

Part Two

Key management issues and opportunities

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6.0 INTRODUCTION TO KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

6.0.1 The key purpose of the Management Plan is to set out a framework for the management of the WHS to ensure its protection and the maintenance of its OUV alongside its continued sustainable use. To achieve this, the Management Plan needs to address sustainability issues relating to visitor access, experience and use of the Site, the retention of a sustainable working agricultural economy and the long-term social, economic and amenity needs of the local community.

6.0.2 The Plan does this by identification and consideration of key issues, threats and opportunities and by the development of policies and actions to deal with them. The term 'issue' is used in the Plan in its widest sense and refers not only to problems or threats but also to changes in the management context that will need to be reflected in the management framework. Part Two of the Management Plan sets out and discusses the key issues, threats and opportunities. Unlike the previous Avebury and Stonehenge Management Plans which discussed issues in isolation in Part Two, this Plan includes discussion of both the issues and the agreed approaches and actions for addressing them in one section. This has been done to provide greater clarity regarding the rationale for the framework, a more cohesive and accessible document with greater ease of reference, and to minimise repetition as far as possible. The aims and policies without the issues are set out in Part Three for reference.

6.0.3 Part Two draws extensively on the Avebury 2005 and Stonehenge 2009 Plans which considered the key issues in some detail. It also draws on the various surveys and other work carried out in the WHS since the production of these two Plans. As with other parts of the Plan, it has benefited greatly from the expertise, knowledge and experience of the WHS partners and members of the Management Plan Project Board, Steering Committees, Stonehenge Advisory Forum, ASHRG and the WHS Partnership Panel. The wider stakeholder community has also had the opportunity to input to the process through a series of workshops and both formal and informal consultation.

6.0.4 Considerable progress has been made on many of the issues at Avebury and Stonehenge since the last Plans were published in 2005 and 2009 respectively. It may now be easier to make progress on some of the more challenging issues due to changes in the

management context. In addition, some new issues that have arisen in recent years are discussed for the first time. There have also been considerable changes in both international and national policy which will affect the future management and conservation of the site. Not least of these is adoption of the Statement of OUV by UNESCO in 2013 which serves as the focus for our management aims, policies and actions. UNESCO's increased focus on the role of the community and the relationship of WHSs to sustainable economic development has also raised new issues and opportunities that are reflected in the Plan.

6.0.5 The issues, threats and opportunities were identified for both Avebury and Stonehenge during their respective review processes. These were signed off by the Project Board and both Steering Committees. They were then reviewed and rationalised to arrive at a list of 61 key issues. These are considered sequentially, and are grouped together and discussed under the following eight themes:

- Planning and Policy
- Boundaries of the WHS
- Conservation
- Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism
- Interpretation, Learning and Community Engagement
- Roads and Traffic
- Research
- Management, Liaison and Monitoring

6.0.6 Within each section the aim related to the theme appears at the start. Sub-sections discuss the issues and threats in each area. Opportunities and approaches to addressing these issues and threats are also discussed in these sections. The actions agreed with WHS partners are indicated where relevant in the text and the policy and actions are listed below each section for ease of reference. They appear in brackets within the text alongside the appropriate policy number. All aims, policies and actions included in the Management Plan are set out in a comprehensive table in Part Four of the Plan. This table provides additional information on lead and key partners, priority, timescales and outcomes/success measures.

