

Press release: PM statement on EU Withdrawal Bill: 12 Sept 2017

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Earlier this morning Parliament took a historic decision to back the will of the British people and vote for a bill which gives certainty and clarity ahead of our withdrawal from the European Union.

Although there is more to do, this decision means we can move on with negotiations with solid foundations and we continue to encourage MPs from all parts of the UK to work together in support of this vital piece of legislation.

Press release: CMA accepts Wood Amec remedy proposals

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) began investigating the merger of the 2 companies in June 2017. Both provide engineering services to the Upstream Offshore oil and gas sector in the UK Continental Shelf.

After the CMA found that competition concerns could arise in the supply of engineering and construction services and operation and maintenance services, the companies offered to sell Amec Foster Wheeler's businesses in these areas to address the CMA's concerns.

The CMA found that this proposal would, in principle, be suitable to address its competition concerns and opened a public consultation in August. Following this, the CMA is now satisfied the issues it identified will be fully addressed by the remedy offered. The CMA has therefore decided that the merger will not be referred for an in-depth, phase 2, investigation.

Kate Collyer, Deputy Chief Economic Adviser and decision maker in this case, said:

It is crucial that competition is maintained in this major UK industry. We have therefore conducted a thorough investigation into this merger, and believe that the sale of Amec Foster Wheeler's assets will address our concerns and ensure that customers in the North Sea continue to be able to obtain competitive bids.

The CMA is committed to conducting merger investigations as quickly and efficiently as possible. In this case, the CMA worked with the companies on a 'twin-track' approach, engaging with them on shaping remedies that might mitigate competition concerns, if any were found, whilst still investigating whether such concerns arose.

This enabled us to promptly reach a final view on the proposed remedy after competition concerns were identified, helping to reduce uncertainty about the potential impact of the merger for customers within this industry.

Amec Foster Wheeler's relevant assets will now be sold to a purchaser approved by the CMA.

All information relating to the investigation is available on the [case page](#).

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For more information on the CMA see our [homepage](#) or follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Sign up to our [email alerts](#) to receive updates on merger cases.
 2. Merger review in the UK is primarily the responsibility of the CMA, which is an independent public authority. For more information on how we undertake such work read our [Quick Guide to UK Merger Assessment](#).
 3. Under paragraphs 8.7 and 8.8 of the [CMA's Mergers – Jurisdiction and Procedure Guidance](#), the merger parties can engage with the CMA's case team on remedies prior to any decision for reference. However, the case team is not able formally to agree with the parties whether a particular package of undertakings in lieu would or would not be sufficient. This is because the final decisions on whether, first, the duty to refer arises and, (if it does) second, whether to accept undertakings in lieu are not to be pre-judged and remain with the phase 1 decision maker.
 4. The text of this decision will be placed on the [case page](#) in due course.
 5. Media enquiries should be directed to press@cma.gsi.gov.uk or journalists can call 07774 134814.
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Speech: Until the regime sees that diplomacy, not duplicity is the way forward, we must use all of our diplomatic tools to bring pressure to bear on Pyongyang

Thank you Mr President.

Just over a week ago, North Korea sent a brazen message of provocation, a message of belligerence – a sixth nuclear test, carried out once again in clear contempt for the Security Council, the region, and the international community.

Today, through the unanimous adoption of the resolution, we have sent a message of our own in response. Through this vote we have made clear that we will not stand idly by in the face of such aggression. That we will not be intimidated or cowed. That we will match North Korean provocations with clear, targeted consequences.

Today we have enacted strategic measures that together with existing obligations add up to the most stringent United Nations sanctions regime placed on any nation in the 21st century.

We have enacted measures today that show our determination to act. This resolution does three big things. First it will curtail gas, petrol and oil imports. Second, it will ban all textile exports, taking hundreds of millions of dollars from revenues that the North Korean regime uses to fund its nuclear and missile programmes. Third it will end future work authorisations of North Korean overseas labourers, stopping a sickening industry built on modern slavery, and used to divert funds to the regime.

