

## THE STONEHENGE ALLIANCE

From the Chairman, George McDonic, MBE, BL, DIPLTP, DPA, FFB

Jesse Norman, MP,  
Under Secretary of State for Transport,  
Department for Transport,  
Great Minster House,  
33 Horseferry Road,  
London, SW1P 4DR

Sent by email on 22 August 2017

Dear Jesse Norman,

### **Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS) and the A303**

Thank you for your letter to me of 17 August, in response to mine to Chris Grayling of 27 July, in which you assure me that UNESCO's recommendations are being taken into consideration in shaping the development of the A303 widening scheme at Stonehenge.

UNESCO's World Heritage Committee's Decision 41 COM 7B.56, urges the UK Government to

“explore further options with a view to avoiding impacts on the OUV of the property, including:

1. The F10 non-tunnel by-pass option to the south of the property,
2. Longer tunnel options to remove dual carriageway cuttings from the property and further detailed investigations regarding tunnel alignment and both east and west locations.”

We understand, however, that Highways England is currently proceeding with a scheme involving a tunnel that falls far short of the World Heritage Site boundaries, with the intention of announcing its preferred route possibly as early as mid September. You will know that UNESCO has indicated that such a scheme would impact adversely on the property and its Outstanding Universal Value.

I would be grateful if you should, please, let me have answers to the following two questions.

1. How can Highways England's current approach be considered consistent with UNESCO's recommendations “being taken into consideration in shaping the scheme's development” when the scheme clearly fails to meet those recommendations at the outset?
2. In view of UNESCO's urgent advice on *route options*, will an announcement on the preferred *route* now be delayed until such time as the advice of the World Heritage Committee and that of the second UNESCO WH Centre and ICOMOS Advisory Mission

is taken fully into account, including a reassessment of heritage impacts according to correct understanding of ICOMOS guidance?

As I mentioned to Chris Grayling, should UNESCO's urgent advice be disregarded, we fear that the WHS may be placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and, ultimately, lose its designation altogether. Such an outcome for this iconic WHS would result in international disgrace for our country and those bodies charged with the safeguarding of our heritage.

I look forward to hearing your answers to my questions.

Yours sincerely,

George McDonic  
Chairman, the Stonehenge Alliance

cc. The Rt. Hon. Theresa May, MP, Prime Minister  
The Rt. Hon. Philip Hammond, MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer  
The Rt. Hon. Karen Bradley, MP, Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport  
The Rt. Hon. Jeremy Corbyn, MP, Leader of the Opposition  
The Rt. Hon. Sir Vince Cable, MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Party  
The Rt. Hon. John Hayes, MP, Minister of State for Transport  
Tom Watson, MP, Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Secretary of State for  
Digital, Culture, Media and Sport  
Andy McDonald, MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Transport  
John Glen, MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Arts, Heritage and Tourism  
Molly Scott Cato, MEP, Green Party MEP for the South West  
Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb  
Baroness Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury, Liberal Democrat Lords Spokesperson for  
Culture, Media and Sport  
Dr Isabelle Anatole-Gabrielle, Head of Europe and North America Unit, UNESCO  
World Heritage Centre  
Susan Denyer, Secretary, ICOMOS-UK

**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