

Stonehenge Alliance Press Release

National Highways are looking down the wrong end of the telescope at Stonehenge

For immediate release: 29 April, 2024

At very short notice the Stonehenge Alliance [1] was alerted to a series of 5 local 'information events' organised by National Highways concerning the A303 Stonehenge located in and around Salisbury. [2]

A review of their information boards last Thursday revealed many errors and omissions. Members of Stonehenge Alliance will attend National Highways' information event in Salisbury from 11am and bring an information board listing issues that need correcting and enlarging to ensure that members of the public are not given the wrong impression about this major road scheme that, if it went ahead, would cost at least £3bn, damage our World Heritage Site irrevocably and cause major disruption for many years to come. [3]

Andy Rhind-Tutt, former mayor of Amesbury and President of Salisbury Chamber of Commerce said: "People in Salisbury need to be made aware that this always has been a vanity project for political gain. The only people that will benefit are 1. English Heritage who will force anyone who wants to see Stonehenge to pay an exorbitant charge, 2. Consultants 3. Sub-contractors. There is no evidence whatsoever that the tunnel will improve the livelihoods of local people, improve local roads from rat running when the tunnel is blocked or maintained. The traffic issues need a regional solution, not a local one, and the World Heritage Site should not be damaged any further."

Simon Slader, co-manager of a new conservation project at Winterbourne Stoke, said: "If this road goes ahead, it will take years. Far longer than National Highways' ambitions to complete in 5 years. They make much of 'enhancing wildlife' but the truth is that wildlife is very easily disturbed, it doesn't like human activity let alone heavy machinery all day long 24/7. It will have a negative impact on wildlife within the area and threaten protected species such as Stone Curlews and Great Crested Newts."

Kate Freeman, the Alliance's representative for Friends of the Earth South West, said: "The information event is riddled with errors and omissions. National Highways are clearly hosting a PR exercise for local people who are truly alarmed by the reality of what the future holds: many years of chaos with little to show for a horrendously damaging scheme. There is a lot of exaggeration, for instance the area is already rich with wildlife and the noise

reduction from the tunnel very limited. Nor is there a single mention of UNESCO's threat to the site's World Heritage status if this project goes ahead as it stands. Do they really care about world heritage?"

NOTES

1. 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.
2. National Highways five information events started last Thursday in Amesbury – more information from NH [here](#).
3. The Stonehenge Alliance will have a display showing the main errors and omissions and will be leafleting, and also inviting people to write to their MP and parliamentary candidates.