

THE STONEHENGE ALLIANCE

Case against A303 Stonehenge scheme strengthens

For Immediate Release: 26 April, 2022

In response to Transport Secretary Grant Shapps' recent consultation [1] prior to redetermining National Highways' A303 Stonehenge road scheme, the Stonehenge Alliance [2] has submitted a raft of new documents [3]. These show the case for the scheme is even weaker than it was at public Examination in 2019 [4].

The Alliance has highlighted that the economic case for the tunnel, already in the red, is now far worse with rising construction costs and a heritage valuation survey that is no longer valid. It has also shown that National Highways' assessment of alternatives is not fit for purpose as it failed to acknowledge the Examining Authority's and Grant Shapps' opinion that the road scheme would cause significant harm to the World Heritage Site.

Tom Holland, Alliance President, said:

"There is only one sane outcome to this process and that is for Grant Shapps to refuse permission for this highly damaging road scheme. Even though UNESCO has threatened to place the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger [5] if the road goes ahead as planned, National Highways remains in complete denial about the impact of its plans for the Stonehenge landscape. This Government-owned company is increasingly clutching at straws in its attempts to justify the desecration of our most iconic World Heritage Site.

"If Grant Shapps refuses to take the sensible course and tell National Highways to go away and come back with something better, then at the very least he should hold a new public examination. The amount of technical information involved is far too great for the Secretary of State to make a new decision without first obtaining the expert advice of a team of independent planning inspectors."

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Notes

1. Grant Shapps issued a [letter on 24 February, 2022](#), asking for interested parties' views on a number of issues as set out in his [Statement of Matters](#) published on 30 November, 2021. He also asked for comments on National Highways' submissions. All responses had to be submitted by midnight on 4 April, 2022. **Responses amounting to around 1,200 were published today, 26 April on the National Infrastructure Planning website.**
2. The [Stonehenge Alliance](#) supporter-organisations are: Ancient Sacred Landscape Network; Campaign to Protect Rural England; Friends of the Earth; Rescue, the British Archaeological Trust; and Transport Action Network.

3. The Stonehenge Alliance submissions can be found on the National Infrastructure Planning [website](#)
4. The Stonehenge Alliance's Summary of Case at the 2019 Examination into the road Scheme can be accessed via the National Infrastructure Planning A303 Stonehenge [website](#).
5. UNESCO World Heritage Committee [Decision 2021](#)
6. The [petition](#) against the road is at almost 220,000 signatures. For petition, please see [38 Degrees](#) (UK only) and [Change.Org](#) (UK and abroad).