

Response to the Preferred Route Announcement for the A303 Stonehenge Tunnel - Tuesday 12 September 2017

Historic England, the National Trust and English Heritage welcome today's announcement of the repositioned route for the proposed A303 dual carriageway and tunnel past Stonehenge. We believe the amended route can, if designed and located with the utmost care, deliver a lasting legacy for the World Heritage Site and restore peace and tranquillity to the Stonehenge landscape.

The three heritage organisations are pleased that Highways England has improved the route of the road as it travels through the World Heritage Site, particularly in relation to the winter solstice alignment.

We remain committed to working with and constructively challenging Highways England to deliver a final design that protects and enhances the World Heritage Site. We will examine the specific details of the tunnel and road design when they become available.

In a joint statement Historic England, the National Trust and English Heritage said:

“The Stonehenge World Heritage Site is internationally-important not just for Stonehenge itself but for the unique and rich concentrations of burial mounds and monuments in the landscape. Brimming with nature, the open chalk grassland is also home to rare and endangered species of wildlife.

“This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reunite this ancient landscape which is currently severed by a huge volume of road traffic.

“We welcome the amended route and believe it can, if designed and located with the utmost care, deliver a lasting legacy for the World Heritage Site and restore peace and tranquillity to the Stonehenge landscape.

“The route announced today will ensure the winter solstice alignment will be unspoilt by lights and traffic from the road. We also want to see the globally important archaeology protected, the settings of the ancient burial sites respected and the views between those sites restored. It is now critical to ensure that the benefits of this new route can be realised through careful design and mitigation of archaeological risks, particularly at the western portal of the tunnel and the approach road.

“We remain committed to working with all those with an interest in the World Heritage Site to protect it and help people to better enjoy and explore this iconic place. We believe that this road scheme, including a bored tunnel of at least 2.9km (1.8 miles) can achieve that aim by opening up and re-uniting the historic landscape.”