

# The National Trust remains deaf to concerns about A303 road scheme

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Concerned National Trust (NT) members have tabled a resolution [1] on the A303 Stonehenge road scheme for the Trust's AGM tomorrow (Saturday 5 November 2022).

The resolution will be proposed by Dr Kate Fielden and seconded by John Adams, OBE. Both members are supporters of the Stonehenge Alliance [2]. The resolution, on which members will vote, asks the Trust's Trustees to reconsider their stance on the road scheme.

The Trust has supported the scheme since it was announced in 2014. Since then, independent planning inspectors and the former Transport Secretary have said that the road scheme would permanently and irreparably damage the famous Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS). UNESCO has warned that the site could lose its world heritage status if the scheme goes ahead without fundamental change. A Judicial Review in 2019 ruled that Grant Shapps' approval of the scheme was unlawful and that alternatives must be examined [3].

The Trust's Trustees, in responding to tomorrow's resolution, say that removal of the A303 from the site has long been called for and that the route has been carefully chosen to avoid archaeology. However, only around half of the road would be removed into a tunnel, leaving massive, noisy, and unsightly dual carriageway cuttings to each side, entirely removing sensitive archaeological remains in the way [4]. Walkers and cyclists on a new right of way referred to by the Trust would see directly into the huge western road cutting.

Dr Kate Fielden said:

"In view of warnings from UNESCO and other expert bodies, and the Trust's founding purpose to protect natural and historic places for future generations, we believe the Trust should reconsider its position on the scheme. It should be leading the calls for less damaging alternatives to road building at Stonehenge, not providing cover for National Highways' highly destructive scheme. At a time of climate emergency we need to find solutions that don't increase traffic and emissions, while also safeguarding the WHS for future generations."

## Notes to editors:

[1] For wording of the resolution and NT response, please see [here](#).

[2] The Stonehenge Alliance campaigns to protect the WHS and champion sustainable development within it. The Alliance is supported by: Ancient Sacred Landscape Network;

Campaign to Protect Rural England; Friends of the Earth; Rescue, The British Archaeological Trust; Transport Action Network; and many individuals worldwide.  
<https://stonehengealliance.org.uk/> and <https://stonehengealliance.org.uk/mp-briefing/>

[3] National Highways has produced information on longer tunnels but says their benefits do not outweigh the cost and that a longer tunnel would require a new scheme application. However there has been no proper public scrutiny of the alternative options or of National Highways' assertions. The present scheme is now being redetermined by the Transport Secretary, but the Stonehenge Alliance has called on the Examination to be reopened given the large amount of new material that has been produced.

[4] The western section of the road would see a single carriageway road within the WHS replaced by a dual carriageway with a far bigger footprint and impact.