

STONEHENGE ALLIANCE CAMPAIGN UPDATE



On 2 April the A360 south of the A303 was closed to lay cables and fibre optics for the Stonehenge tunnel for at least three months. This work was not only premature but unnecessary (more below). At a public meeting National Highways promised that SSEN contractors would be working "23.5/7" to get this finished on time. 4 days later no one was to be seen after 6pm. Photo from [Andy Rhind-Tutt's tweet](#).

Dear Friends and Supporters,

The news last February that Judge Holgate had dismissed the second challenge came as a cruel blow to all of us and plunged our small team into frantic activity. Top of the list was supporting the legal team's request for leave to appeal. At incredible speed people responded magnificently to pleas on [CrowdJustice](#) and social media, and permission to appeal was submitted in time. We do not know when the Court of Appeal will make its decision but it could be another month before we find out.

We also contacted UNESCO urging them to place Stonehenge WHS on their list of World Heritage in Danger. See also *Out of Sight* in Snippets below..

Next on our action list was National Highways' (NH) preparations for road widening before any of us had even heard the outcome of the legal



challenge. NH kicked off in January with a planning application to construct a replacement nesting plot for [stone-curlew](#), a Schedule 1 protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This rare, shy bird has inconveniently nested in the line of the planned road construction. Our specialist on stone-curlews was

able to help us with our objection and explained that stone-curlews are faithful to their nesting sites and easily unsettled by human activity. She was doubtful that the birds would successfully relocate.. After all, the replacement plot is situated next to the area where over 400,000 cubic metres of tunnel spoil will be dumped and would disturb this wild bird with its haunting call at dusk and dawn ([listen to it on BBC's Tweet of the day](#)). NH admitted that there was no guarantee of success. What will Wiltshire the planners make of that? More news when we've heard Wiltshire's decision at the end of this month.

Next on NH's agenda was a major road closure to lay electric cables and fibre optics for the Stonehenge tunnel. Not only was this work premature but



unnecessary. It could have been carried out *without closing any roads* if NH had waited until the legal process was settled. The land owners were not prepared to allow access to their land until that process had been concluded. What is more, there is probably going to be a change of government with different spending priorities. Public money is wasted in haste and traffic chaos now reigns on the A345 between Amesbury and Salisbury and

surrounding villages. [Our comments were widely reported](#).

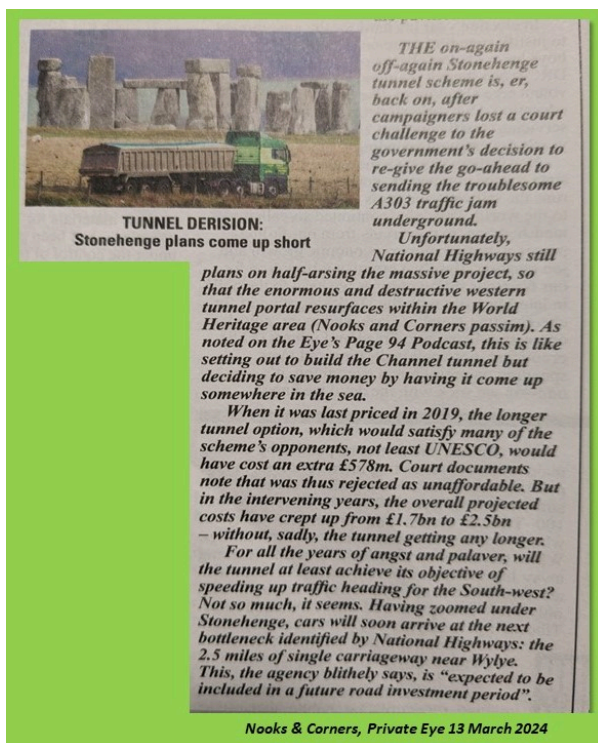
Hard on the heels of this email we will send out our blog about ballooning costs. [Our MP](#) is having difficulty establishing the real cost of this scheme, as opposed to the persistently quoted, out of date, "[£1.7bn](#)". So we will share the punch line of our blog now: our best guess is **at least £3bn**. Stay tuned!

We are grateful for all your support, emails, suggestions and engagement. Thank you for sticking with us.

Warm regards,
John Adams OBE - and all the team
Chair of the Stonehenge Alliance

SNIPPETS

* **CREEPING DEVELOPMENT:** At the end of last year English Heritage submitted a planning application was submitted to expand the Visitor Centre complex for a learning centre including a classroom sized 'prehistoric' hut, described as part of a "[wider investment strategy for supporting improvements to the visitor experience at Stonehenge](#)." We thought the design was not of high quality, it would increase an already dense cluster of buildings, prominent on the World Heritage Site, and that it would add to transport pressures where buses were not a realistic alternative throughout the year. We were not alone in our views, however Wiltshire Council granted permission last month.



* **IN THE EYE:** Private Eye poured tunnel derision on Stonehenge plans for coming up short, comparing the massive project with setting out to build the Channel tunnel but deciding to save money by having it come up somewhere in the sea. Nooks and Corners, March (Click on the image to read the article}.

* **OUT OF SIGHT:** Under threat of placing Stonehenge on World Heritage in Danger, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee (WHC) required the UK Government to halt action on the road scheme until the

WHC had received by 1st February a report with a package of proposed modifications and corrective measures for the WHC to review. A summary was duly published but the UK Government asked UNESCO not to publish the full report. Something to hide?

* **IN THE PIPELINE:** Professor Mike Parker Pearson has agreed to share his thoughts on Stonehenge, the road scheme and other controversial matters. We've prepared some FAQs.

ABOUT THE STONEHENGE ALLIANCE




[The Stonehenge Alliance](#) was set up in 2002 to protect the Stonehenge World Heritage Site from further damage. It has campaigned against the current road scheme since its inception in 2014. It is appalled by the Government's decision to go ahead with the short tunnel and road widening project in the face of:

- *strong advice from its Planning Inspectorate not to proceed,*
- *UNESCO's World Heritage Committee's condemnation, and*
- *the High Court's quashing of the scheme in 2021.*

The Stonehenge 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.

THE INTERNATIONAL PETITION against the road has reached over 238,000 signatures. ***You can sign and share it [here](#).***

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 <https://mailchi.mp/stonehengealliance/national-highways-preparatory-works-start-prior-to-legal-processes>

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