7.0 PLANNING AND POLICY

Aim 1: The Management Plan will be endorsed by those bodies and individuals responsible for its implementation as the framework for long-term detailed decision-making on the protection and enhancement of the WHS and the maintenance of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Its aims and policies should be incorporated in relevant planning guidance and policies

7.0 Introduction

- 7.0.1** There have been considerable changes in the planning system and policy framework at international, national and local levels since the publication of the Avebury Management Plan in 2005. These changes have been particularly marked at national and local level in the five years following the publication of the Stonehenge Management Plan in 2009. Section 4.0 (Current Policy Context) sets out the policy and guidance framework at all levels. This section mentions these changes where they are relevant to the WHS Management Plan aims, policies and actions.
- 7.0.2** The first section discusses the requirement to produce a Statement of OUV and its impact on the management framework for the WHS. Changes to the planning framework at a national level that are directly relevant to WHS issues are outlined. At a local level the Wiltshire Core Strategy and its relevant policies as well as WHS Management Plan actions resulting from these are outlined. In addition the section highlights the relevant statutory and non-statutory strategies and plans. Their relationship to the WHS is reviewed as well as actions required to ensure they reflect the aims and policies of the WHS Management Plan.
- 7.0.3** Under development pressures, current issues and trends relevant to the WHS and its setting are listed. These include large renewable energy schemes, agricultural development and the scale of replacement dwellings. The impact of light pollution and additional tourist facilities is also discussed. Agreed policies and action to protect the WHS and sustain its OUV are set out. This includes the production of a WHS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) or appropriate planning guidance as well as the development of a WHS Setting Study. In addition the need for a review of the boundary to enhance the integrity of the Stonehenge part of the WHS is discussed.



St James Church and sixteenth-century Avebury Manor Dovecote

7.1 Evolving UNESCO policies and guidance

Issue 1: UNESCO requirements need to be met. Its guidance and the newly adopted UNESCO Statement of Outstanding Universal Value need to be reflected in the framework for the protection and management of the WHS

- 7.1.1** Details of UNESCO's policy and guidance which constitutes the international framework for the management of the WHS can be found in Section 4.1. The UNESCO World Heritage Convention (1972) provides protection at an international level for all WHSs in the UK.

Statement of Outstanding Universal Value: key protection and management requirements

- 7.1.2** Following changes in the UNESCO requirements for all WHSs set out in more detail at 4.1.6, the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (Statement of OUV) was adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2013. This document is a key reference for the effective protection and management of the WHS, the main objective of which should be to sustain its OUV.⁷⁷
- 7.1.3** The following key protection and management issues and requirements set out in the UNESCO Statement of OUV have been reflected in drafting of the aims, policies and actions in the Management Plan:
- Development pressures: Setting Study and SPD/ planning guidance reiterated in Wiltshire Core Strategy WHS Policy (59)
 - Boundary Review at Stonehenge
 - Importance of sustainable, managed public access
 - An overall visitor management and interpretation

- strategy, together with a landscape strategy to optimise access to and understanding of the WHS
- Maintain and enhance the improvements to monuments achieved through agri-environment schemes supporting grassland reversion
- Avoid erosion of earthen monuments and buried archaeology through visitor pressure and burrowing animals
- Impact of roads and traffic remains a major challenge in both parts of the World Heritage Property. The A303 continues to have a negative impact on the setting of Stonehenge, the integrity of the WHS and visitor access to some parts of the wider landscape. The A4 and other roads have a similar impact at Avebury
- Research to develop, in particular, understanding of the overall relationship between buried and standing remains and its implications for the development, use and meaning of the landscape over time.
- Engagement of local residents in the stewardship of the WHS.

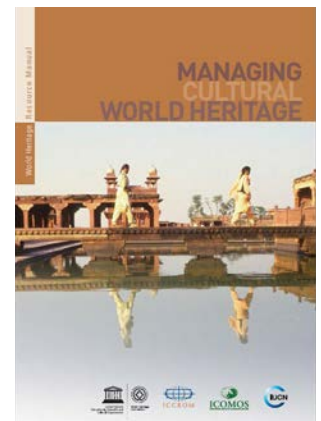
UNESCO's guidance on coordinated management of serial sites

7.1.4 *The Operational Guidelines for Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* contain guidance on the management of serial sites such as Stonehenge and Avebury. This states that 'in the case of serial properties, a management system or mechanisms for ensuring the coordinated management of the separate components are essential'.⁷⁸ This has now been achieved following a governance review of the WHS whose findings were discussed, agreed and implemented by the two Steering Committees in 2013. Support for the new WHS Coordination Unit needs to be maintained and agreement sought on its resourcing. This is discussed further in Part Two, Section 13.0 (Management, Liaison and Monitoring), and reflected in Policy 8b.

