

[A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling granted development consent](#)

Press release

Today, Friday 29 January 2021, the application for the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling has been given development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport.



The Order grants development consent for a continuous dual carriageway on the A303 linking the Podimore Roundabout and the Sparkford Bypass. The Proposed Development would also involve the removal of at-grade junctions and direct accesses.

The Secretary of State has determined, following consideration of the report of the Examining Authority which conducted the Examination of the Application, that development consent should be granted.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Highways England on 27 July 2018 and accepted for examination on 23 August 2018. Following an Examination during which the public, Statutory Consultees and Interested Parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 12 September 2019. The Secretary of State extended the deadline for the decision to 29 January 2021 for him to consider responses to the further consultations and his request for comments.

This is the 101st Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and 37th transport application to have been examined by The Planning Inspectorate within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were able to participate in the six-month long examination. The Examining

Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views and the evidence gathered during the Examination before making their recommendation.”

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the project page of the [national infrastructure planning website](#).

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Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

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[Janssen publishes positive safety and efficacy data for single-dose COVID-19 vaccine](#)

- Janssen publishes phase 3 trial data from study showing positive safety and efficacy results for its single-dose COVID-19 vaccine
- Vaccine shown to be 66% effective overall in preventing coronavirus in participants
- UK has secured 30 million doses with deliveries expected to arrive this year if approved by regulators

Janssen today (29 January) published positive data from the phase 3 studies of its single-dose Covid-19 vaccine candidate, showing it to be 66% effective overall in preventing coronavirus in participants. The data did not report any significant safety concerns relating to the vaccine, with no serious adverse events in vaccine recipients.

The UK has secured 30 million doses of Janssen’s vaccine last summer, with deliveries expected to arrive in the second half of this year if approved for use by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), who will review and analyse the relevant data to see if the vaccine meets their

strict standards of safety and effectiveness.

Today's results are for Janssen's single-dose study. Phase 3 trials for the company's two-dose regimen are ongoing worldwide, including in the UK at 16 National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) sites across the country. These trials involve more than 6,000 volunteers in the UK, some of whom were recruited from the NHS Vaccines Registry.

While a single dose of a safe and effective vaccine would offer a significant advantage during a global pandemic emergency, a two-dose schedule may have the potential to offer enhanced durability in some participants. Data from this multi-country study is expected later this year.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

This is yet more promising news from Janssen following last night's positive trial results from Novavax, and news this week that Valneva have started vaccine production in Scotland.

Thanks to the life-saving work of our Vaccine Taskforce, the UK moved quickly to secure 30 million doses of Janssen's vaccine last summer. If this vaccine is authorised by our medicines regulator, we are set to receive the doses in the second half of this year.

To date, the UK government has secured early access to a bumper portfolio of 367 million vaccine doses from seven separate vaccine developers, with Janssen's vaccine the fifth to publish its phase 3 results.

The Janssen vaccine works in the same way as vaccine developed by Oxford and AstraZeneca and is designed to prompt an immune response including neutralising antibodies against the spike protein to eliminate the virus. Again similarly to the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine it can be safely stored and transported at standard refrigeration temperatures.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said

This is yet more good news from Janssen on vaccines. If this jab is approved this could significantly bolster our vaccination programme, especially as a single-dose vaccine.

Once the full data has been submitted to the regulator they will consider the evidence to determine whether the vaccine meets robust standards of safety, effectiveness and quality.

We are continuing to roll out vaccines as quickly as possible across the UK, with more than 7.4 million people given their first dose so far.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

It is encouraging to see more positive news about vaccines coming through so quickly – this time from Janssen. Only a few months ago there were doubts over whether a Covid-19 vaccine would even be possible – now five companies have published good phase 3 results, three vaccines have been approved and over seven million people have received their first jabs.

Vaccination is the way out of this pandemic, and I am once again grateful to all of the trial volunteers who have made these studies possible.

Through the Vaccines Taskforce, the UK has secured early access to 367 million doses of seven of the most promising vaccines so far. To date, the UK government has invested over £230 million into manufacturing a successful vaccine.

The UK was the first country in the world to procure, authorise and then deploy both the Oxford/AstraZeneca and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines.

Production of the Oxford University/AstraZeneca vaccine started last autumn where the bulk of the vaccine for the UK is being made in Oxfordshire and Staffordshire, with filling into vials taking place in North Wales.

In total, more than 7.4 million people across the UK have now had a least one dose of the vaccine.

