

Press release: Archaeological survey work to continue on A303 Stonehenge scheme

The survey work, which includes surface artefact collection, topsoil tests and trial trenching, is part of the company's continuing commitment to preserving the World Heritage Site and in particular its Outstanding Universal Value.

Highways England Project Director Derek Parody said:

Heritage is very much at the heart of our work at Stonehenge.

As well as removing the traffic bottleneck at Stonehenge and addressing the rat-running issue through local villages, the proposed scheme will remove the sight and sound of traffic from the iconic monument and reduce intrusion in the wider World Heritage Site landscape.

The environmental, archaeological and geophysical surveys we have been carrying out since 2016, and our review of existing surveys, have added to our knowledge and understanding of this unique landscape and helped us develop the design of our preferred route.

Our continuing archaeological survey work, which we are carrying out with experts in the field, will ensure we gather vital information about the environment and archaeology to inform the project as it progresses.

Among the experts is the Stonehenge Scientific Committee, a body of leading independent archaeologists, who have advised on the ongoing survey work, and will continue to do so as the company develops the details of the scheme.

The preferred route for the £1.6 billion A303 upgrade between Amesbury and Berwick Down was announced in September. It includes a free-flowing dual carriageway with a tunnel at least 1.8 miles long and a much-needed bypass north of Winterbourne Stoke.

Following public consultation earlier in the year and further engagement with local communities, heritage groups, archaeologists, historians and engineers, the preferred route was chosen so that the route now closely follows the existing A303 through the World Heritage Site.

This alignment avoids important archaeological sites and intrusion on the view of the setting sun from Stonehenge during the winter solstice.

The Government, as part of its £15 billion road strategy, is committed to

upgrading all remaining sections of the A303 between the M3 and M5 to a high quality dual carriageway standard, starting with three schemes: one at Stonehenge, one between Sparkford and Ilchester and the third on the A358 between the M5 at Taunton and the A303 Southfields Roundabout.

Highways England plans to hold a statutory public consultation in early 2018, and in the meantime, details of the preferred route are available on the [scheme consultation page](#).

Ahead of Friday's Winter Solstice event at Stonehenge, Highways England has issued [travel advice](#) to drivers planning to travel on the A303.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.