WHS and sustainable development

7.1.5 In addition to the *Operational Guidelines*, the World Heritage Committee develops further guidance at its annual meetings. This can cover both general and site-specific matters. UNESCO also produces resource manuals to meet identified needs for guidance on the implementation of the Convention. Of particular significance for this Management Plan is the Committee's focus on the role of the Convention in sustainable development. This is particularly relevant to Part Two, Section 9.0 (Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism). The recent World Heritage

Resource Manual, *Managing Cultural World Heritage* (2013), was produced on behalf of the Committee and World Heritage Centre by the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), ICOMOS and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The



Managing Cultural World Heritage 2013

manual underlines the role of heritage as a 'powerful contributor to environmental, social and economic sustainability'. It advises that the management of WHSs should 'embrace initiatives that deliver mutual benefits to the property and its surroundings that may not seem essential to the protection of the OUV, but may prove important in the long term because they tie the property into its context in a positive and enduring way, thus favouring its long-term survival'. This echoes the theme of the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention in 2012 which celebrated sustainable development and the relationship of local communities to their heritage. These principles are reflected in the framework set out in this Plan.

Endorsement of the WHS Management Plan

7.1.6 The above paragraphs and Section 4.0 on Current Policy Context demonstrate the degree to which international involvement and guidance informs the management of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS. It has been important to take this into account in developing the aims, policies and actions in the Management Plan. The Plan complies fully with the international policy and guidance set out by UNESCO. It was prepared with the full participation of key WHS stakeholders including the representatives of the local community. Consensus was reached on its aims, policies and actions by all members of the WHS partnership. The Plan has also undergone a 12-week period of public consultation. At the end of the process DCMS will submit the Plan to UNESCO for final approval. All organisations on the WHSPP and local Steering Committees will then endorse the Management Plan. **(Policy 1a/Actions 1, 2)**

Policy 1a – Government departments, agencies and other statutory bodies responsible for making and implementing national policies and for undertaking activities that may impact on the WHS and its environs should recognise the importance of the WHS and its need for special treatment and a unified approach to sustain its OUV

ACTIONS

- 1 Submit WHS Management Plan to UNESCO.
- 2 All organisations represented on the World Heritage Site Partnership Panel (WHSP) and Steering Committees (SC) to endorse/adopt the Management Plan.

7.2 Changes to the English planning system and local government structure

Issue 2: The effect of changes in national policy including the introduction of the Localism Act 2011, Neighbourhood Plans and the National Planning Policy Framework (2013) as well as changes in local government structure

7.2.1 The planning policy context is set out in Section 4.2 (Current Policy Context). It sets out changes in the planning system, the relevant contents of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It also set out the requirements for assessing the impacts of new developments and the changes to call-in procedures. This section discusses issues that have arisen in relation to these changes and the agreed policies and actions to address them.

Wiltshire Council Unitary Authority

7.2.2 Wiltshire Council came into existence as a Unitary Authority in April 2009 following the structural changes to local government in some areas in England.⁷⁹ It embraced both Salisbury District Council and Kennet District Council which, prior to this date were the two local planning authorities responsible for the Stonehenge and Avebury parts of the WHS respectively. The resultant single planning authority has provided a number of opportunities to establish a coherent approach to the protection of the whole Stonehenge and Avebury WHS. This has been particularly pertinent following the adoption of the single Statement of OUV by UNESCO in 2013.

7.2.3 The 2005 Avebury Management Plan was endorsed by Kennet District Council and Wiltshire Council. The 2000 Stonehenge Plan was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Salisbury Local Plan. The first WHS Management Plan to be produced since the establishment of the Unitary Authority was for Stonehenge in 2009. This was endorsed by Wiltshire Council on 15 July 2009 and was considered a material consideration for the purposes of determining planning proposals.