- The Government's vaccine supply and scheduled deliveries will fully support our target of offering a first vaccine dose to every person in the top four priority groups by mid-February.
- The members of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) are independent experts who advise the UK on prioritisation at a population level for all vaccination and immunisation programmes; they have developed the prioritisation list of patient groups that is guiding the NHS vaccination programme and the committee keeps its advice under review and updates it as appropriate.
- The Government has a set process for approving any vaccine, with regulatory oversight provided by the MHRA. This involves MHRA approving a product licence after the applicant has generated appropriate data to demonstrate the quality, safety and efficacy of the vaccine.
- In total, the Government has procured 60 million doses of the Novavax candidate, the bulk of which will be manufactured in the UK if the vaccine is approved by regulators.
- Through the Government's Vaccine Taskforce, the UK has secured early access to 367 million doses of 7 of the most promising vaccine candidates, including:
 - BioNTech/Pfizer – Approved – 40 million doses secured
 - Oxford/Astra Zeneca – Approved – 100 million doses secured

- Moderna – Approved – 17 million doses secured
- Novavax – Phase 3 – 60 million doses secured
- Janssen – Phase 3 – 30 million doses secured
- GSK/Sanofi – Phase 1/2 – 60 million doses secured
- Valneva – Phase 1/2 – 60 million doses secured, with an option to acquire a further 130 million if the vaccine is proven to be safe, effective and suitable.
- The UK government has invested £127 million to fund a state-of-the-art manufacturing innovation centre in Braintree, Essex, in collaboration with the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, to accelerate the mass production of a successful Covid-19 vaccine in the UK. Due to open in December 2021, the centre will have the capacity to produce millions of doses of vaccines each month, ensuring the UK has the capabilities to manufacture both vaccines and advanced medicines, including for emerging diseases, far into the future.
- The government has also provided £4.7 million funding to the Catapult to ensure that the UK has the best skills and expertise in vaccine manufacturing and advanced therapies.
- The government has established a Rapid Deployment Facility with £8.75 million of investment which is manufacturing vaccines at scale.
- The government has also created the UK's first dedicated Vaccine Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (VMIC) and accelerated its development with £93 million of investment. This investment will rapidly accelerate the construction of the facility, enabling us to bring it online sooner. It will also have expanded capability for advanced vaccine process development, fill and finish and bulk manufacture. In addition, the facility's capacity will be significantly increased to be able to respond to this pandemic. Once open, it will be able to manufacture 70 million vaccines doses in just 6 months – enough for the UK population. Located in Oxfordshire, the centre will be the UK's first not-for-profit organisation established to develop and advance the mass production of vaccines. This will boost the UK's long-term capacity against future viruses.

King George III's watch at risk of leaving the country

- Bar is to allow time for a UK gallery or institution to potentially come forward and save the work for the nation
- Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said: "with the nation captivated by Bridgerton, there is no better time for this watch owned by George III to come to light"

An exceptionally rare example of a Breguet Four Minute Tourbillon watch, owned by King George III is at risk of leaving the country unless a UK buyer can be found to save the work for the nation.

Valued at £2,000,000, plus VAT of £400,000, the watch was made in 1808 for His Majesty King George III and is thought to be one of fewer than ten tourbillon watches known to exist.

Designed and made by the pre-eminent watchmaker Abraham-Louis Breguet, the watch was designed to keep good time with a mechanism to stabilise and protect the movement from being disturbed by daily use. Its austere beauty and innovative mechanism represents a pinnacle of horological technology.

The watch at risk of export was part of the collection of King George III and Queen Charlotte. The King was a keen horologist and, as well as engaging leading horologists of the day, he actively involved himself in the creation of pieces that he commissioned. The Royal Collection holds manuscripts written in the King's hand in which he details the procedure for assembling and disassembling watches.

Watches of this style are not currently represented in any public collection in the UK and this is thought to be one of less than ten known to survive.

Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said:

With the nation captivated by *Bridgerton*, there is no better time for this watch owned by George III to come to light. This rare specimen is beautifully crafted and would make an excellent addition to a UK collection. I hope that a buyer can be found so that the public can continue to be inspired by this exciting period of our history.

The Minister's decision follows the advice of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA). The committee noted that the watch was an outstanding technical accomplishment, demonstrating Breguet's skill as a watchmaker and embodied the Enlightenment values of early 19th century Britain.

Committee Member Pippa Shirley said:

This watch is a tour-de-force of the art of horology. At the very cutting edge of technology, the beauty of its mechanism is matched by the restrained elegance of its case, all of which would have been prized by its original owner King George III, an astute collector and active horologist.

This important type of watch is not currently represented in any national collection. With fewer than ten thought to still exist, the opportunity to save this pristine example for the nation, with its rich connection to the social and political history of Britain and Europe, simply must not be missed. Its loss from Britain would be a misfortune.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the watch's outstanding significance for the study of British collecting, horology and the social and political history of Britain and Europe.

The decision on the export licence application for the watch will be deferred until 28 April 2021. This may be extended until 28 September 2021 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £2,000,000 plus VAT of £400,000.

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Notes to editors

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the watch should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

Details of the watch are as follows:

- Certificate No. 4178 issued by the Breguet firm in Paris on 29 June 1808 shows that this watch was issued to their agent in London, Recordon, for King George III. The watch was signed by Recordon, rather than Breguet, perhaps to disguise the sale to the British King during the Napoleonic Wars.
- The watch is an early example incorporating Breguet's tourbillon, possibly Breguet's single greatest contribution to the field. He conceived the idea while in Switzerland between 1793-1795, in exile from the Reign of Terror in Paris. It was patented on June 26, 1801 and was finally put into commercial production in 1805.
- The escapement, the beating-heart of a watch responsible for controlling its timekeeping, is subject to varying forces as it moves about in normal use, which can adversely affect timekeeping. Breguet sought to reduce these positional errors by incorporating the tourbillon which caused the entire escapement assembly to rotate continuously through 360°, the word "tourbillon" translating as "whirlwind". Breguet excelled at knowing what his customers wanted and watches fitted with tourbillons were and are highly prized. Breguet sold 35 tourbillon watches between 1805 and 1823 and less than ten survive, thus making them rare and coveted pieces. It includes a thermometer, seconds, stopping seconds and a state of wind indicator and has a high quality gold case.

Provenance: Malcolm Gardner, lent to the Five Centuries of British Timekeeping Exhibition, 1955 Property of a Gentleman, Sotheby's 9th November 1999, lot 78 Current private collection

The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a

cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.

The [Arts Council](#) champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

Government's multimillion-pound support scheme for airports opens today

- airports and ground handlers in England will be eligible to receive up to £8 million each
- significant investment to ease pressure on airports hit by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- scheme reflects the sector's valuable contribution to the UK economy

Airports across England are set to receive a boost as the government's financial support scheme opens for applications today (29 January 2021).

Commercial airports and ground handlers will be able to apply for up to £8 million each to support with fixed costs while travel restrictions remain in place. The financial relief will help airports and ground handlers to cover losses on costs including airfield operations, contracted services such as airfield and runway maintenance, and business rate bills.

The investment will help airports and ground handlers, following the introduction of international travel restrictions designed to protect public health and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Recognising the crucial role the sector plays and its contribution to the UK economy, the scheme will support the aviation industry while the government continues to roll out its vaccination programme.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

A thriving aviation industry has been central to the success of this country and while we recognise the testing conditions airports are currently facing as a result of the pandemic, I believe that the sector will be ready to bounce back once restrictions are lifted.

Today's scheme is another step in the right direction, providing vital support for an industry that is raring to get back to

business, once it is safe to do so.

Aviation Minister Robert Courts said:

The aviation sector plays a crucial role in our economy, contributing £22 billion directly to the UK economy and supporting around half a million jobs.

We are well aware of the challenges facing the industry, however, this scheme will give airports and ground handlers in England a boost, helping them continue to prepare for a future when international travel is ready to take off again.

Airports and ground handlers will be able to [apply to the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme online](#) and, if successful, should receive their funding by the end of the financial year. The financial support scheme, which follows the government's extension of the [Job Retention Scheme](#), is open for applications from today until 21 February 2021.

The government has also provided flexibility to airlines to support them during this difficult time – extending the waiver of the '80:20' slot usage rule in time for the summer scheduling season. This removes the requirement for airlines to operate flights at least 80% of the time to retain their slots, to reflect the current low demand for air travel.

This not only helps airlines' finances but reduces the environmental impact of 'ghost flights' while ensuring that the slots allocation system works in the interests of air passengers.

The government acknowledges the severe impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the travel sector as a whole and continues to provide support while international travel is paused.

[National restrictions for England](#) introduced on 6 January 2021 continue to remain in place, meaning that everyone must stay at home unless travelling for a very limited set of reasons.

[Clothing boss jailed for failing to keep adequate accounts](#)

Ezazali Ahmed Namaji (40), of Osbourne Road in Leicester, was the sole director of Miss Pebbles Clothing Ltd, a cut and trim garment manufacturer incorporated in February 2015.

The company traded from premises in Layton Road, Leicester, and employed up to 50 people until March 2016 when Ezazali Namaji placed the business into liquidation, owing the funds to the tax authorities and a further £44,000 to other creditors.

An Insolvency Service investigation found that the defendant had not kept adequate accounting records which meant the liquidator could not ascertain where cheque and debit card withdrawals totalling more than £983,000 had been spent.

Furthermore, during its 13 months of trading, Miss Pebbles Clothing failed to pay tax liabilities of more than £300,000. Some of this amount related to national insurance and PAYE payments after it was found the director was taking contributions from employees without passing them on.

On 23 December Ezazali Namaji was sentenced to six months imprisonment at Leicester Crown Court after pleading guilty to failing to keep adequate accounting records. The defendant has also been banned from being a company director for a period of five years.

Glenn Wicks, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Ezazali Ahmed Namaji was a negligent company director who failed to maintain company records. When Miss Pebbles Ltd ceased trading, it left serious losses of almost £345,000, with more than £301,000 alone owed to the tax authorities.

Namaji's unscrupulous conduct is a serious offence and this sentence should serve as a stark warning to others that we will investigate those that think they can flout their responsibilities as directors and cause harm and loss to the public purse.

Ezazali Ahmed Namaji is of Leicester and his date of birth is May 1980.

MISS PEBBLES CLOTHING LTD Company number 09445941

The sentence result was announced at Leicester Crown Court by Mr. Recorder Upward QC

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: