

A photograph of the Stonehenge monument in a grassy field, with the stones arranged in their characteristic circular formation. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent olive-green filter.

The future of Stonehenge

Public Consultation



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Stonehenge is perhaps our most famous and important ancient monument, inscribed with Avebury as a World Heritage Site in 1986. The need to care for it properly has been recognised for many years, as has the need to improve its landscape setting and its presentation to visitors.

Publication of the World Heritage Site Management Plan in 2000 was an important step forward; at its heart was a vision of Stonehenge returned to open grassland. Since then, 520 hectares of arable land have been changed to grassland.

Apart from the grassland reversion, two major projects were planned: to remove the roads from around Stonehenge by placing the A303 in a tunnel, and to relocate visitor facilities to a new centre away from the Stones. Public inquiries were held into each, and the outcomes reviewed at length.

In December 2007, the Government announced that, while there were no acceptable alternatives to the A303 tunnel scheme, the cost would not represent best use of taxpayers' money. As a result, the visitor centre could not go ahead, since planning permission was conditional on approval for the tunnel scheme.

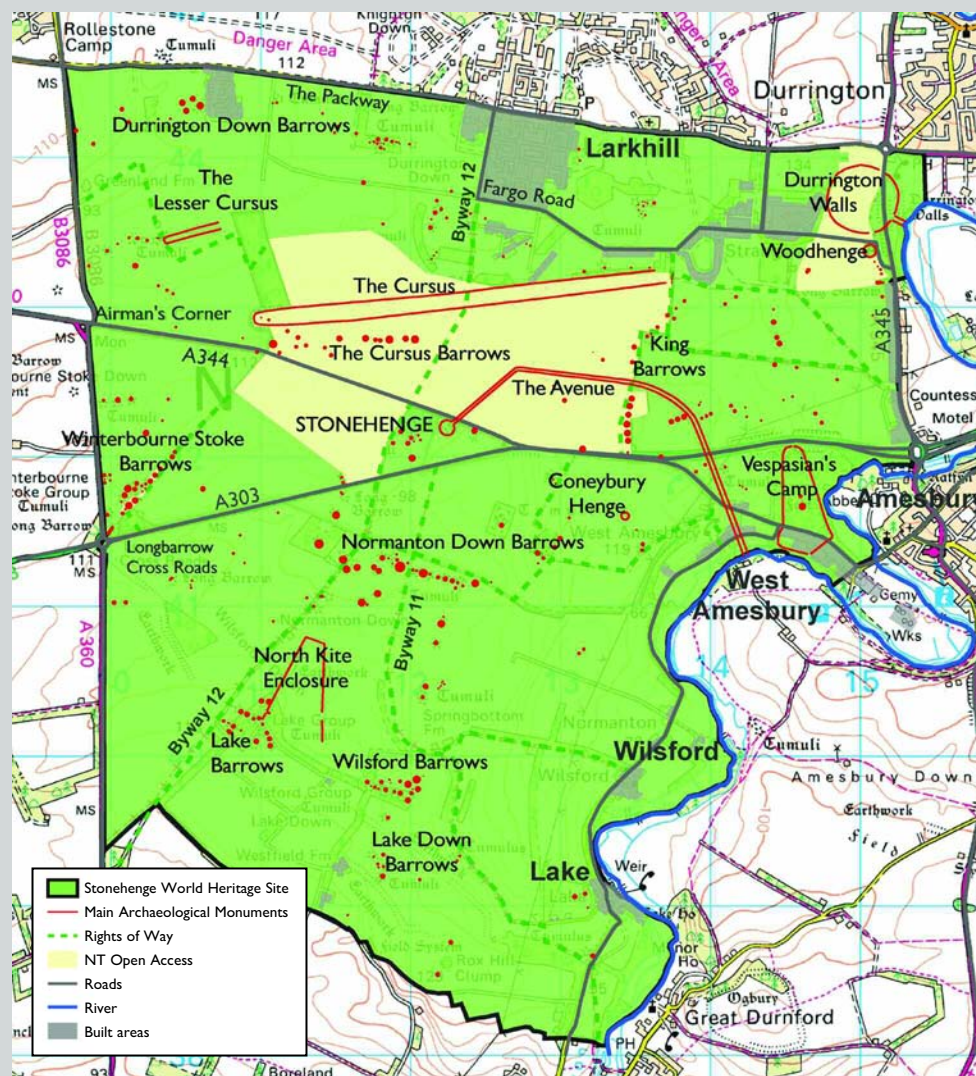
At the same time, the Government has made a commitment to work with stakeholders to

review the Management Plan as the overarching strategic document for the site and to consider alternative options for new visitor facilities in the light of the decision on the A303. This work includes examination of the case for closing the A344/A303 (Stonehenge Bottom) junction to improve the setting of Stonehenge.

A new Stonehenge Project Board, chaired by the Ministers for Culture and Transport, has been set up to oversee this work. The aim is to complete environmental improvements at Stonehenge, including new visitor facilities, in time for the 2012 Olympics, when the UK is expecting to welcome large additional numbers of overseas visitors.

A revised draft of the Management Plan and new proposals for environmental improvements, including road improvements near Stonehenge and options for the location of new visitor facilities, are now being put forward for a three month public consultation.

Stonehenge World Heritage Site



Produced by Rachel Foster, English Heritage 2008

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What are World Heritage Sites?

World Heritage Sites (WHSs) are places of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) to all humanity. They are designated by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee under the terms of the World Heritage Convention. By ratifying this treaty, the UK has undertaken to identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit such places to future generations.

Each member state decides how it will protect its Sites. The UK government uses existing laws and policies, but most decisions are taken by the local planning authority. Many individual features within each World Heritage Site (WHS) are protected by other designations such as listing. The second key element of the government system for protecting WHSs is the development of Management Plans (see page 6).

The Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites WHS was inscribed in 1986. It is in two parts, some 24 miles apart, focused respectively on the great stone circles of Stonehenge and Avebury.

The Stonehenge part of the WHS covers 2,665 hectares around Stonehenge itself. It is one of the richest concentrations of early prehistoric monuments in the world and attracts around a million visitors each year. The WHS is also a place where people live and work. Much of it is farmed.

What is the Outstanding Universal Value of Stonehenge?

