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Save Stonehenge blog

16 November 2018

A303 Stonehenge Expressway - A monumental disaster!

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Photo: A303 Amesbury Bypass under construction 1968, showing the World Heritage Site landscape (designated 1986) deeply scoured for a new roundabout and dual carriageway beside Amesbury Abbey and Park. Far more extensive destruction of this famous landscape is proposed.

Source: unknown

Highways England's application for the Stonehenge Expressway and short (around 3km) tunnel was accepted today by the UK [Infrastructure Planning Inspectorate](#).

The [planned engineering works](#) would scar the Stonehenge landscape for ever. There would be extensive tunnel cuttings into the chalk for four lanes of tarmac, and massive highway interchanges through sensitive archaeological areas. Over Countess Roundabout, shown under construction in the 1968 image above, there would be a colossal flyover into the World Heritage Site, looming close by the Mesolithic site of **Blick Mead**. The deep cutting through the hillside below **Vespasian's Camp**, under woodland at the top of the image, would be further widened for the eastern tunnel approach over what was once the parkland of **Amesbury Abbey** and, long before that, a prehistoric cemetery, parts of which are still visible on the ground.



Artist's impression of proposed flyover relative to Amesbury Abbey, Grade I listed building, Grade II listed park and garden near Countess roundabout, Amesbury within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. Highways England hope not to have street lights, but vehicle headlights would be highly visible. Photo: Amesbury Museum Heritage Trust*

LOSS OF WORLD HERITAGE STATUS?

Some **five years of construction and traffic chaos** would leave the Stonehenge landscape so altered that loss of its World Heritage status is already feared. The advice of international experts and leading archaeologists, and the outright objections of the clear majority of those who responded to Highways England's consultations have been ignored.

The estimated cost of the project has now risen to £1.7bn. Quite apart from the damage it would cause to our ancient heritage, the scheme is assessed in Highways

England's documents as low value for money. If Highways England's valuation estimate of the inappropriately described 'heritage benefit' of the short tunnel is removed, the scheme would be **poor value for money**.

WE CAN'T BUILD OUR WAY OUT OF CONGESTION

Surely, there must be better ways of spending £1.7bn than on a damaging scheme that is predicated on Government demands for "affordability, deliverability and value for money"? **This road-widening project revives a discredited transport policy scrapped in the 1990s**, based on the misunderstanding that building more and wider roads will relieve congestion.

TAKE ACTION AND GET INVOLVED

The Stonehenge road scheme will be judged by a panel of planning Inspectors early in 2019. Would you like to express your opinion as an individual or on behalf of an organisation? **Please [sign up for email updates](#) from the Infrastructure Planning Inspectorate**. The Inspectorate will keep you informed of the progress of the **Development Consent Order process** and how you can register as an Interested Party in order to make your views known.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please go to our [A303 Stonehenge Briefing](#)
The planning process [explained](#)

WATCH



Professor Mike Parker Pearson, leading expert in British Neolithic archaeology, speaks passionately in support of protecting the **entire** World Heritage landscape in perpetuity for future generations. 1 minute clip.

TAKE ACTION

Have you signed our [petition](#) to the Secretaries of State for Transport and Culture?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Access for sunrise at
Winter Solstice
Stonehenge 22
December 2018
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ABOUT THE STONEHENGE ALLIANCE

The Stonehenge Alliance is a group of non-governmental organisations and individuals that seeks enhancements to the Stonehenge World Heritage Site and opposes development that would cause it significant harm. The Alliance is concentrating its efforts on opposing the proposal for dualling the A303 including a short tunnel across Stonehenge WHS announced in December 2014, which would result in serious damage to the WHS landscape. [More about us.](#)

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