the additional evidence and further development of design details and mitigation measures included within the scheme as part of the Examination (please see Annex A for further explanation). This should be read in conjunction with the State Party's 2019 SOCR, which provides a fuller response to the World Heritage Committee's concerns, as outlined in the 2018 decision (42 COM 7B.32) and reiterated in the 2019 decision (43 COM 7B.95).

In particular, the 2019 report provides a detailed response to the Committee's concerns about the exposed dual carriageway sections, particularly those at the western end of the property. That report sets out how the Committee's 2018 decision was instrumental in securing additional mitigation measures, including the 150m wide 'green' land bridge at the western end of the World Heritage property. This bridge will enhance the physical and visual connectivity of the Stonehenge landscape and together with extensions to the overall tunnel length, reduces the extent of road in open cutting. The 2019 report also sets out the careful consideration given to extending the bored tunnel or covering more of the open cutting. As outlined in that report, and further considered during the DCO process, the State Party's view remains that amendments to extend the bored tunnel or cover more of the open cutting would not secure sufficient additional benefits to justify the additional costs.

The 2019 SOCR went on to say that the State Party anticipated that sufficiently detailed information would be provided in the application and during the course of the Examination to ensure that, in the event of consent being granted, the benefits to the WHS would be delivered and any adverse impact appropriately mitigated. While few changes have been made to the principal components of the scheme since the submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application in October 2018, a significant area of focus during the DCO Examination process has been on further enhancing the detailed design and mitigation measures to help minimise potential harm to OUV and archaeological remains. See our response to paragraph 5 of the WHC Decision for further details.

The six month Examination conducted by the Planning Inspectorate from April to October 2019 was a rigorous and transparent process covering a range of issues including an in-depth consideration of heritage. The Planning Inspectorate were required to prepare a report on the application to the relevant Secretary of State, including a recommendation, within three months of the close of the Examination. This was submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport on 02 January 2020. The Secretary of State for Transport now has a further three months to make his decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent.

During the examination, Interested Parties were invited to provide further details of their views in writing. Careful consideration was given by the Examining Authority to all the important and relevant matters, including the representations of all Interested Parties, any supporting evidence submitted and answers provided to the Examining Authority's questions set out in writing or posed at hearings.

Two sets of detailed written questions and requests for information were issued by the Examining Authority during the Examination, including questions relating to cultural heritage and the World Heritages site. These were responded to by the Interested Parties and further discussion was held during the hearings. In addition, the key documents intended for certification were further developed through discussion and feedback during the Examination period, and subsequent iterations submitted leading to the submission of final versions before the end of the Examination.

A total of 16 hearings were conducted, comprising 4 open floor hearings, one compulsory acquisition hearing, and 11 issue specific hearings. Hearings are supplemental to written submissions made during the Examination, and allow the Examining Authority to ask questions about the written representations submitted by Interested Parties and gather information and evidence to further their understanding of important and relevant issues. Open Floor Hearings tend to have a community focus and are an opportunity for individuals and community groups to speak directly to the Examining Authority. Issue Specific Hearings are held to explore in detail a specific issue or set of issues arising from the application.

Two issue specific hearings dealing with cultural heritage issues were convened by the Examining Authority covering a total of 3 days. Given the nature of the Scheme and the importance of the historic environment, cultural heritage issues were also discussed as part of the majority of the other issue specific hearings covering a range of environmental issues, including but not limited to: landscape and visual effects, design, waste and materials management, noise and vibration, and traffic and transport.

Much of the discussion, including at the two hearings specifically focusing on the drafting of the DCO itself, focused on how the proposed minimisation and mitigation of impacts on the historic environment could be secured under key certified documentation in association with specific requirements and articles under the Order.

In addition to their review of the application documentation, discussion during the hearings, and consideration of written representations from the various Interested Parties, members of the Examining Authority's panel made two site visits accompanied by Interested Parties during the Examination. They made a further ten unaccompanied site visits as part of their review of the application.