Stonehenge is one of the most impressive prehistoric megalithic monuments in the world on account of the sheer size of its megaliths, the sophistication of its concentric plan and architectural design, the shaping of the stones, and the precision and effort with which it was built.

There is an exceptional survival of prehistoric monuments and sites within the WHS. Today, together with their settings, they form landscapes without parallel.

The Stonehenge World Heritage Site meets three of the criteria set by UNESCO:

*Criterion i – represent a masterpiece of human creative genius**

The monuments of the Stonehenge WHS demonstrate outstanding creative and technological achievements in prehistoric times.

Criterion ii – exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design

* NB see Management Plan, section 3.3, for the full Summary Statement of Significance.

The WHS provides an outstanding illustration of the evolution of monument construction and of the continual use and shaping of the landscape over more than 2,000 years, from the early Neolithic to the Bronze Age.

The monuments and landscape have had an unwavering influence on architects, artists, historians and archaeologists, and still retain a huge potential for future research.

Criterion iii – bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared

The complexes of monuments at Stonehenge and Avebury provide an exceptional insight into the funerary and ceremonial practices in Britain in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Together with their settings and associated sites, they form landscapes without parallel.

Facts and Figures

Archaeology

Key ceremonial monuments include Stonehenge (c3000-1600 BC), the Avenue, the Cursus, Woodhenge, and Durrington Walls.

The landscape surrounding Stonehenge contains more than 350 prehistoric burial mounds, including 10 Neolithic long barrows and 348 Bronze Age round barrows. The key barrow cemeteries are Normanton Down, King Barrows, Cursus Barrows, Winterbourne Stoke, Wilsford Barrows and Lake Barrows.

Altogether there are 784 known archaeological features in the WHS. 416 of these are protected in 180 designated areas as scheduled monuments.

Size and ownership

Ownership and management of the WHS is shared between English Heritage, the National Trust, the Ministry of Defence, and farmers and householders in Amesbury, Larkhill and the Woodford Valley.

Stonehenge, Woodhenge and parts of Durrington Walls are owned by the government and managed by English Heritage (16ha).

Much of the landscape surrounding Stonehenge is owned by the National Trust (827ha, 31% of the WHS). 46ha of the WHS is now managed as an RSPB reserve.

Visitors to the Stone Circle

- Around 900,000 visitors in 2007/08.
- About 50% are from overseas, 30% are part of a group, 5% are education visitors.
- Summer Solstice: 30,000 people visited in 2008.
- Existing visitor facilities built in 1968 though subsequently extended.
- Access inside the stone circle stopped in 1978 because of vandalism and erosion due to increasing visitor numbers.

Aerial view looking south © Copyright English Heritage

Stonehenge World Heritage Site Management Plan Review

World Heritage Site Management Plan Review

What are WHS Management Plans?

WHS Management Plans are UK government policy for all WHSs. They are not statutory but do have weight in the planning system. Plans aim for an appropriate balance between conservation, access and interpretation, local community interests, and sustainable use of the Site. They are prepared on a participatory basis by a Committee of the key stakeholders in each Site. As far as possible Plans should be based on consensus, involve all stakeholders in each Site and be subject to public consultation. They should have an overall vision for the Site, long-term aims, and policies for five years.

The 2000 Stonehenge WHS Management Plan

The first Stonehenge WHS Management Plan was completed in 2000 and adopted by Salisbury District Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Plan had an ambitious

range of targets. Although it has not been possible to progress two of them – removing roads from the central part of the WHS and building a world-class visitor centre – there has been substantial progress elsewhere.

Agreements were made to revert 520 ha of arable land to pasture. The National Trust increased the size of their estate and the RSPB established a reserve for stone curlews. There have been improvements to interpretation, the development of educational projects, and the publication of guidance on a number of themes.

The first Archaeological Research Framework for the WHS was completed. There have been significant programmes of archaeological work both by universities and in connection with proposed projects in the WHS.

A WHS Coordinator was appointed to carry forward the implementation of the Plan.



School group at Stonehenge

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Why we need a Review

WHS Management Plans should be reviewed periodically. It is particularly necessary to revise this Plan now because of government decisions on the A303. The review is being overseen by the Stonehenge WHS Committee, made up of those who own or manage the WHS or have statutory responsibilities in it. The WHS Advisory Forum, a wider stakeholder body, has been fully involved. The whole process has been facilitated by English Heritage.

The revised Management Plan

The Plan will set the overarching strategy to protect the site's OUV, provide access worthy of the site for visitors, and allow its continued use for sustainable agriculture. Central to it is the Vision established for the 2000 Plan which is still valid today. The Plan consists of:

- a description of the WHS and an assessment of its OUV, other values and character; its current management; the planning and policy context for the Site; and an assessment of the effectiveness of the 2000 Plan (Part 1);
- the identification of the main issues affecting the OUV of the WHS which need to be addressed (Part 2);

- Vision, aims (long-term), and policies (short to medium-term), arising from the management issues identified in Part 2; (Part 3)
- mechanisms for implementing and monitoring the Plan and a programme of action (Part 4).

Supporting information is provided as Appendices at the end of the Plan.

In this booklet you will find the Vision, Objectives and Aims of the revised Plan. The full draft of the revised Plan and a summary of the revised Management Plan are downloadable from www.stonehengeconsultation.org

Changes from the 2000 Plan

The new Plan sets out the many new legislative, policy and political changes since 2000. It includes a new Statement of Significance for the WHS, and incorporates recent archaeological research. In the light of recent government decisions, it does not focus on the long-term roads or visitor facilities improvements to the WHS, but instead sets out a framework for improvements that could be delivered in the immediate future. It proposes that developments inside or outside the WHS are evaluated according to their impact on the Site's OUV and will now emphasise the setting of all key monuments, not just Stonehenge. There is also more emphasis on museums, education, interpretation, community involvement and wildlife.

The Vision

The Stonehenge WHS is internationally important for its complex of outstanding prehistoric monuments. The Vision of this Plan is to preserve and manage this complex, to improve its condition including the settings of monuments, and to enhance its presentation and understanding, allowing present and future generations to enjoy and appreciate it fully.