7.2.4 Wiltshire Council inherited the local plans produced by the former district councils in Wiltshire. The policies contained within those documents formed part of the development plan for Wiltshire. Salisbury District Council had begun work on the South Wiltshire Core Strategy as part of its Local Development Framework prior to establishment of the new unitary authority in 2009. Wiltshire Council adopted the completed South Wiltshire Core Strategy on 7 February 2012. The South Wiltshire Core Strategy included specific policies to improve the setting of Stonehenge, interpretation and access, and the protection of the World Heritage Site. The former have to some extent been achieved through the closure of the A344, the removal of old visitor facilities and the opening of the new Stonehenge Visitor Centre.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

7.2.5 Since the changes to the planning system in 2013 the local planning authorities have been required to produce a



Stonehenge Visitor Centre under construction following Environmental Impact Assessment

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Local Plan consisting of Development Plan Documents (DPD) including the central DPD: the Core Strategy. The Wiltshire Core Strategy was adopted by Wiltshire Council in January 2015. It replaces both the South Wiltshire document and the Kennet Local Plan adopted by Kennet District Council in 2004. A number of Avebury specific policies have been saved from the Kennet Local Plan. These relate to tourism and car parking and can be found at Appendix H.

Saved policies

7.2.6 The Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out a small number of policies from the Kennet Local Plan that remain in use. These are policies that offer guidance not currently covered by the Core Strategy. The policies are TR6, 8 and 9. Policies TR 6 and 8 refer to visitor facilities and accommodation while TR9 refers to car parking. TR9 requires that there is no significant net increase in the number of formal car parking spaces within the WHS. A review of these policies is scheduled to establish whether there is an ongoing need to save them. If this is established, relevant modifications will be made to the Core Strategy. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) includes an action to complete this review in 2016. Wiltshire Council and other relevant WHS stakeholders will need to engage with this process to ensure that adequate protection is retained within the policy framework. **(Policy 1b/Action 6)**

WHS SPD/planning policy guidance

7.2.7 The Wiltshire Core Strategy includes a specific robust policy relating to the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site. Policy 59 sets out to ensure the protection of the WHS and its setting from inappropriate development in order to sustain its OUV. The policy highlights the need to produce supplementary planning guidance – possibly a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – to assist in articulating the spatial implications of the attributes of OUV. **(Policy 1b/Action 4)** It also underlines the need to protect the setting of the WHS to sustain the OUV and highlights the need for a Setting Study. **(Policy 2b/Action 15)**

7.2.8 It will be necessary to continue to work in close partnership with Wiltshire Council to encourage the timely production of the Setting Study and SPD. They will need to be included in the LDS that sets out the planned programme of work on the Local Plan related documents over a three-year period. The current LDS covers the period from 2014 to 2017. The timescale for production of the SPD will need to be

negotiated with Wiltshire Council. Finding resources for the development of these documents, identified as particularly important for the protection of the WHS both within the Statement of OUV and the Core Strategy, in a period of government cutbacks in local authority funding will require commitment and exemplary partnership working.

7.2.9 There are a number of other policies in the Core Strategy which relate to the protection of the WHS and its setting. These can be found under the relevant strategic objectives, particularly objective 5: protecting and enhancing the natural, historic and built environment. The WHS is also mentioned in relation to sustainable tourism under objective 1: delivering a thriving economy, and under objective 2: to address climate change in relation to the sensitivity of the WHS landscape and its setting. The WHS is mentioned in the relevant area sections. For Stonehenge these are Amesbury, Salisbury and South Wiltshire; and for Avebury, the Marlborough, Calne and Devizes areas. Further details of the relevant policies can be found in Appendix H.