*5. Urges the State Party to continue to pursue design solutions which reduce further the impact on the cultural landscape and OUV of the property through longer tunnel sections, so that the western portal is located outside the property boundary;*

The State Party's 2019 SOCR reflected the principal design features of the proposed scheme that formed the basis of the DCO application. The features included:

- A 3.3 km long tunnel, designed with cut-and-cover canopy extensions at the east and west portal entrances (with the eastern portal having been acknowledged by

the WHC as being optimally located so as to minimise damaging effects on the property);

- A green bridge approximately 150 metres wide located to the south of the Winterbourne Stoke Barrow Group, designed to re-establish physical and visual connectivity between the northern and southern parts of the property within the setting of these monuments and the Diamond Group, with additional landscape and biodiversity benefits ('Green Bridge No. 4');
- The western approach to the tunnel contained in a deep cutting formed with vertical retaining walls, both to minimise visual intrusion within the WHS (hiding traffic from wider points in the landscape, including from public rights of way) and to minimise the 'footprint' of the A303 scheme within the WHS; and
- A new junction of the A303 with the A360, located 600 metres to the west of the existing Longbarrow roundabout and the Winterbourne Stoke Crossroads Barrow Group (located on the western boundary of the WHS), reducing the visually intrusive effects of this junction on the WHS, including the removal of associated street lighting on the roundabout junction to improve the dark sky environment within the WHS.

Taking into consideration the above features, the State Party's 2019 SOCR summarised the scheme proposals and explained why, in the view of the State Party, alternative longer tunnel solutions at the western end of the WHS would not secure sufficient additional benefits to justify the additional costs.

These issues were further considered in detail during the DCO process, and evidence was submitted regarding the consideration of longer tunnel options. Subsequent to production of the 2019 SOCR, and thus not available to the Committee at its 43<sup>rd</sup> Session, the scheme Design Vision, Principles, Commitments and Consultation sequence were set out in the final version of the Outline Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) accompanied by additional 'visualisations'. These details collectively serve to illustrate how the scheme might appear in the WHS landscape and secure commitments identifying how heritage considerations will be taken into account during the detailed design and construction stages. An explanation of these elements of the OEMP and associated visualisations is included within Annex A.

Prior to and during the Examination Highways England engaged in further discussions with the members of the Heritage Management and Advisory Group (HMAG). Design was one of the key points of discussion and, as a result, provisions have now been included in the various scheme documents and DCO to ensure that the development of the detailed design is heritage focused.

Also subsequent to production of the State Party's 2019 SOCR report was the finalisation of the Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (DAMS). This sets out the scope, guiding principles and methods for the planning and implementation of essential archaeological mitigation associated with the design and construction of the Scheme, following the approach to mitigation set out in the Environmental Statement submitted with the DCO application. It details the archaeological mitigation proposed to reduce the effect of the Scheme on the archaeological resource either by protection / preservation of archaeological remains wherever possible or, where remains cannot be preserved, through a structured programme of

archaeological investigation to mitigate the loss. The DAMS is secured by a Requirement in the Development Consent Order and would therefore be legally binding if the scheme is approved.

The DAMS was also produced following review and comment by members of HMAG, Wiltshire Council and Historic England, as informed by advice provided by the A303 Scientific Committee and discussion during the Examination process. A further explanation of the approach taken to this document is also set out in Annex 1.

These constitute the main changes included within the Scheme subsequent to the submission of the January 2019 SOCR.

*6. Requests the State Party to ensure that this present World Heritage Committee Decision (43 COM 7B.95) is conveyed to the Planning Inspectorate, to other decision-makers, to known stakeholders and to the wider community through the DCO online exhibition, and that mechanisms are put in place to ensure that the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS International and the World Heritage Committee continue reviewing and assessing the design plans at the appropriate stages of the project, in conformity with the Operational Guidelines;*

DCMS made a representation to the Examining Authority on 09 August 2019 in their role representing the UK Government as the State Party to the World Heritage Convention. The representation contained in annexes the recent World Heritage Committee Decision **43 COM 7B.95** on the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site, published on 24 July 2019. The Committee Decision was made publicly available on the web pages for the examination of the DCO and was drawn to the attention of Highways England, the Department for Transport, key consultees and Interested Parties. In addition, and at the request of the Examining Authority, all of the associated background material to the Decision was submitted to the Examination. Members of the Steering Committees for both the Stonehenge and Avebury components of the WHS and members of the WHS Partnership Panel were also made aware of the decision.

As noted above the Committee decision was taken at the half way point of the six month Examination of the scheme for which Highways England is seeking consent. The principal focus of this stage of the process was for the Examining Authority to assess the scheme, to read and hear the views of stakeholders (including the World Heritage Committee) and to ask questions of Highways England and other parties to enable them to submit a fully informed report and well evidenced recommendation to the Secretary of State. The Examining Authority engaged in extensive questioning of Highways England and other parties to enable its preparation of a fully reasoned and substantiated Recommendation Report to inform the Secretary of State for Transport in his preparation for making the decision on whether or not to grant development consent for the A303 scheme.