In the long-term, large parts of the WHS focused on key monuments will be restored as permanent grassland and inappropriate structures and roads removed or screened to provide:

- an improved landscape setting for the key monuments,
- the protection of buried archaeology from ploughing,
- areas carefully managed for open access by visitors on foot.

Such grassland areas will be primarily managed for archaeological, landscape and nature conservation purposes and, near the Stones, for the access and enjoyment of the very large numbers of visitors who it is anticipated will continue to concentrate, at least initially, near there.

With a new high quality visitor centre as a starting point, visitors will gain access to the Stones and the heart of the WHS. Pedestrian access to the more tranquil, and more fully presented and interpreted landscape and

archaeological sites, particularly in the southern WHS, will be possible using the existing public rights of way network, and new pedestrian links and routes to currently inaccessible sites and areas. Researching and improving our understanding of the WHS, and the development of its enjoyment and educational value for future generations, are also fundamental concepts for guiding the long-term management of the Site.

Mixed sustainable farming will continue as the principal land use in parts of the wider landscape of the WHS. Outside the main areas of open access grassland, the improved conservation and management of important archaeological monuments and ecological features will be balanced with the practical needs of modern arable or mixed farming, and military activities.

The vision for the future is based therefore on the fundamental need to conserve, enhance and interpret the OUV of the Stonehenge WHS.

Strategic Objectives of the Management Plan

- to manage the attributes that carry the OUV of the WHS so that the WHS is conserved and improved;
- to identify the current other values, needs and interests of the WHS;
- to outline a sustainable approach to the future management of the whole WHS which aims to balance all values and needs, such as archaeological and nature

conservation (including research), visitor access and farming, and to set out ways whereby stakeholders can optimise the benefits of these values, without compromising the OUV of the Site;

- to increase public awareness of and interest in the WHS, and to promote the educational and cultural value of the entire Site, not just the famous Stones;
- to identify a prioritised programme of action that is achievable and will contribute to the conservation, understanding of OUV, and the improvement of the WHS for all those who visit Stonehenge and live or work in the area.

Aims of the Management Plan

To achieve these objectives, the Plan has identified eight long-term Aims. Each of these is supported by Policies and Actions set out in an Action Plan. The Aims are:

Aim 1

The Management Plan should be endorsed by those bodies and individuals responsible for its implementation as the framework for long-term detailed decision-making on the conservation and improvement of the OUV of the WHS and its attributes, and its aims and policies should be incorporated into relevant planning guidance and policies.

Aim 2

The WHS boundary should ensure the integrity of the WHS is maintained by including all known significant archaeological

features and landscapes related to the Site's OUV.

Aim 3

The OUV of the WHS should be sustained and enhanced through the conservation of its archaeology and landscape.

Aim 4

To interpret the outstanding universal value of the whole WHS to increase understanding and conservation of the cultural assets, and to promote the importance of the heritage resources for public enjoyment, education and research.

Aim 5

To reduce the impacts of roads and traffic on the OUV of the WHS and to improve sustainable access to it.

Aim 6

Sustainable research should be encouraged and promoted to improve understanding of the archaeological, historic and environmental value of the WHS necessary for its appropriate management.

Aim 7

The long-term objectives for reducing the impact of the A303 in the WHS, and the creation of a permanent world class visitor centre should be kept under review.

Aim 8

Provide adequate resources for the management and monitoring of the WHS.

What happens next

Have your say

Use the questionnaire inside the front cover of this booklet to respond to the consultation on the WHS Management Plan by 17 October 2008. (There is a separate questionnaire for the Environmental Improvements Project inside the back cover). You can also email us at **stonehenge.whsmp@uk.grayling.com** or write to:

WHSMP c/o English Heritage
1 Bedford Avenue
London WC1B 3AU

If you need more information than it is possible to provide in this booklet, you can download the Plan or its Summary from www.stonehengeconsultation.org or obtain a hard copy by contacting the Consultation Hotline on 0845 026 4409.



Winterbourne Stoke Barrows

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What will happen to the consultation responses?

The consultation responses will be collected and analysed by the World Heritage Committee who will take them into account when deciding on any changes to the Management Plan. Once these have been made, the final plan will be submitted to the Minister for Culture for endorsement, published in early 2009 and sent to UNESCO.

The Plan will then become the basis for future management of the World Heritage Site. Its implementation will be overseen by the WHS Committee, supported by the WHS Coordinator. Each year the Committee will draw up an annual Action Plan based on the Aims and Policies of the Plan and on the Action Table set out in Part Four.

Stonehenge Environmental Improvements



Detail of inner circle © Copyright English Heritage

Stonehenge Environmental Improvements

The Government, through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has established a group of key stakeholders to look at ways of improving the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. A Project Implementation Group, led by English Heritage (which has responsibility for the management of the Stonehenge monument), reports to the Project Board. Its members include:

- English Heritage
- Government Office for the South West
- Highways Agency
- National Trust
- Natural England
- Salisbury District Council
- South West Regional Development Agency
- Wiltshire County Council

The aim of the group is to deliver, within the framework of the revised WHS Management Plan, environmental improvements including new visitor facilities and interpretation of the WHS, in keeping with Stonehenge's status as a WHS, by 2012.

In order to implement environmental improvements at Stonehenge while the current A303 remains open to traffic, two principal elements are being proposed:

- The **improvement or relocation of the visitor facilities and parking**, with better interpretation of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. A number of possible locations for the new visitor facilities have been shortlisted, and are being considered against a range of criteria.
- The **closure of the A344 where it runs adjacent to the Stones**. This involves the closure of its junction with the A303, which would in turn require changes to other nearby junctions on the road network.

The aim of this consultation is to find out your views on the shortlisted options for the location of new visitor facilities and on the proposed changes to the road network near Stonehenge.



Stonehenge: current situation

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The need for improvements

The need for new visitor facilities

The present visitor facilities adjacent to Stonehenge are inadequate and improvements have been limited by the sensitivity of their location.

Interpretation of the site is limited to a leaflet and an audio guide. The shop regularly becomes overcrowded, while refreshment is provided only by an outdoor kiosk. The parking area is too small, with vehicles overflowing onto the adjoining field at busy times.

The presence of the facilities and parking so close to the Stones represents a significant visual intrusion at the centre of the World Heritage Site.

The new visitor facilities

The new visitor facilities would provide better interpretation of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, along with a café, a larger shop and improved visitor amenities, within a building of 1500m² - 1600m² (about three times the size of the existing facilities).

Permanent parking would be provided for 40 coaches and 200 cars (about 6160m²). Overflow parking on reinforced grass would accommodate a further 600 cars (about 11280m²). This is about twice the number of spaces currently available and would be sufficient to accommodate the number of vehicles arriving on a busy day.

The facilities would be designed to be sensitive to the surrounding landscape and environmentally friendly, with a low carbon footprint and significant energy saving and water recycling features. They would also be reversible, allowing for easy removal in the future.

If the facilities and parking are moved away from their current location, then assistance would be provided for visitors unable to walk to the Stones.

For sites more than 1.5km away, a 'park and ride' link (for example, low-emission buses) would take visitors to a drop-off point or points within walking distance of the Stones.

The closure of the A344

The closure of the A344 would bring substantial improvements to the environment of Stonehenge, allowing better access to the surrounding landscape.

It would reunite Stonehenge with the ancient processional Avenue, fulfilling the commitment made by the UK Government in 1986 when Stonehenge was inscribed as a World Heritage Site.

The closure of the junction with the A303 would improve road safety by removing a known accident blackspot.

Options for visitor facilities

Shortlisting options

A number of principles were established in order to select a shortlist of options for the location of new visitor facilities. Suitable sites would avoid significant impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (see page 3) of the WHS and on local communities. They would offer good access from the A303 and an easy route to the Stones. They would not constrain opportunities for improving the setting of the Stones or for realising the long-term vision for the WHS, and new infrastructure would be minimised.

The shortlisted options

If new visitor facilities are developed, five options for their location have been identified, shown on the map overleaf and summarised as follows:

Option 1 (Area V)

Redevelopment of the current visitor facilities site.

Option 2 (Area W)

The area around Byway 12 near Durrington Down Farm.

Option 3 (Area X)

The area around the A344 near Fargo Plantation.

Option 4 (Area Y)

The area around Airman's Corner junction.

Option 5 (Area Z)

The area around Rollestone Camp junction.

There are further variants of some options, depending on where the parking area is located.

The exact position of the facilities and/or parking within each of these broad areas is yet to be defined.

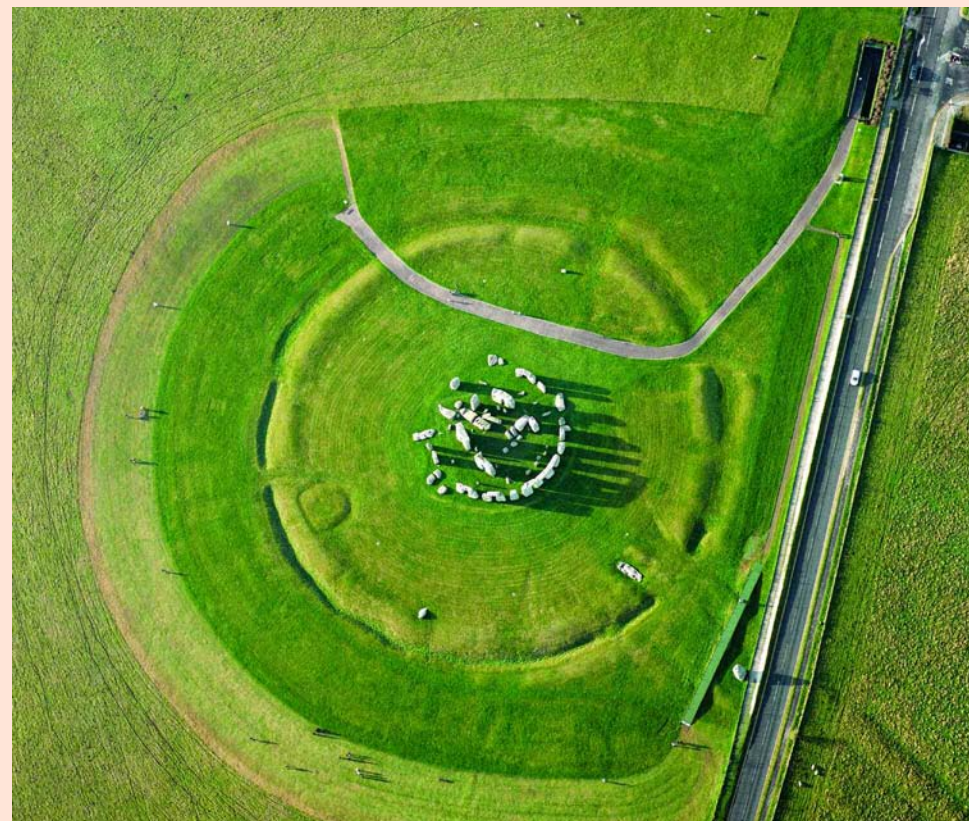
Assessment of the options

A technical assessment of each of the shortlisted options and variants is currently being undertaken, with information being gathered in relation to a range of criteria.

Some of the key aspects of this information are summarised on the following pages under three main headings:

- Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS
- Visitor access and experience
- Environmental and other impacts