Policy and guidance: partner and other organisations

7.2.10 On occasion the policies or guidance of national agencies may inadvertently conflict with the aims of protecting and enhancing the WHS and its attributes of OUV, and the policies of the Management Plan. Addressing this issue may involve lobbying at a national level. An example of this is the Forestry Commission's policy requiring replanting when trees are felled. The *WHS Woodland Strategy* has identified areas of the WHS where this is undesirable for example where trees risk damaging archaeology or obscuring key views between monuments. Dispensations need to be agreed at a national level to help protect and enhance the WHS. This will need to be understood and implemented locally. **(Policy 1b/Action 3)**

7.2.11 It is important that all partner and other relevant organisations at a national and local level commit to review whether there is a need to produce additional agreed policies, guidance or plans to assist in protecting the WHS and achieving the WHS Management Plan aims, policies and actions. If existing policy and guidance is adequate, consideration should be given to whether any changes are required to ensure it is effectively implemented. **(Policy 1b/Action 5)**

Policy 1b – Set within the framework provided by the Management Plan, relevant stakeholders should implement existing policy and guidance and where necessary develop policies and written guidance at a national and local level for the improved management and conservation of the WHS. These policies should ensure the maintenance of its OUV by protecting the physical fabric, character, appearance, setting and views into and out of the WHS. Relevant Management Plan policies should be incorporated within the Core Strategy and other relevant development plan documents within the Local Plan and additional WHS planning guidance produced

ACTIONS

- 3 Advocate and contribute to the formulation of appropriate national policies. Where necessary agree local exceptions from national policies to protect the WHS and its attributes of OUV in line with the obligations of the World Heritage Convention.
- 4 Identify and produce the most appropriate form of planning guidance. Establish a working group to consider a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that explains the significance of the WHS and ensures that development management of the site, its attributes of OUV, and its setting reflects its designation as set out in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value.
- 5 All WHS partners and other relevant organisations to ensure effective implementation of existing policies and review the need to produce additional agreed policies/guidance/plans to assist in achieving WHS Management Plan aims, policies and actions.
- 6 Review saved WHS policies from Kennet Local Plan and ensure that relevant policies are incorporated in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

7.3 Concordance with other statutory and non-statutory strategies and plans

Issue 3: *The need to align with other statutory and non-statutory strategies and plans such as the Wiltshire Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment*

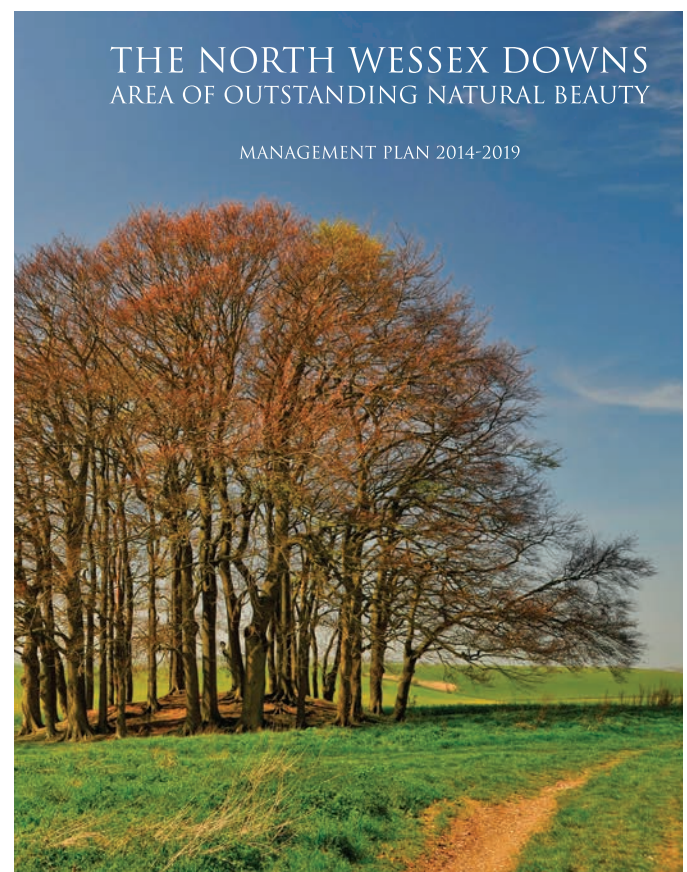
- 7.3.1 Ensuring that the Management Plan is aligned with other statutory and non-statutory policy, plans and strategies will help to protect the WHS and encourage positive partnership working as well as increase the opportunities for accessing related funding. This requires liaison by the WHS Coordination Unit and commitment among WHS partners to ensure their organisation reflects the aims and policies of the WHS. In addition, the Coordinators should respond to relevant public consultations.