As set out in response to paragraph 5 above, the examination submissions included the evolution of the draft Development Consent Order and associated legal documentation (the OEMP and the DAMS) which, if development consent is granted, will influence and regulate the future development of the detailed design of the A303 scheme, through the involvement of key stakeholders in that process and through the implementation of a detailed archaeological mitigation strategy.

Whilst engagement with heritage stakeholders continues, there is limited opportunity for further review and assessment of the design plans until a decision has been made. That decision is currently expected on 02 April 2020 but any change to the expected date will be communicated to the World Heritage Centre.

Should the DCO be approved the State Party will wish to discuss an appropriate measure of engagement with the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS International and the World Heritage Committee as the scheme is further developed.

*7. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2020, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020.*

The UK State party submits this report for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44<sup>th</sup> session in 2020.

### **3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value**

#### **Progress towards establishing new management and governance arrangements for the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site**

World Heritage property partners, with assistance from a National Lottery Heritage Fund Resilient Heritage grant, are exploring how best the planning, coordination, monitoring and advice function currently carried out by the Coordination Unit can be delivered in future. An in-depth options appraisal was prepared for the partnership exploring the costs, benefits and risks related to a number of different models. The project board, including representatives from key partner organisations, has reviewed the evidence and is exploring two preferred options in greater depth to enable a decision in the spring of 2020. Both options would see the continuation of the arrangement in which the coordination function is hosted by a partner organisation which would receive funding for core functions from a wider support base. This should encourage shared responsibility and encourage increased ownership and commitment to the World Heritage Site. Alternative structures for the unit, increased resourcing and strengthened governance arrangements will be considered.

A parallel independent trust to raise funds and add substantial value to the World Heritage property, its partners and the wider community is also under consideration. Additional funding raised could provide a real boost to the implementation of the Management Plan and deliver ambitious landscape wide strategies. Related interpretation projects could encourage greater understanding of the significance of the whole World Heritage property and deeper engagement with its protection and management.

#### **World Heritage Property Setting Study and Boundary Review**

There is a specific and robust policy in the Local Development Framework to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property from inappropriate development, along with full references in relevant strategies and plans at all levels. The Wiltshire Core Strategy, formally

adopted on 20th January 2015, includes a specific World Heritage Property policy. Policy 59 requires that precedence should be given to the protection of the WHS and its OUV. This policy also advises that additional planning guidance be produced to ensure its effective implementation. Officers are working to ensure that the strength of the policy is retained in a forthcoming review of the Core Strategy that is currently underway.

The brief for the Setting Study has been finalised. This has been developed in partnership with heritage and landscape experts. The study is designed to provide guidance on the identification of the setting and the type of development within it that is likely to have an impact on the World Heritage Site and its OUV. It will also provide advice on the nature of evidence likely to be required in support of planning applications. Funding is currently being sought to commission this work and it is intended that the project should be progressed in the 2020 - 2021 financial year.

The study will be informed by the Statement of OUV and identified attributes as well as Historic England's Guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second edition) 2017). This sets out guidance against the background of the National Planning Policy Framework for England and related guidance in the Planning Practice Guide on managing change within the setting of heritage assets. The ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties (2011) will also inform the study. These existing documents today form a robust basis for the assessment of impact on the World Heritage property through change in its setting and inform the approach to assessing impact in current development proposals.

The potential to modify the extent of the WHS to ensure that the level of understanding that we now have of the property is properly reflected in where its boundaries are drawn will be progressed following completion of the setting study.

### **Conservation: Cultivation, EU Exit and Burrowing Animals**

The first joint Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Condition Survey was produced in 2012. The summary of this joint Condition Survey noted a positive change to the overall condition of monuments. This analysis was confirmed by the broad stability of monuments in good and fair condition. These encouraging findings result from a great deal of positive management of the attributes of OUV by the partners engaged in both parts of the World Heritage property including national organisations and local landowners and farmers.

The results of the Condition Survey show that the two most significant threats to the physical remains that contribute to the OUV continue to be cultivation and burrowing animals. There had been a significant increase in the presence of the latter over the decade since the preceding condition surveys. Work to protect vulnerable monuments from damage by cultivation and from badgers and other burrowing animals are therefore two of the key priorities of the World Heritage Management Plan (2015).

