

From: A303Stonehenge <A303Stonehenge@highwaysengland.co.uk>

Sent: 03 February 2020 15:19

To: kate fielden

Subject: Highways England response – Your enquiry about the A303 Stonehenge – ref 22012001

Dear Dr Fielden

Thank you for your email of 22 January in relation to the A303 Stonehenge scheme.

The answers to the queries laid out in your letter are as follows:

A. Environmental Information Regulations request

1. I'm sorry to hear that Dr Reeves has been unable to print some of the documents we provided in response to your recent Environmental Information Regulations request. The information provided on the USB stick was in a PDF readable electronic format and everything contained on it should be capable of being printed. For us to investigate this further, we'd be grateful if you could narrow down the problem Dr Reeves is experiencing, as there are thousands of pages spread over a number of documents.
2. The articles you would have read in the media were speculative and not informed by Highways England. The position about the additional information remains as previously advised. At this time we can't say exactly when the information can be released, but we'll let you know in due course.

B. Artesian flow from groundwater observation borehole at Blick Mead

3. The discharge of groundwater you've referred to is a function of the hydrogeology of the area that gives rise to the artesian spring conditions at Blick Mead, including the seasonal pond that regularly occurs at this location in winter. These hydrogeological conditions are inherent within the assessment of the water environment impacts of the scheme reported in the [Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement \(ES\)](#) available on the [Planning Inspectorate's \(PINS\) website](#) (doc ref APP-049). The flow of water from the borehole in question is exhibiting the groundwater behaviour expected at this location, namely an upward pressure of water from the chalk aquifer. The borehole is penetrating the aquifer and therefore the greater head of water at the base of the borehole will result in upward flow. It is already known that the head of water in the aquifer is above ground level when groundwater levels are high, so it isn't surprising that this phenomenon is being observed above ground level. The concept of upward flow and upward pressure is described in the Blick Mead Tiered Assessment, contained in Annex 3 of the ES's [Appendix 11.4](#) (doc ref APP-282), with the upward flow within the chalk aquifer being consistent with groundwater discharging into the River Avon (see paragraph 2.5.17) and the groundwater level in the underlying aquifer being such that there will normally be upward pressure that assists in maintaining the wet conditions in the Mesolithic deposits at Blick Mead (see section 2.6).
4. As stated in Chapter 11 of Environmental Statement (paragraph 11.6.12), a seasonal winter pond can occur within the area of Blick Mead in which the borehole is located. The borehole is simply providing a ready artesian pathway at this location, as would be expected. As discussed during the DCO Examination,

Highways England considers that sufficient monitoring and investigation has been carried out for the purpose of assessing the water environment impacts of the scheme.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact us. If you have any further questions or concerns please don't hesitate to get in touch on 0300 123 5000 or email A303Stonehenge@highwaysengland.co.uk.

Kind regards

Heather Price, A303 Stonehenge Correspondence Officer

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