(Policy 1c/Action 7)

- 7.3.2 Previous WHS Management Plans have identified the need to coordinate with relevant plans and strategies at a local level. Many of these are still in place, such as the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan which was updated in 2014, while others such as Sustainable Community Strategies are now defunct. A number of new opportunities for coordination have arisen at a local level. A list of relevant strategies and plans can be found at Part One, Section 4.3 (Current Policy Context). The issues and opportunities related to some of these are discussed below.

North Wessex Downs AONB

- 7.3.4 Avebury lies completely within the North Wessex Downs AONB which is a nationally protected landscape that is required to produce a statutory management plan. It is essential that the NWDAONB plan and related guidance and strategies reflect the aims and policies of the WHS. Additional relevant documents include the Wind Turbine Sensitivity Study and the AONB Position Statements on Housing, Renewable Energy and Setting (March 2012). In addition there are AONB strategies on Arable Biodiversity (2008, updated 2010), Woodland (2005) and Chalk Grassland (2005). Close cooperation in their production and update is very important. The next update of the NWAONB management plan is due in 2019.



North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan, 2014–2019

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

7.3.5 Local authorities are still required to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). *The Guidance on the Production of JSNA and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies* from the Department for Health came into effect in April 2013. It highlights the fact that the production of a JSNA is an ongoing process by which local authorities and other public sector partners jointly describe the current and future health and wellbeing needs of its local population and identify priorities for action. The JSNA is about the wider aspects of health including poverty, employment, education, public safety, housing and the environment. The ultimate purpose of the JSNA process is to use the information gathered to identify local priorities, services and interventions to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

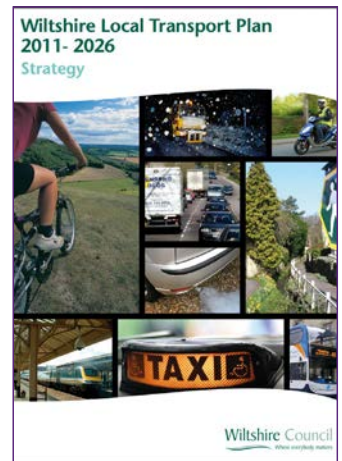
7.3.6 A statutory JSNA was first produced for the whole of Wiltshire in 2009. In Wiltshire the process has been extended to include Joint Strategic Needs Assessments for community areas. Through participatory process the community is invited to produce JSNAs focused on their area. The priorities identified are used to inform strategies and plans and in addition target local funding available through Community Area Boards. There are clearly methodological links between JSNAs and the participatory way in which WHS Management Plans are developed by key stakeholders with the involvement of local and other interested communities. It will be helpful for WHS Coordinators and other partners to engage with this process so that the contribution of the WHS to quality of the environment and the wellbeing of the community is better understood and reflected in JSNA priorities. Heritage is often taken for granted and without greater public understanding of its role and the need for protection and management the resources for these functions are likely to continue to diminish.

