

Minutes

A303 Stonehenge – Amesbury to Berwick Down

Title:	Scientific Committee		
Date:	03 August 2018	Time:	10:30 – 14:00
Location:	Aldgate Tower, London, E1 1FE		

Attendees:

Scientific Committee

Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe
Professor Nicky Milner
Professor Oliver Craig
Dr Colin Shell
Professor Mike Parker Pearson
Dr David Field
Professor Vince Gaffney

HMAG

Dr Nicola Snashall (National Trust)
Dr Heather Sebire (English Heritage)

HE/AmW

Andrew Clark (Highways England)
Chris Moore (AmW)
Neil Macnab (AmW)

Apologies

Professor Clive Ruggles
Dr Andrew Fitzpatrick
Professor Tim Darvill
Professor Josh Pollard
Mike Pitts

Phil McMahon (Historic England)
Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger (Wiltshire Council)

Chair: Sir Barry Cunliffe

Agenda Item	Action
Welcome and Apologies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">	
Minutes and Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Minutes agreed by all present.	
Matters Arising	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">ICOMOS Mission Report has been received, DCMS attended the WHC in Bahrain representing the State Party. The WHC Decision accepts the location of the Eastern Portal, has requested that the State Party reviews the design of the Western Portal and approach road to minimise adverse impact to the WHS. Notes the proposed link between BOATs 11 and 12. The decision also accepts that alternative routes outside the WHS have been satisfactorily investigated and closed out.Supplementary Consultation is running at present. This is covered in the AmW presentation.Site visit to the western portal. The visit was restricted due to the presence of a pair of breeding Stone Curlew, however the crouched Beaker burial was viewed and its location and significance was discussed.	
Presentation by AmW and Discussion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Progress with Archaeological Evaluation<ul style="list-style-type: none">Eastern portal, Presentation covered the findings from the Draft Report, results included Mesolithic flints in a location to the north of the road in the vicinity of Countess Farm West; there was also discussion and presentation on the buried soils within the colluvial sequence as seen on site by some committee members.	

- Western Portal, Overview from initial results, draft report has not been received yet. Discussed the evaluation approach and location of specific features. The exclusion from the evaluation of a c.4m diameter hengiform monument located by multi-channel GPR and the Scheduled Wilsford G1 bowl barrow was noted. All top soil sieving was undertaken as agreed – except that the area of the former pig field has yet to be test-pitted (as agreed on site with the Scientific Committee as the conditions on site at the time were not favourable), all other areas have been completed. Several features have been identified within the area, predominately from the Beaker Period. As well as the crouched burial, Beaker period pottery, including coarse and finewares and a near-complete plain vessel has been found. A discussion was held, and a request was made for the soil sieving in the former pig area to be undertaken once sufficient time has been given to allow for establishment of suitable ground conditions.
- Proposed Scheme Design Update.
 - Presentation of the history of the development of the scheme, highlighting how heritage issues have influenced design decisions at every stage of the process.
 - Blick Mead: monitoring of the water table was requested by the SC as part of the approach to mitigate impacts of the scheme. This is being progressed through the tiered assessment approach outlined in Historic England's guidance. Monitoring will commence once land access has been agreed with the landowner. This will be for a period of at least 12 months.
 - Historic reporting/investigation indicate that the majority of soft organic material, between the River Avon bridge and the vicinity of Vespasian's Camp, was excavated in the 1960s as part of the Amesbury bypass scheme.
- The Supplementary consultation exercise was presented.
 - Covering three changes to the proposed scheme; a move east of the Rollestone Junction put forward at statutory public consultation; removal of the proposed byway link for motorised traffic; and the relocation of Green Bridge No. 4, to be within the WHS and to be up to 150m in width. It also includes further clarification of the scheme and wider area Public Rights of Way. This was in response to criticism that the previous consultation was insufficiently clear on this point.
- HIA Progress.
 - Highways England have always recognised the need for HIA, The HIA Scoping has been undertaken and presented to the mission in 2018, this was recognised by the mission advisors as being appropriate for assessment purposes.
 - The 2015 WHS Management Plan is a key document, identifying the attributes of OUV and the priorities and policies in relation to the roads within the WHS, these set the framework for the HIA.
 - Groupings of assets expressing attributes of OUV have been identified as part of the assessment approach to both HIA and EIA. A discussion was held around the groupings, the importance of the relationships between the long barrows in the western part of the WHS – the HIA needs to take account of impacts on this widespread grouping.
 - HIA should also encompass the recent trends of finds relating to the Early Bronze Age in the western approach road area, this may be related to settlement, and is therefore important in HIA terms.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The longevity of the landscape, with activity from the Mesolithic onwards needs to be considered. Attention was drawn to the significance of recent Electro-magnetic Induction (EMI) survey in the WHS – this has identified numbers of previously unknown pit features, excavation of one of these (east of King Barrow Ridge) has indicated a Mesolithic date – this emphasises the long duration of activity in the landscape. It was noted that Paul Garwood had recently presented an overview of this project and its outline findings to members of HMAG and the AmW heritage team. It was noted, however, that the Mesolithic activity is not what gives the WHS Outstanding Universal Value, it is the activity in the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age that provides this.○ Tools used to assist in the HIA assessment process were presented, including Zone of Theoretical Visibility, Dark Skies mapping, Tranquillity Model, were noted.○ Engagement with stakeholders and consultations undertaken ensure that the information is distributed and helps gain feedback and inform scheme development.○ How the current A303 impacts on the WHS. Information contained within the statement of OUV and the 2015 Management Plan highlight this issue and helps the HIA detail the impacts.○ Scheme Legacy was also covered.● Emerging HIA Conclusions<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The emerging conclusions were discussed at length and the Scientific Committee raised some points for AmW to take away and consider.	
AOB	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● None.	

Next Meeting: Doodle Poll to be set up around the End of October, this meeting will be used to discuss the final conclusions and how earlier recommendations have been incorporated, or not.