

Notes

A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down

Title: Heritage Working Group - Session 5

Date: 09/12/2016 **Time:** 14:00 – 17:00 **Location:** History Centre, Chippenham

Attendees: Historic England (HiE)- Phil McMahon
 English Heritage (EH) – Heather Sebire; Jennifer Davies
 National Trust (NT)- Cassandra Genn; Dr Nicola Snashall
 Wiltshire Council (WC) - Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger
 Highways England (HE) – Stuart Wilson (EIA Advisor)
 AAJV Environment & Heritage - Liz Brown (Environmental Lead); Nick Rowson (Landscape); Andrew Croft (Heritage); Tom Marshall (Noise); Calum Ferreira (Noise).
 AAJV Stakeholder Team - Janette Shaw.

Chair: Janette Shaw

Circulation: Those above

Meeting objective(s): To get feedback on heritage implications of approach to mitigation of key impacts. Experience sound demonstration

No.	Item	Action
1.	Following introductions Janette Shaw (AAJV) explained that the sound demonstration and discussion of mitigation would be based on the working assumption of a 2.9km tunnel with eastern portal to the east of The Avenue. Stakeholder comment that the west portal location without revision/mitigation was unacceptable was acknowledged and remains to be addressed.	Stakeholder position re West Portal to be emphasised with HE.
2.	There were two sound demonstrations of existing noise levels and predicted impacts of the tunnel scheme on receptors (byway locations) at Stonehenge and due south of Stonehenge on the opposite side of the current A303 alignment. In answer to queries, Tom Marshall (AAJV) confirmed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal impact factor was distance of the receptor location from the new alignment; Estimated noise reduction at Stonehenge some 14dBA (from 60 to 46); about 10dBA at the second location (48 to 38). Stakeholders felt it important not to just represent, in demonstrations, the best locations for sound.	
3.	Nick Rowson (AAJV) gave a short powerpoint presentation picking up design responses to date on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lighting – commitment to no new lighting in the WHS/taking out existing lighting on Long Barrow roundabout. Junction design/footprint might need to be adjusted to compensate for any safety reduction. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter Solstice alignment and newly found barrows – current D61 and D62 alignments have been adjusted to improve relationship with these features. <p>NR also illustrated some of Knight’s (architects) preliminary ideas for the portals.</p>	
	The following points were raised in discussion generated by the presentation.	
4.	NS (NT) referred to the draft WHS Woodland Strategy which specifies the approach to Woodland and hedgerow management within the WHS; in particular there should be no new plantings (even at the eastern end of the scheme).	NT to supply AAJV with copy.
5.	PM (HiE) understood the balanced cut and fill approach to design but confirmed that from a heritage stakeholder standpoint any new earthworks in a landscape of earthworks would be unacceptable as a mitigation principle.	
6.	NR (AAJV) said that it would be useful to know from stakeholders where material from the tunnel might be deposited outside the World Heritage Site (WHS). MPK (WC) pointed out that there were sensitivities outside the WHS; it should be regarded as a continuum and that earthworks or planting cannot be imposed just because a location is outside the WHS.	
	Knight’s design concepts (which represent an advanced progress on the design approach to tunnel entrance and approach for the current stage) elicited the following points.	
7.	Consensus among heritage stakeholders that design should be driven by the heritage impact of the form rather than simply aesthetics and that landscape integration should take precedence over the desire to create an architectural statement. Tabled designs were from a driver’s view and whilst it was understood that some of them might be based on giving road users an iconic view to compensate for loss of the view of Stonehenge, it was necessary to understand how they worked from the wider landscape and how that decision would be arrived at. First reactions to the options presented indicated a preference for the “softer” options and rejection of the more “urban” design concepts eg the louvre design. But stakeholders emphasized that the most important consideration was the impact on the OUV of the WHS.	
8.	SW (HE) agreed that the more talk and early inputs about design, the greater likelihood of common ground. He pointed out that the illustrations were early concepts based on the aim to give a sense of place.	
9.	PM/NS/CG expressed concern that some of the design concepts were misleading as they might not be capable of being provided with lid mitigation (for the west portal).	
10.	PM (HiE) - ha ha concept of minimising land-take around entrance seems a reasonable approach. All illustrated concepts were	