So make no mistake we are tightening the screw. And we stand ready to tighten it further. Until the regime sees that diplomacy, not duplicity, is the way forward, we must use all of our diplomatic tools to bring pressure to bear on Pyongyang.

Some observers doubted that this Council would be willing or able to react speedily or in unison or even at all to this new provocation. With this Resolution we have shown that we are united in condemning this illegal and reckless act, and that we are determined that the North Korean regime change course.

The unanimous agreement today of the states around this table is a powerful step. We now call on all states to redouble their sanctions implementation, taking note of the decisions that we have made today under international law.

Mr President,

North Korea is engaged in a dangerous policy of provocation. Our role as a Council, and as an international community, is to constrain them so that they change course. Sanctions are a vital part of this effort.

It is the regime that bears full responsibility for the measures that we have enacted today. It is their continued, illegal and aggressive actions that have brought us here. Such actions are in no way a proportionate response to the legitimate defensive military exercises of South Korea and the United States.

There is a way out. Diplomacy can end this crisis. First North Korea must change its reckless course. There must be an end to the tests, an end to the provocations. Until North Korea changes course, we must maintain the maximum pressure possible.

Through this resolution today, we have done just that. The onus now falls on Pyongyang to do the right thing. To step back from confrontation, and to step towards de-escalation.

Thank you.

[News story: Major boost for the south-west as plans published for £1.6 billion A303 Stonehenge upgrade](#)

The route for the £1.6 billion A303 upgrade near Stonehenge, a key part of the 'South West expressway', has today (12 September 2017) been published by Transport Secretary Chris Grayling.

Linking the M3 in the south-east and the M5 in the south-west, the 'expressway' will upgrade this key route and improve journey times for millions of people. This major investment will support economic growth and tourism in an area where congestion and slow journeys have long had a negative impact on the region's economy.

A tunnel near Stonehenge will remove the traffic blight on local communities and enhance the famous landmark. It will reconnect the 2 halves of the 6,500 acre World Heritage site which is currently split by the road, and remove the sight and sound of traffic from the Stonehenge landscape.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

This government is taking the big decisions for Britain's future

and this major investment in the south-west will provide a huge boost for the region.

Quicker journey times, reduced congestion and cleaner air will benefit people locally and unlock growth in the tourism industry.

The scheme will also support 120,000 extra jobs and 100,000 new homes across the region, helping us build a country that works for everyone.

The A303 upgrade between Amesbury and Berwick Down is a key part of the government's £15 billion road strategy – the biggest investment in roads in a generation. The scheme includes the 1.8 mile-long tunnel, a free-flowing dual carriageway and a much-needed bypass north of Winterbourne Stoke.

Highways England chief executive Jim O'Sullivan said:

Highways England is committed to delivering a high quality, modern road on this vital route between the south-west and the rest of the country.

The A303 and the World Heritage site has suffered from congestion for many years. This scheme will enhance, protect and restore tranquillity to one of the UK's most iconic landscapes.

We have listened to feedback from consultation and believe this preferred route will help improve traffic flow, reduce rat-running on the surrounding roads, bringing improvements to local communities and benefits to the south-west economy.

A [public consultation was held earlier this year which attracted considerable feedback from thousands of individuals and organisations](#). Following this and further engagement with local communities, heritage groups, archaeologists, historians and engineers, Highways England has modified the plans, including moving the position of one of the entrances to the tunnel to avoid conflicting with the solstice alignment. The route ensures the Stonehenge World Heritage site will be protected and enhanced for people from across the world to enjoy.

Secretary of State for Culture, Karen Bradley said:

Stonehenge has captured the imagination of people around the world for centuries and is a site of global importance. With over 1 million visitors a year it is one of the jewels in the UK's crown and it is important that we preserve it for generations to come. This investment from the government will help make the visitor experience much more enjoyable and this is good news for local residents and businesses who will benefit from the new route.

The government will also continue to work closely with key heritage bodies to ensure this scheme respects and protects the Stonehenge World Heritage site.

The government is committed to upgrading all remaining sections of the A303 between the M3 and M5 to dual carriageway standard, starting with 3 schemes: one at Stonehenge, one between Sparkford and Ilchester and the third on the A358 between Taunton and Southfields.