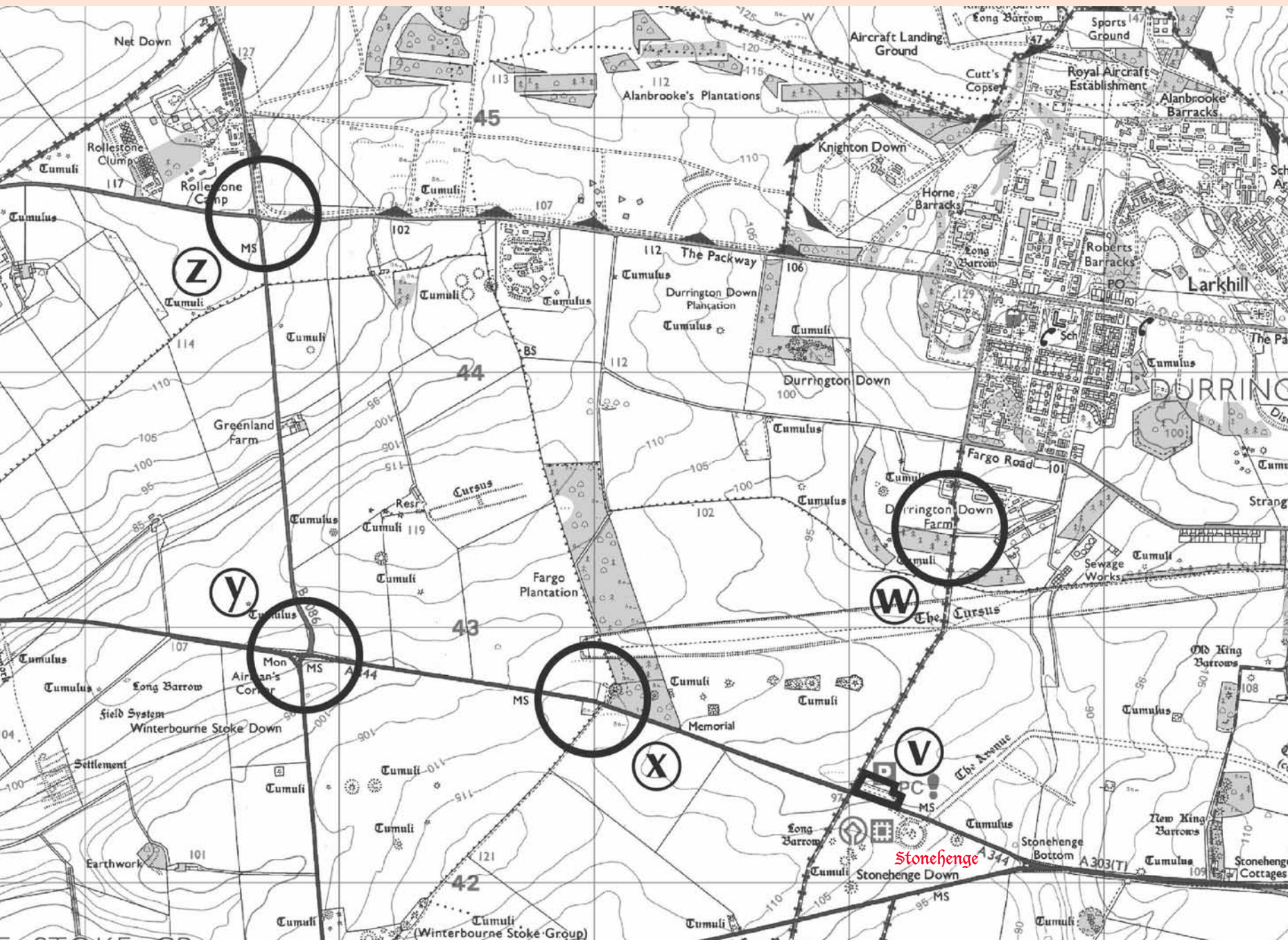
The costs of both the construction and the operation of each option have not yet been assessed but will form part of the final appraisal later in the year.



Aerial view of Stonehenge and the adjacent A344

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Shortlisted Options



All areas/routes are indicative



0 250 500m



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The current situation



Stonehenge: the current situation

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This represents the current situation if no changes are made, to provide a comparison for the following options.

Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site

The current visitor facilities and parking, along with the A344 road adjacent to Stonehenge, represent a significant adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS.

Visitor access and experience

The facilities and parking are about 100m from the Stones, which are approached via the underpass under the A344.

Access to the landscape is constrained by the presence of the A344. Interpretation of the World Heritage Site is limited.

The site is about 500m from the A303 via the A344/A303 junction for westbound traffic and 3.5km from the A303 via Longbarrow Crossroads for eastbound traffic.

Environmental and other impacts

Landscape

The current site falls within the WHS and the Special Landscape Area.

Setting of the Stones

The site is in the immediate setting of the Stonehenge monument.

Historic environment

There are seven Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 250m of the current visitor facilities site.

Ecology

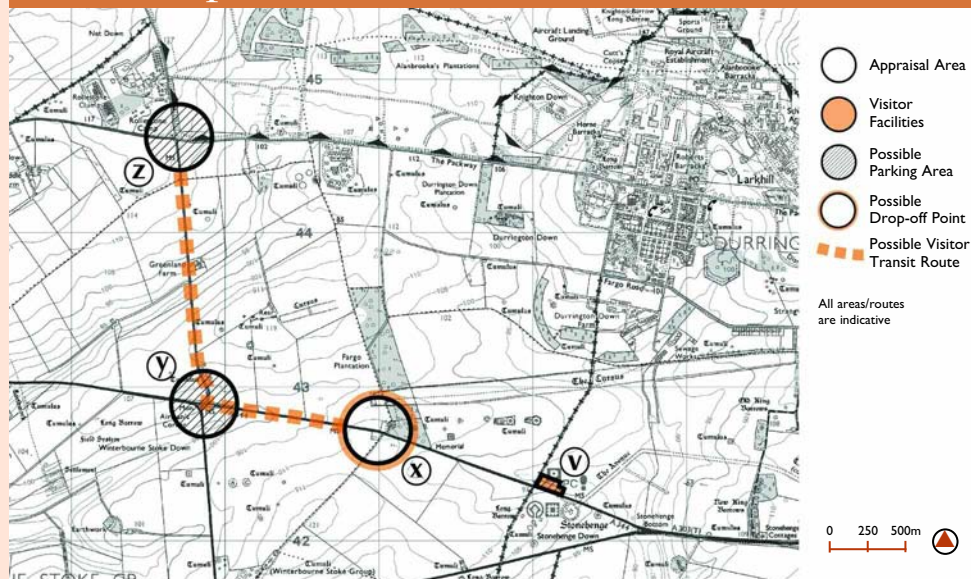
There are no habitats or species of nature conservation importance within the current site.

Local community

There are no residents in close proximity.

Option 1

Redevelopment of the current visitor facilities site



Ia – redevelopment of the current site with visitor facilities and parking within existing footprint (Area V).

Ib – visitor facilities within the existing footprint, parking at Airman's Corner Junction (Area Y) and a 'park and ride' link to Fargo Plantation (Area X).

Ic – visitor facilities within the existing footprint, parking at Rollestone Camp Junction (Area Z) and a 'park and ride' link to Fargo Plantation (Area X).

Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site

The visitor facilities would remain as a significant adverse impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS, although this impact could be reduced with the removal of the A344 and - for Ib and Ic - the relocation of parking. For Ib and Ic the drop-off point at Fargo Plantation would need to be sensitively designed and positioned to avoid adverse impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value.

Visitor access and experience

For Ia visitors would approach the Stones across grassland from the facilities and parking about 100m away.

For Ib and Ic visitors would approach the Stones across grassland or along the line of the present A344 from Fargo Plantation, about 1.25km away. The walk to the Stones would be preceded by a 'park and ride' journey of 1.25km from Airman's Corner or 3km from Rollestone Camp.

The distance to the parking area from the A303 via Longbarrow Crossroads would be about 3.5km for the current visitor facilities site, 1.5km for Airman's Corner or 3.25km for Rollestone Camp.

Environmental and other impacts

Landscape

Area V is within the WHS and the Special Landscape Area (SLA). Area Y (parking for Ib) is within the SLA, with the NE and SE quadrants within the WHS. Area Z (parking for Ic) is within the SLA (SE, SW and NW quadrants) and the WHS (SE quadrant only). Area X (drop-off point for Ib and Ic) is within the WHS and SLA.

Setting of the Stones

For Ia the facilities and parking would be in the immediate setting of the Stonehenge monument. For Ib and Ic only the facilities would be in the immediate setting of the Stonehenge monument.

Historic environment

There are seven Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 250m of Area V. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area Y, but six within 250m of the area. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area Z, but four within 250m of the area. There are six Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area X (three in the NE quadrant, two in the NW quadrant, one in the SW quadrant) and six more within 250m of the area (all to the NE).

Ecology

There are no habitats or species of nature conservation importance within Area V. Areas Y and X support some habitats and species of nature conservation importance. Area Z supports some habitats and species of nature conservation importance, and is within (NE quadrant) or close to (SE, SW and NW quadrants) areas designated for their conservation value.

Local community

There are no residents in close proximity to the current site. For Ib the parking area would be in proximity to residents of Greenland Farm (about 1km). For Ic the parking area would be in proximity to occupants at Rollestone Camp (less than 250m), and residents of Greenland Farm (750m) and Middle Farm (1km), with the 'park and ride' route passing close to Greenland Farm.

Option 2

Durrington Down Farm



2a – visitor facilities and parking in the area around Durrington Down Farm (Area W).

2b – visitor facilities in the area around Durrington Down Farm with a 'park and ride' link to parking at Rollestone Camp Junction (Area Z).

Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site

The removal of the visitor facilities and parking from their current location, along with the A344 adjacent to Stonehenge, would have a positive impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. New facilities and/ or parking at Durrington Down Farm would present a significant design challenge to avoid adverse impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value.

Visitor access and experience

Visitors would approach the Stones across grassland or along Byway 12 from Durrington Down Farm, about 1.25km away. If parking is at Rollestone Camp then the walk to the Stones would be preceded by a 'park and ride' journey of 3.5km.

The distance from the A303 via Longbarrow Crossroads would be about 6.75km for parking at Durrington Down Farm or 3.25km for a parking area at Rollestone Camp.

Environmental and other impacts

Landscape

Area W is within the WHS and immediately outside the Special Landscape Area (SLA). Area Z (parking for 2b) is within the SLA (SE, SW and NW quadrants) and the WHS (SE quadrant only).

Setting of the Stones

The facilities and parking would be outside the immediate setting of the Stonehenge monument.

Historic environment

There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument within Area W (west of Byway 12) and eight more within 250m of the area (five to the west and three to the east). There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area Z but there are four within 250m of the area.

Ecology

Area W supports some habitats and species of nature conservation importance. Area Z supports some habitats and species of nature conservation importance, and is within (NE quadrant) or close to (SE, SW and NW quadrants) areas designated for their conservation value.

Local community

There are residential buildings adjacent to Durrington Down Farm, and residents of Larkhill about 500m away. For 2b the parking area would be in proximity to occupants at Rollestone Camp (less than 250m), and residents of Greenland Farm (750m) and Middle Farm (1km), with the 'park and ride' route passing close to residents at Larkhill and Durrington Down Farms.

Option 3

Fargo Plantation



3a – visitor facilities and parking in the area around the A344 at Fargo Plantation (Area X).

3b – visitor facilities in the area around the A344 at Fargo Plantation, with a 'park and ride' link to parking at Airman's Corner Junction (Area Y).

3c – visitor facilities in the area around the A344 at Fargo Plantation, with a 'park and ride' link to parking at Rollestone Camp Junction (Area Z).

Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site

The removal of the visitor facilities and parking from their current location, along with the A344 adjacent to Stonehenge, would have a positive impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. New facilities and/ or parking at Fargo Plantation would present a significant design challenge to avoid adverse impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value.

Visitor access and experience

Visitors would approach the Stones across grassland or along the line of the present A344 from Fargo Plantation, about 1.25km away. For 3b and 3c the walk to the Stones would be preceded by a 'park and ride' journey of 1.25km from Airman's Corner or 3km from Rollestone Camp.

The distance from the A303 via Longbarrow Crossroads would be about 2.5km for parking at Fargo Plantation, 1.5km for a parking area at Airman's Corner or 3.25km for a parking area at Rollestone Camp.

Environmental and other impacts

Landscape

Area X is within the WHS and Special Landscape Area (SLA). Area Y (parking for 3b) is within the SLA, with the NE and SE quadrants within the WHS. Area Z (parking for 3c) is within the SLA (SE, SW and NW quadrants) and the WHS (SE quadrant only).

Setting of the Stones

The facilities and parking would be outside the immediate setting of the Stonehenge monument.

Historic environment

There are six Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area X (three in the NE quadrant, two in the NW quadrant, one in the SW quadrant) and six more within 250m of the area (all to the NE). There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area Y but six within 250m of the area. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area Z but four within 250m of the area.

Ecology

Areas X and Y support some habitats and species of nature conservation importance. Area Z supports some habitats and species of nature conservation importance, and is within (NE quadrant) or close to (SE, SW and NW quadrants) areas designated for their conservation value.

