

THE STONEHENGE ALLIANCE

POSITION STATEMENT on A303 expansion at Stonehenge

4 December 2014

The Stonehenge Alliance, in calling for a longer tunnel at Stonehenge, wishes to restate and clarify its stance on the proposed expansion of the A303.

In common with others, the Alliance and its member organisations wish to see the tranquillity and appearance of the Stonehenge landscape improved. Protection of the World Heritage Site (WHS) landscape, extending to 27sq.km around the Stones and recognised to be of outstanding universal value, is paramount.

The driving force for any activity within the WHS should be heritage, not the relief of congestion or stimulation of economic activity. We are mindful of widely accepted studies that relief of congestion or stimulation of the economy are insufficient justification in themselves for increasing road capacity. Evidence shows that these benefits are often not realised in practice. Smaller, more targeted interventions could deter problems of rat-running through local villages and avoid traffic jams near Stonehenge at busy times and should be introduced now.

The UK body of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS-UK), advisers to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, has expressed its own concerns about the Government proposals for a 2.9km tunnel and at least 1.6km of new dual carriageway within the WHS.

A 4.5km tunnel, starting within the already dualled eastern section of the A303 and passing south of the Stones, would avoid a new road on the surface within the WHS and need not damage the site further. Ideally, we would advocate a considerably longer tunnel of at least 6km, to allow restoration of the whole WHS and its setting. Such a tunnel would meet Government's duty under the World Heritage Convention as well as its planning policy and guidance for our WHSs.

Petition: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-stonehenge-world-heritage-site>

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