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	<p>“walled” and he queried whether bare chalk might be considered as an option for the cutting; the preferred treatment being that most sympathetic to OUV and in visual/aural/landscape terms.</p> <p>IM (AAJV) advised that even the ha ha design would require a construction footprint almost as extensive as the slackened slopes. PM confirmed that construction impacts were the same as permanent from an archaeological point of view because of the shallowness of the archaeology.</p> <p>PM pointed out that OUV is as much a matter of visible relationships as it is about footprint.</p>	
11.	CG urged the prioritisation/consensus of those factors most important to the design because of the competing claims for architectural statement, biodiversity promotion, archaeology protection etc. and commented on presenting options in a single specialism group as opposed to a joint working group.	
	There followed an interactive session in which the mitigation proposals at a number of locations (shown in tabled A1 Drawings) along routes D061 (northern bypass of Winterbourne Stoke) and D062 (southern bypass of Winterbourne Stoke) were examined and stakeholder comments captured. The main general and particular points made by stakeholders (unless otherwise indicated) were:	
12.	<i>Flood risk</i> – the size, number and location of balancing ponds is a significant factor, in terms of archaeology and historic landscape impact.	
13.	<i>Planting</i> – Woodland management should be in accordance with WHS Woodland Strategy – no new planting within the WHS. No compensation woodland planting in the WHS eg for loss of bat habitat at Diamond Wood. No extension of planting (of Normanton Gorse) around west portal because of impact on intervisibility of monuments.	
14.	<i>Fencing</i> – should be post and wire	
15.	<i>Field boundary planting (to strengthen landscape pattern and provide visual mitigation)</i> – may degrade setting of scheduled monuments eg north of Lake Group Tumuli	
16.	<i>New NMU links</i> – any proposals extending access over NT land may not be straightforward depending upon proposals. General comment about how new PROW links will be delivered and the need to discuss this early in the development of the proposals. Also treatment and appearance of NMU routes – including remnant A303.	
17.	<i>Potential fill</i> – along remnant A303 and grade out A303/A344 (causeway) (SW).	
18.	<i>Re-instatement of the line of the Avenue</i> – regarded as a good thing but what does that mean and how can it be delivered? The need for careful consideration of the treatment of the line of the Avenue was discussed. With regard to NMU any access along this route would need to be on foot (i.e. no cyclists / no horses).	
19.	<i>Western Portal</i> –strong support for exploring potential for a landbridge/ canopy solution west of portal to minimise/reduce impact on WHS OUV.	Re-iterate strength of position to HE (as per Item 1)

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20.	<i>A360 Overbridge (D061 / D062)</i> – strong feedback that the A360 should be kept at grade and that any raise of the overbridge eg to accommodate reduced cuttings (A303) would increase visual impact on the attributes of OUV of the WHS (including through greater headlight penetration etc)	
21.	<i>Longbarrow Roundabout (D061)</i> – removal of lighting is beneficial and re-shaping of junction should avoid compromising the benefit to the Winterbourne Stoke barrow group. Concern that any junction would need to ensure there should be no detrimental impact on coach movements (to/from Visitor Centre) and therefore over the feasibility of a junction in this location.	
22.	<i>New road link to A360 (D061) (allowing section of A360 in WHS to be removed)</i> – considered to have potential depending on how it is realised.	
23.	<i>Southern bypass of Winterbourne Stoke (D062)</i> – mitigation potential and opportunities, including topographical integration of alignment through tighter section of the Till Valley, are highlighting the advantages of the southern bypass option over the alternative. Also felt by EH to be a better coach route.	
24.	Before winding up the meeting, JS (AAJV) indicated that the next session would be likely to cover stakeholder response to the Record of Determination and Environmental Assessment Report findings.	

NEXT MEETING : tbc

Date:

Time:

Location: