

A303 Stonehenge: Amesbury to Berwick Down

Fact sheet - historic environment



The historic environment covers anything created by humans throughout history, whether visible or underground, from historic buildings to archaeological sites and landscapes.

Building a new road changes the landscape around it. In some cases, this might affect important archaeology and historical features, altering the relationships between them, or even removing them entirely. Once the road is up and running, the sight and sound of traffic can also affect the features in the area, by changing the way that we experience them.

The Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site (WHS) – one of the UK’s most iconic locations—sits within the area covered by the A303 Stonehenge project, so it’s crucial that we carefully consider the historic environment as the project develops.

Our challenge

The A303 Stonehenge project is unlike any other road scheme in the UK.

The WHS is a unique archaeological area of international importance. The landscape contains a complex blend of prehistoric archaeology, including hundreds of burial mounds and numerous ceremonial sites and henge monuments. The relationships between these sites are extremely important and help us to understand why and how they were built and how people might have used them.

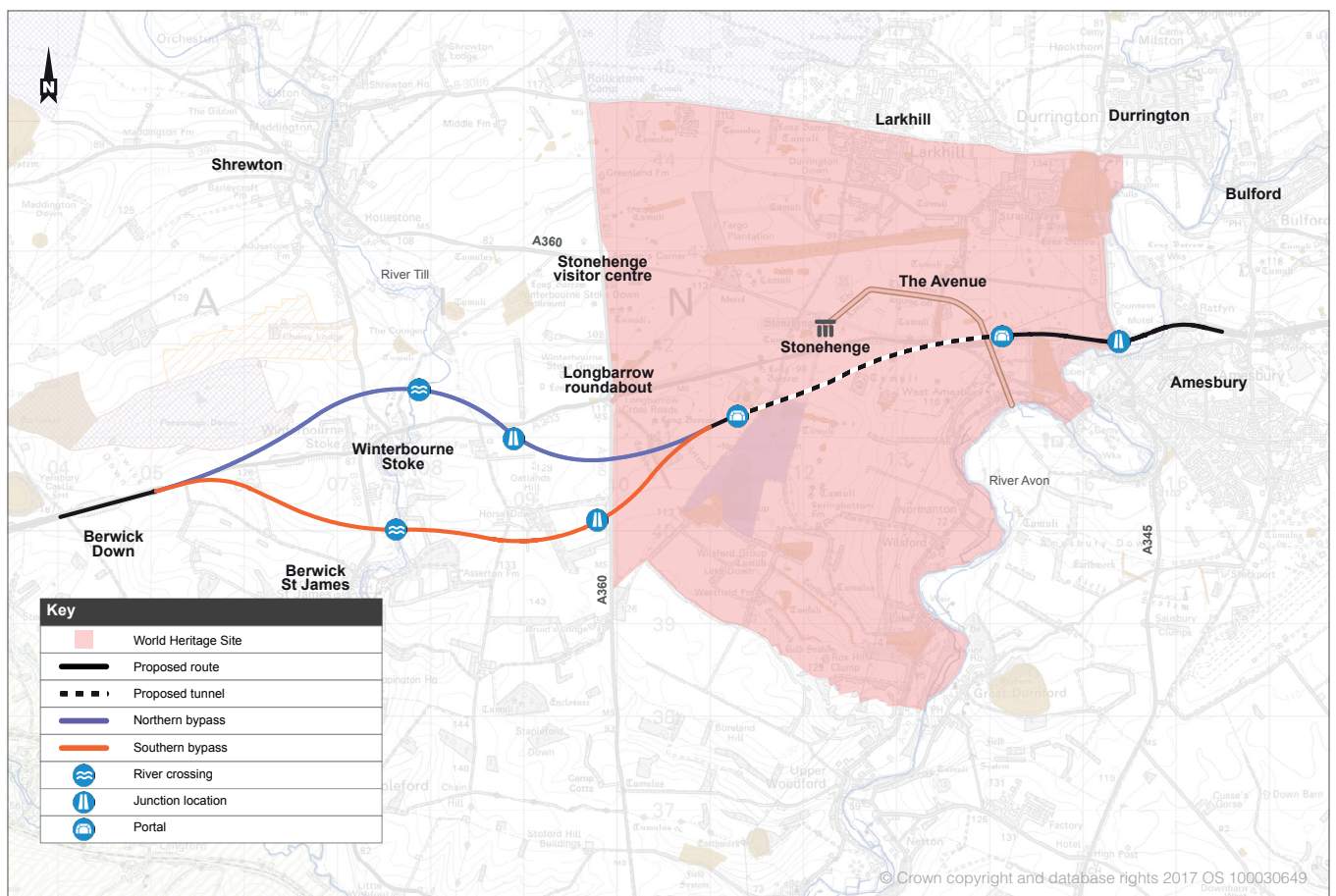
UNESCO have already identified the project as one of global interest, with the potential to set the bar for major infrastructure projects delivered around WHSs across the world. So, delivering the A303 will need a sensitive approach to the archaeological landscape, carefully considering the impacts of different options and finding creative ways of facing these challenges.



Our approach

One of our main aims is to enhance the WHS, reducing the impact of the current A303, which runs just 165m away from Stonehenge itself. A tunnel would help to avoid the area around Stonehenge, taking traffic away from the stones, improving their setting and reconnecting the southern and northern parts of the WHS. We've completed a number of archaeological surveys around the WHS, finding previously unknown sites and confirming our knowledge about others. This has informed the choice of routes and will help us as the design process continues.

Professional archaeologists are a key part of our design team, making sure that the potential impacts on the WHS are understood and considered, as ideas, approaches and solutions are developed. We're also working to reflect the surrounding landscape in our designs, for features like the tunnel portals or approach roads. In addition to our archaeological experts, we've been working closely with major heritage organisations like Historic England, English Heritage Trust, the National Trust and UNESCO, so that they can review our progress and inform our designs. This will continue as we move forward on the project.



Contact us

Visit our webpages for information about the schemes and to find out when you can have your say, or call or email us to find out more.

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Highways England creative job number M160393

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Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ
Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales
number 09346363