

STONEHENGE ALLIANCE PRESS RELEASE

Embargoed for 01:00 Tuesday 17th March 2015

HISTORIANS JOIN FORCES TO CONDEMN STONEHENGE PLANS

Three eminent historians are uniting with the Stonehenge Alliance to oppose plans by the Department for Transport, backed by English Heritage and the National Trust, for massive road engineering in the Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS) [1].

The trio are Dan Snow, Ruth Scurr and Tom Holland.

Dan Snow and Tom Holland will be visiting the Stonehenge World Heritage landscape in the company of Alliance members on Tuesday 17th March.

Dan Snow, broadcaster and President of the Council for British Archaeology, said

"Around the world we see pictures of our fellow humans smashing the treasures of the past and count ourselves lucky that we live in a country which values its rich history and appreciates what it offers modern Britain. Our heritage helps us understand ourselves, how we got here and where we are going.

"Of all our many treasures on these islands, none is more internationally revered than Stonehenge. We have recently started to realise that the standing stones are just a beginning, they sit at the heart of the world's most significant and best preserved Stone Age landscape. The government's plans endanger this unique site. "

Broadcaster and award-winning classical historian Tom Holland said

"There is so much waiting to be learnt about how Stonehenge was built - if we decide, as a country, not to sacrifice it to road-building. The battle to save our most significant neolithic landscape is an unending one."

Ruth Scurr, author of a biography of John Aubrey published to widespread acclaim this month, said

"Previous generations worked hard to preserve Stonehenge. In the 17th century John Aubrey, member of the Royal Society and early archaeologist, surveyed the stones for posterity. He would have been horrified by the current proposal to widen the A303 with destructive effect on the surroundings of this important monument."

ENDS

PHOTOCALL

Dan Snow and Tom Holland will join members of the Stonehenge Alliance at the crossing of the A303 with byway 12 at 2:30pm on Tuesday 17th March

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=znkBUAAftjd0.k09tpohjSqGE>

The Stonehenge Alliance is supported by: Ancient Sacred Landscape Network, Campaign for Better Transport, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Friends of the Earth, and RESCUE: The British Archaeological Trust.

NOTES

[1] The government announced in December 2014 revived plans to dual the A303 trunk road across the Stonehenge World Heritage Site including a tunnel of up to 2.9 km in length. This would leave 1.6 km or more of above ground road widening and cuttings on the surface of the WHS.

Roads Announcement 1 December 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/biggest-upgrade-to-roads-in-a-generation>

English Heritage press release welcoming tunnel proposal <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about/news/stonehenge-and-the-a303/>