



Department
for Transport

George McDonic
Chairman
The Stonehenge Alliance

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State
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Dear George,

Thank you for your follow up letter of 22 August, about Stonehenge and the A303.

Of course it may not be possible to avoid disagreements, but I can assure you that Highways England has taken all views, including those of UNESCO, into consideration at every stage of the project and will continue to do so. On 12 September 2017 the Secretary of State for Transport announced the preferred route for dualling the A303 past Stonehenge. This is not by any means the end of consultation; it is in fact the beginning of the formal consultation period, giving all stakeholders the chance to have their say.

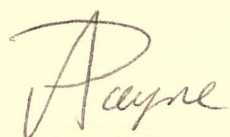
After carefully considering more than 9,000 responses to their informal consultation, together with further assessments, Highways England was able to improve the route before recommending it to the Government. The most significant improvement was a change to the route through the western half of the World Heritage Site and to the location of the western tunnel portal. Both of these are now much closer to the line of the existing A303 than they were before the consultation.

The preferred route avoids many important archaeological sites, including newly-discovered barrows just to the east of the A360. The modified alignment also avoids any risk of the road intruding on the view of the setting sun from Stonehenge during the winter solstice. I am delighted that the preferred route has been welcomed by English Heritage, Natural England, and the National Trust.

Highways England will continue to liaise closely with the World Heritage Centre in seeking to arrange the next advisory mission for UNESCO/ICOMOS and is looking forward to opportunities to discuss their views in more detail.

I am confident that the mission recommendations and future dialogue will continue to influence the scheme's development positively, and therefore do not expect the project's published timetable to be affected.

You will by now have received an invitation from Highways England to discuss these and any other matters you may wish to raise.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Payne', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

JESSE NORMAN *pp. in Minister's absence*