Local community

There are no residents in close proximity to Fargo Plantation. For 3b the parking area would be in proximity to residents of Greenland Farm (about 1km). For 3c the parking area would be in proximity to occupants at Rollestone Camp (less than 250m), and residents of Greenland Farm (750m) and Middle Farm (1km), with the 'park and ride' route passing close to Greenland Farm.

Option 4

Airman's Corner



Visitor facilities and parking in the area around Airman's Corner Junction (Area Y) with a 'park and ride' link to the area around Fargo Plantation (Area X).

Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site

The removal of the visitor facilities and parking from their current location, along with the A344 adjacent to Stonehenge, would have a positive impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. The 'park and ride' drop-off point at Fargo Plantation would need to be sensitively designed and positioned to avoid adverse impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value.

Visitor access and experience

Visitors would approach the Stones across grassland or along the line of the present A344 from Fargo Plantation, about 1.25km away. The walk to the Stones would be preceded by a 'park and ride' journey of 1.25km.

The distance to the parking area from the A303 via Longbarrow Crossroads would be about 1.5km.

Environmental and other impacts

Landscape

Area Y is within the SLA, with the NE and SE quadrants within the WHS. Area X (drop-off point) is within the WHS and SLA.

Setting of the Stones

The facilities and parking would be outside the immediate setting of the Stonehenge monument.

Historic environment

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area Y but six within 250m of the area. There are six Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area X (three in the NE quadrant, two in the NW quadrant, one in the SW quadrant) and six more within 250m of the area.

Ecology

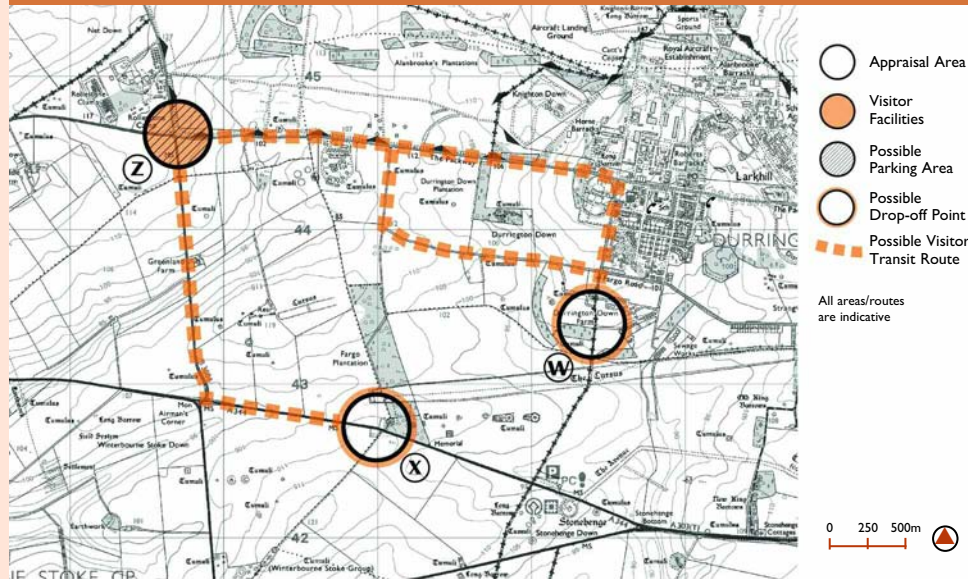
Areas Y and X support some habitats and species of nature conservation importance.

Local community

The facilities and parking area would be in proximity to residents of Greenland Farm (about 1km). There are no residents in close proximity to Fargo Plantation.

Option 5

Rollestone Camp



5a – visitor facilities and parking in the area around Rollestone Camp Junction (Area Z) with a ‘park and ride’ link to the area around the A344 at Fargo Plantation (Area X).

5b – visitor facilities and parking in the area around Rollestone Camp Junction with a ‘park and ride’ link to the area around Durrington Down Farm (Area W).

5c – visitor facilities and parking in the area around Rollestone Camp Junction, with ‘park and ride’ links to both Fargo Plantation and Durrington Down Farm.

Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site

The removal of the visitor facilities and parking from their current location, along with the A344 adjacent to Stonehenge, would have a positive impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. The ‘park and ride’ drop-off points at Durrington Down Farm and/or Fargo Plantation would need to be sensitively designed and positioned to avoid adverse impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value.

Visitor access and experience

Visitors would approach the Stones across grassland or along Byway 12 from Durrington Down Farm, or across grassland or along the line of the present A344 from Fargo Plantation, both of which are about 1.25km away. The walk to the Stones would be preceded by a ‘park and ride’ journey of 3km to Fargo Plantation or 3.5km to Durrington Down Farm.

The distance to Rollestone Camp from the A303 via Longbarrow Crossroads would be about 3.25km.

Environmental and other impacts

Landscape

Area Z is within the Special Landscape Area (SLA) (SE, SW and NW quadrants) and the WHS (SE quadrant only). Area X is within the WHS and SLA. Area W is within the WHS and immediately outside the SLA.

Setting of the Stones

The facilities and parking would be outside the immediate setting of the Stonehenge monument.

Historic environment

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area Z but four within 250m of the area. There are six Scheduled Ancient Monuments within Area X (three in the NE quadrant, two in the NW quadrant, one in the SW quadrant) and six more within 250m of the area (all to the NE). There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument within Area W (west of Byway 12) and eight more within 250m of the area (five to the west and three to the east).

Ecology

Area Z supports some habitats and species of nature conservation importance, and is within (NE quadrant) or close to (SE, SW and NW quadrants) areas designated for their conservation value. Areas X and W support some habitats and species of nature conservation importance.

Local community

The facilities and parking area would be in proximity to occupants at Rollestone Camp (less than 250m), and residents of Greenland Farm (750m) and Middle Farm (1km). There are residential buildings adjacent to the drop-off point at Durrington Down Farm, and residents of Larkhill about 500m away, and the ‘park and ride’ route would pass close to residents of Larkhill and Durrington Down Farms. There are no residents in close proximity to the drop-off at Fargo Plantation, but the ‘park and ride’ route would pass close to residents at Greenland Farm.