Agri-environment schemes remain the most effective response to protecting sensitive archaeology from damage through cultivation. These schemes are extremely important for protecting the physical remains and enhancing the setting of prehistoric monuments through measures such as grassland restoration and scrub control. At Stonehenge around 40% of the WHS landscape is in environmental stewardship helping to protect and/or enhance the setting of c. 500 historic features. At Avebury too around 40% of the WHS is in these schemes which benefit c. 300 historic features. Agri-environment schemes currently rely on European Union funding. The UK Government is putting in place arrangements for



Environmental Land Management Schemes to succeed EU funded schemes as they expire and the Agriculture Bill which is currently going through Parliament makes provision for the Secretary of State to provide financial assistance for, amongst other things, “managing land or water in a way that maintains, restores or enhances cultural heritage or natural heritage”.

Support has been secured from Highways England Designated Funds<sup>1</sup> for the preparation of the World Heritage Property Burrowing Animal Strategy. Work is underway to survey the current presence and impacts of burrowing animals in the World Heritage property and conduct a review of existing research. In the Spring of 2020 consultants will be producing a landscape scale strategy to shape management action that aims to reduce and mitigate the harmful impacts of burrowing animals.

### **Other Roads and Traffic**

Despite the very substantial progress delivered by the closure of the A344, the impact of roads and traffic remains a major challenge in both parts of the World Heritage property. The dominance of roads, traffic and related clutter continues to have a harmful impact 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.

At Avebury work on developing more detailed plans for some of the schemes proposed in the WHS Transport Strategy (2015) is underway. These schemes relate in part to the narrowing of the A4 to reduce its dominance in the landscape by calming traffic and encouraging exploration of the WHS. This will be even more important if visitor numbers increase during development of the A303 improvement scheme, should this proceed, or in response to The Great West Way initiative to develop a tourist route along the A4 from London to Bristol.

Impacts of traffic on the West Kennet Avenue at Avebury have not yet been addressed. Vehicles passing each other on the narrow B4003 are causing erosion to archaeology in verges. The Avebury WHS Transport Strategy proposes closure of this road to halt damage and improve landscape setting and access. A short-term repair has also been designed with curatorial partners and is ready to implement. It is recognised that these solutions need to be implemented as soon as possible.

Wiltshire Council are progressing work to further the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on the Ridgeway National Trail. At present, as a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) in the Avebury half of the World Heritage property, motorised traffic is causing damage to archaeology, visual amenity and tranquillity. An Experimental TRO will be in place over the summer in 2020 to enable soft repairs to establish. Traffic and parking on BOATs in the Stonehenge part of the property continue to have harmful impacts on the landscape setting of monuments and greater amenity for visitors. Wiltshire Council will develop its work with partners to agree an approach to managing the BOATS that will address these negative impacts.

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<sup>1</sup> Highways England’s Designated Funds is a separate funding stream from the DCO process on which they draw down to deliver improvement projects in the surroundings of the Strategic Road Network to support and protect people and the things they value for quality of life, both now and in the future. The programme is formed of 5 funds, and of these the Environmental fund includes cultural heritage as a specific environmental topic.

## **Landscape Scale Strategies: Landscape Access, Sustainable Tourism, and Sustainable Transport**

Work is now underway on the production of this strategy. Funding was secured from Highways England Designated Funds to deliver the project brief designed by the WHS Partnership. The three strategic strands reflect actions set out in the Management Plan 2015 for the property. The project will identify a vision and principles for access, transport and tourism based on the principles of sustainability and the protection of the World Heritage property. It will also identify further opportunities for sustainable economic development through tourism. Proposed projects and actions will be developed as part of the work. The project covers both the Stonehenge and Avebury landscapes focussing on their identity as one World Heritage property and the benefits this can bring to the site, visitors, the local community and wider environment. Work will be complete in spring 2020.

### **World Heritage Site Condition Survey 2022**

The World Heritage Site Condition Survey is carried out every 10 years to gain a detailed understanding of the condition of the property and provide a baseline for on-going review. The results of this survey enable an assessment of the success of conservation and management interventions and assist in planning future approaches. Historic England is leading on designing an approach to undertaking the survey beginning in 2020 with a project board including key partner organisations. Innovative approaches involving trained volunteers are being explored. The results of this survey should help to inform the response to the third cycle of Periodic Reporting.

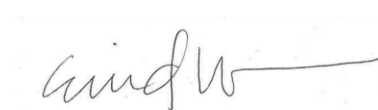
- 4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.**

There are currently no proposals which require notification in conformity with Paragraph 172.