The preferred route includes:

- 8 miles of free-flowing, high-quality dual carriageway
- a tunnel at least 1.8 miles long underneath the World Heritage site, closely following the existing A303 route, but a further 50 metres away from the monument, avoiding important archaeological sites and avoiding intrusion on the view of the setting sun from Stonehenge during the winter solstice
- a new bypass to the north of the village of Winterbourne Stoke
- junctions with the A345 and A360 either side of the World Heritage site.

Details of the [preferred route are available on the scheme webpage](#).

[News story: Thousands of commuters to benefit from UK-built river boats with wifi](#)

Tens of thousands more people will be able to commute by modern river boats kitted out with the latest technology.

In a boost for the UK maritime industry, British shipbuilding company Wight Shipyard has announced recent orders worth £20 million for 4 boats for the Isle of Wight and London.

The news comes during [London International Shipping Week 2017](#), which will showcase the UK's thriving maritime industry to ministers, industry leaders and delegates from around the world.

The shipyard employs 75 full time workers and their construction programme supports 10 apprentices, who begin training this month – backing the government's Industrial Strategy to boost jobs, growth and productivity across the country.

Two of the new 'Hunt Class Mark 2' boats will serve millions of London commuters a year as they travel with MBNA Thames Clippers along the capital's

famous river. The other two will join the Red Funnel high speed passenger service operating between Southampton and the Isle of Wight.

The British-built boats can carry some 14,000 commuters a day during rush hour and are more environmentally-friendly, with new modern engines burning less fuel and emitting less CO2. They are also fitted with wifi and USB phone chargers for a better passenger experience.

The shipyard has also secured its first multi-million pound export order for a 250-passenger river boat to operate for Twin City Liner – a commuter service running on the Danube between Vienna and Bratislava, joining two European capital cities.

Transport Minister John Hayes said:

As we celebrate London International Shipping Week 2017, we proudly show off our thriving shipping sector and world-leading manufacturing skills and talent.

Countless more commuters will be able to travel in modern, fully kitted out boats built in the UK – helping to slash congestion on our roads and railways.

What's more, the world is watching and wanting our iconic boats, Wight Shipyard deserve all of our thanks and congratulations for its first international order.

Not only are companies like Wight Shipyard providing specialist training opportunities, they are helping boost our vital maritime sector and the UK economy – especially important making the pace as we look beyond the bureaucracy of the EU to our European friends across the world.

Peter Morton, CEO Wight Shipyard said:

I am extremely proud of my colleagues at Wight Shipyard who I am convinced now build the finest high-speed ferries in the world. Domestic orders for the Red Funnel and MBNA Thames Clippers which we secured against international competition, as well as our first export order to Twin City Liner in Vienna, make the prospects for the Wight Shipyard, jobs on the island and the wider maritime sector in the UK look healthy. Our strong orderbook is a big vote of confidence for the industry and the UK economy.

Sean Collins, CEO at MBNA Thames Clippers

I am extremely pleased that MBNA Thames Clippers were able to recently place an order with a British yard for our 2 new vessels,

Mercury and Jupiter Clipper. These vessels are now in full service and delivering a new level of experience to our customers. I have great confidence in the future success of Wight Ship Yard and hope that we can place further orders with them to satisfy the continued growth opportunities open to our business and the industry. Furthermore the new builds have provided significant career opportunities at MBNA Thames Clippers, in particular within Fleet Operations and Engineering, these include several apprenticeships. I believe that London International Shipping Week places great focus on our maritime sector and the valuable contribution of its people and skills to our economy.

Kevin George, CEO of Red Funnel

The construction of Red Jet 6 by Wight Ship Yard in 2016 marked the return of building large high speed aluminium catamarans to the Isle of Wight and to the UK after a gap of 15 years. We are delighted that this investment provided the catalyst for establishing a world class manufacturer that has aided the local and UK economy. Based on the quality and efficiency of the new vessel, which is part of our Red Jet service that carries over 1 million passengers to and from the Isle of Wight per year, we have recently announced the order for a further vessel from Wight Ship Yard to join our fleet in 2018.