Closure of the A344



Daily traffic flows on the roads network near Stonehenge if nothing is changed © Copyright Highways Agency

Highways Agency review of the A344 closure

The closure of the A344/A303 junction, whilst bringing desirable environmental and safety benefits (see page 13) for the Stonehenge WHS, would affect the operation of the local road network. The Highways Agency has assessed the likely effects of closing the junction, compared with the effects of leaving the A344 open (the 'do nothing' scenario).¹

The existing situation – the 'do nothing' scenario

The existing network illustrated above shows actual traffic flows in 2006 and forecast flows in 2012 (the assumed year of opening for new visitor facilities) and 2027 (15 years after opening) without any changes to the A303.



A344/A303 junction at Stonehenge Bottom

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Traffic flows are forecast to generally increase in the future and, with no changes to the existing network, the following effects are likely:

- The flows on the A303 are likely to increase, but to a lesser degree to the east of the A344 junction, as this section of single carriageway has already reached capacity for much of the day.
- The flows on the A344 by contrast reduce. This is due to the fact that the increasing traffic on the A303 makes it more difficult for traffic exiting the A344 to join the A303. This leads to traffic diverting to alternative routes.
- Some traffic diverting from the A344 will take the A360 to the A303 via Longbarrow Crossroads. However, capacity restraints at Longbarrow will affect the attractiveness of that route.
- Other traffic diverting from the A344 will take The Packway.

¹ See HA report: A303 Stonehenge Improvement Scheme Review Partial Solutions, A303/A344 Junction Closure September 2007. (www.highways.gov.uk/stonehenge)

Closure of the A344

Closing the A344/A303 junction

The works required for the closure of the A344/A303 junction and a short section of the A344 up to the existing Visitor Centre would be relatively simple. The redundant carriageway would be removed and the land returned to grassland.



A344/A303 now

© Copyright Highways Agency



A344/A303 junction after environmental improvements

© Copyright Highways Agency

Assuming access to the visitor facilities remains from the A344 via Aiman's Corner, the traffic impacts of closing the junction without undertaking any other network changes are:

- Additional traffic on the A303 approach to Longbarrow Crossroads from the east. This is the traffic that was previously turning right into the A344 and includes the traffic going to the Stonehenge visitor facilities.
- Increased traffic on the A360 between Aiman's Corner and Longbarrow Crossroads.
- More queuing at Longbarrow Crossroads at peak times and extended congestion on the A303 due to the effect of switching traffic to the A303/A360 from the A303/A344 route. The capacity of the roundabout at Longbarrow would be reached earlier (probably by 2/3 years) than otherwise would be the case.
- An increase in traffic along The Packway, particularly in the early years. However, in time (and particularly with high growth), The Packway would attract a similar amount of traffic whether the A344 is closed or not.
- Improved safety on the A303 in the vicinity of Stonehenge.



Longbarrow Crossroads

© Copyright Highways Agency

Improvements at Longbarrow Crossroads

The effects of closing the A344/A303 junction could be mitigated by small-scale improvements at Longbarrow Crossroads to increase the capacity of the roundabout junction. This would be most effective at reducing congestion at peak hours, with the following effects: ²

- Generally reduced queue lengths on the roundabout approaches at peak times.
- The reduced congestion would attract more traffic back to the A360 southbound. This would most likely be as a result of traffic diverting from the A36/A303, reducing the flow on the A303 through Winterbourne Stoke.
- There would be small reductions in traffic flow on The Packway in the morning peak but the improvements would make little difference outside peak hours.

Extra capacity could be achieved through additional approach lanes on the A303 westbound entry to the roundabout and on the A360 southbound entry, along with increased circulatory width of carriageway around the roundabout. Such improvements could be achieved within the existing highway boundaries.

² See HA report: A303 Stonehenge Improvement Scheme Review Partial Solutions Options Analysis February 2008. (www.highways.gov.uk/stonehenge)

Closure of the A344



Airman's Corner Junction © Copyright Highways Agency

Improvements at Airman's Corner

The closure of the A344/A303 junction would cause a change in traffic movements at the A360/A344 Airman's Corner junction.

At present the main traffic movement through the junction is along the A360/A344, which is the priority route through the staggered crossroads layout. With the closure of the A344 the main traffic movement at Airman's Corner would change to a predominance of turning movements between the A360 to the west and the A360 to the south.

The junction layout would need to be altered through agreement with Wiltshire County Council to accommodate safely the new predominant movement.

Further work will be needed to determine the 'optimum' solution for Airman's Corner. The final layout could be affected by the decision as to where the new visitor facilities and parking will be best located.

Rollestone Camp Junction, B3086

Changes at the B3086/The Packway/ Rollestone Camp Junction may also have to be considered through agreement with Wiltshire County Council depending on the chosen solution for the visitor facilities/car parking.



Rollestone Camp Junction © Copyright Highways Agency

Stonehenge at sunrise © Copyright English Heritage



What happens next

Have your say

Use the questionnaire inside the back cover of this booklet to tell us your preferred and least preferred options for the new visitor facilities. Please also give us your general comments on the Environmental Improvements proposals.

You can also send your comments by email to **stonehenge.environmentalimprovements@uk.grayling.com** or by post to:

Stonehenge Environmental Improvements
c/o English Heritage
1 Bedford Avenue
London WC1B 3AU

by 17 October 2008

There is a separate questionnaire for the World Heritage Site Management Plan revision inside the front cover.

What will happen to the consultation responses?

All of the consultation responses will be collected and analysed at the end of the consultation period on 17 October 2008. English Heritage will use this information, along with the continuing technical assessment of the proposals, to produce a report for the Stonehenge Project Board. That report will help Ministers to decide on a preferred location for the new visitor facilities and on the form that any changes to the roads will take, and their decision will be announced before the end of 2008.

Timetable for environmental improvements

As soon as the preferred location has been decided, the process of designing the scheme for new visitor facilities and any changes to the roads will begin.

A planning application will be submitted in summer 2009, when there will be further public consultation on the scheme.

Construction work is expected to take place in 2011 with new visitor facilities scheduled to open in early 2012, in time for the London Olympics.

If you would like this document in a different format, please contact 0845 026 4409.

English Heritage
1 Waterhouse Square
138-142 Holborn
London
EC1N 2ST

www.stonehengeconsultation.org

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