### **5. Public access to the state of conservation report**

The State Party agrees that the full state of conservation report can be made publicly available via the WH Centre's Information System

### **6. Signature of the Authority**



Enid Williams  
World Heritage Policy Adviser  
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

## **Annex A: Update on Key Documents in DCO Application**

The following annex provides a factual account of how the approach to design (through incorporation of the design vision and additional design principles) and mitigation discussed and developed during the course of the Examination have been included within the Scheme and DCO documentation. This therefore provides the World Heritage Committee with an update on the final versions of these documents which were not available ahead of the 2019 Decision.

### **Outline Environmental Management Plan – Explanation of the purpose and scope of the OEMP**

An **Outline Environmental Management Plan** (OEMP) was developed to accompany, and be appended to, the Environmental Statement (ES) submitted as part of the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO). The purpose of the OEMP is to:

a) Set out the standards and procedures which will be adhered to when undertaking both preliminary and main works under the Scheme. This forms part of the management of environmental impacts and will identify the responsibilities and requirements both for Highways England and their contractors.

b) Enable the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State to identify what mitigation measures are proposed within the Scheme and understand how they are secured.

Measures within the OEMP include proposed design, construction and operational mitigation, which have been defined by the requirements which arise from the technical assessments presented in the Environmental Statement (ES).

The OEMP was further developed throughout the Examination process to include updates and clarifications arising from ongoing engagement with stakeholders, in response to Interested Parties' representations and the Examining Authority's questions. Key stakeholders contributing to the evolution of the OEMP included, but were not limited to, Wiltshire Council, Historic England, the English Heritage Trust, the National Trust, the Environment Agency, Natural England and the National Farmers' Union. Updated versions of the OEMP were submitted to the Examining Authority at a number of deadlines throughout the Examination Period. Consequently, the final version of the OEMP supersedes the OEMPs originally submitted with the DCO application and at the various prior deadlines.

The OEMP includes at Chapter 4 a section on the Development of the Detailed Design. This chapter includes a description of:

a) the Design Vision for the Scheme;

b) key Design Principles which will inform the detailed design of the Scheme;

c) Design Commitments included in the Record of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) for the works in an earlier section of the document; and

d) how Highways England will involve key stakeholders in the detailed design of aspects of the Scheme.

The **Design Principles and Commitments** sections were introduced at the Deadline 3 update of the OEMP, in response to on-going consultation with Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service, Historic England, the English Heritage Trust and the National Trust. Following

continued engagement with these heritage stakeholders, **the Design Vision** section was introduced at the Deadline 6 update of the OEMP and covers the full extent of the Order limits, including the area within the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site (WHS).

The need for a coherent, holistic and unifying Design Vision for the Scheme was highlighted during the Examination including by the Examining Authority. This vision will help to ensure a holistic approach to the design of the whole Scheme; guide the tender and detailed design stages of the Scheme; provide an aspiration and driver for exemplary design from the appointed contractor; provide a point of reference for the design review process; ensure the detailed design represents sustainable infrastructure, sensitive to its place, efficient in the use of natural resources and energy used in their construction, and matched by an appearance that demonstrates good aesthetics as far as possible.

Design Commitments identify areas of the Scheme's detailed design where those details were able to be expressed with certainty and clarity before the end of the Examination. These are set out in a table within the OEMP, and are therefore secured through the requirement for compliance with the OEMP under the DCO. Other design issues which might be considered more ephemeral, covering for example the level of visual obtrusiveness of certain structural elements (e.g. fencing), are covered through a Design Principles approach.

The Design Principles identify areas of the Scheme's detailed design where guiding principles to inform later decision making have been settled, with the precise detail to be determined at the detailed design stage. Heritage, and specifically the WHS, formed a key component in development of the Design Principles. The Design Principles approach is coupled with stakeholder consultation on the development of the detailed design, intended to give confidence of a robust process that would be followed through from DCO Examination into detailed design and delivery.

In addition to the design vision, commitments and principles the DCO submission included 32 visualisations within the Landscape and Visual and Cultural Heritage assessments. The locations for these visualisations were discussed with respective Stakeholders and covered the Scheme both within and outside of the World Heritage Site. During the Examination, the Examining Authority and Interested Parties requested additional visualisations, such that a further 44 visualisations were submitted. Views were requested including:

- from within the WHS towards the retained cutting and tunnel portals, such as visualisations of the sequential experience of moving through the landscape and across the retained cutting, via Green Bridge no.4;
- in relation to solstitial alignments from Stonehenge, Woodhenge and Coneybury Hill;
- Zones of Theoretical Visibility to facilitate comparison between views of the existing A303 highway with views of the proposed A303 scheme.

## **Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy – Explanation of the purpose and scope of the DAMS**

The 2019 State of Conservation Report was submitted prior to the production of the Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy ('DAMS') for the A303 scheme. As such, it did not include the measures set out in the DAMS, which are secured by a Requirement in the Development Consent Order and which are therefore legally binding.

The Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (DAMS) sets out the scope, guiding principles and methods for the planning and implementation of essential archaeological mitigation associated with the design and construction of the Scheme, following the approach to mitigation set out in the Environmental Statement submitted with the DCO application.

It details the archaeological mitigation proposed to reduce the effect of the Scheme on the archaeological resource (either by protection / preservation of archaeological remains wherever possible or, where remains cannot be preserved, through a structured programme of archaeological investigation to mitigate the loss). The intention of the DAMS is to apply the highest practicable standards of mitigation to the loss of archaeological remains, employing innovative approaches to address a question-based research strategy that places the significance of the archaeological resource at the centre of decision-making both at design and implementation phases. The DAMS makes provision for a Site Specific Written Scheme(s) of Investigation (SSWSI) to be prepared for each site or area of archaeological interest outlining specific measures that would apply to particular pieces of archaeological fieldwork, to be carried out as part of the programme of archaeological mitigation works. Each SSWSI would be finalised in consultation with Wiltshire Council and Historic England and, for sites within or affecting the WHS, the Heritage Management Advisory Group (HMAG), prior to work commencing in that site or area of archaeological interest.

The DAMS was produced following review and comment by members of HMAG, Wiltshire Council and Historic England, as informed by advice provided by the A303 Scientific Committee and discussion during the public examination process. The extent of the consultation and involvement from other parties reflects the high archaeological significance of the WHS and its international status.

The DAMS will be a certified document, and therefore the implementation of the programme of archaeological work it details will be secured under the DCO. Those archaeological works will be substantially delivered at the Preliminary Works stage, ahead of the commencement of the main construction of the Scheme, in order to ensure adequate programme time.

The DAMS presents the approach to consultation and approvals, project management, and the post-excavation analysis and publication stages. It provides a detailed framework for the preparation, approval and implementation of documents controlling the archaeological mitigation works, (site specific WSIs, archaeological method statements and heritage management plans) which are to be prepared in consultation with Wiltshire Council and Historic England as statutory consultees and, for sites within or affecting the WHS, members of HMAG, and approved by Wiltshire Council (in consultation with Historic England). These documents, together with the DAMS, will detail the management of the archaeological mitigation work undertaken during the Preliminary Works and Main Works stages of the Scheme, culminating in the publication and dissemination of the findings. Delivery of the archaeological works, both on and off site, will be subject to on-going monitoring by Wiltshire Council and Historic England in their statutory roles and, for sites

within or affecting the WHS, members of HMAG in accordance with their roles and land ownership.

The universal value of Stonehenge and its landscape generates an unusually high level of public interest. Recognising this, the DAMS includes a Public Archaeology and Community Engagement (PACE) Strategy which will aim to collaboratively interpret and communicate the results of the archaeological evaluation and mitigation programmes to a wide audience, including local communities directly impacted by the Scheme (that is, people living and working within the A303 corridor); visitors to the WHS and travellers passing through it; and wider national and international audiences. The Strategy will aim to deliver a lasting legacy from the archaeological investigation and recording works undertaken for the Scheme. The objective will be to provide information to a wide variety of audiences, ranging from those with a strong interest in archaeology and heritage to those with no specific involvement.

The PACE programme is designed to deliver an accessible and inclusive programme to a wide audience including schools outreach, informal and lifelong learning, community and visitor events and activities, digital and virtual heritage interpretation, working in partnership with participants to foster a sense of appreciation and stewardship of the WHS as a whole and the archaeology and heritage of the wider area. A Steering Committee to oversee the PACE programme will include the WHS Coordination Unit alongside HMAG members.

The updated versions of all the documents submitted during the Examination are available on the Planning Inspectorate's webpage as follows:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-west/a303-stonehenge/?ipcsection=docs>.

This website contains a very large amount of evidence and information. The World Heritage Committee may find it useful and relevant in relation to Decision 43 COM 7B.95 to review the written summaries of oral submissions made by the Interested Parties at Issue Specific Hearing 8 (held on 21 August 2019) to Agenda item 3.2 which refers to the adopted decision.