Wiltshire State of the Environment Report

7.3.7 The Wiltshire State of the Environment Report is another document that should be informed by the aims of the WHS Management Plan. It is produced on behalf of the Local Nature Partnership for Wiltshire and Swindon and provides an environmental evidence base to inform policy and decision-making by local authorities and others, such as the JSNA. It is updated on an annual basis which offers the opportunity to ensure WHS aims are reflected and routes to possible funding established.

Green Infrastructure Strategy

7.3.8 Wiltshire Council is in the process of developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy to provide a long-term vision and strategic framework for the delivery of a planned high quality, multi-functional network of green infrastructure across Wiltshire. This is another document that will set out priorities and actions which may attract funding from



Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

routes such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). CIL is a general levy on all development, designed to raise funds for the overall infrastructure needed as a result of an increase in development in an area. It came into force in April 2014. The WHS Coordination Unit should work with the relevant officers in Wiltshire Council to assist in achieving related aims and actions within the WHS Management Plan.

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan

7.3.9 The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out the Council's objectives, plans and indicators for transport in Wiltshire. Furthermore, as a document developed through partnership working and extensive consultation, the LTP also provides the framework for all other organisations with a direct or indirect involvement in transport in Wiltshire.

Policy 1c – Ensure any other plans or strategies produced locally, such as Neighbourhood Plans and the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan contain policies that support the protection of the WHS and its setting and the maintenance of its OUV

ACTIONS

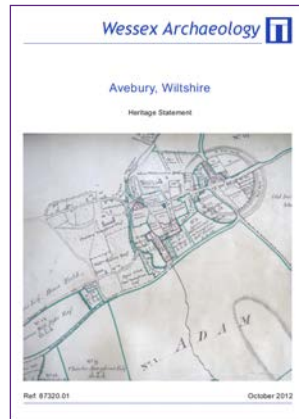
7 Liaise with Wiltshire Council and other partner organisations developing plans and policies to ensure the WHS and its attributes of OUV and their significance are recognised and appropriately safeguarded. Respond to relevant public consultations.

7.4 Development management

Issue 4: *There is a need to ensure that development that would have a negative impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV is not permitted*

SPD/planning guidance

7.4.1 The development management system is a key tool in the long-term protection of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Local planning authorities are required to accept WHS Management Plans as a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications, as is the Secretary of State in determining cases on appeal or following call-in (Part One, Section 4.2.12). This policy should be implemented and to strengthen this protection the planning-related element of WHS Management Plans should also be developed and adopted as an SPD or relevant planning guidance as proposed in the Wiltshire Core Strategy. This would assist greatly in articulating the spatial implications of the attributes of OUV which are often poorly understood. **(Policy 1b/Action 4)**



Heritage Statements provided as part of a planning application set out impacts on the historic environment

Planning applications in the WHS and its setting

7.4.2 In the nine years since the publication of the *Avebury WHS Management Plan* and in the five since the last Stonehenge Plan there have been a number of significant applications.

7.4.3 At Avebury, as would be expected due to its settlements, there have been a greater number of planning applications within the WHS than at Stonehenge. The majority were for small-scale householder developments such as extensions which, unless they are sited directly on archaeologically sensitive land, have



ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments 2011

little impact on WHS and its OUV. However some of these applications have been for more significant developments. Other planning applications outside the WHS have also had the potential to affect its setting and therefore the WHS and its attributes of OUV.

7.4.4 At Stonehenge the number of applications has been higher than would normally be expected in such a sparsely populated landscape because of the current Stonehenge Article 4 Direction Area which withdraws some permitted development rights relating to agricultural and forestry operations (see 7.4.23).

Provision of adequate evidence

7.4.5 It is important that applications are carefully assessed to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV either directly on the physical remains or on their setting. Adequate evidence needs to be requested from the developer to enable consultees to assess any possible impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Desk-based assessments and evaluation should be requested, where appropriate, for proposals within the WHS. The design and scale of proposals will be important. Larger schemes at some distance from the WHS may still fall within its setting and need to provide evidence that they will not have a negative impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Even where a development is deemed suitable in principle, appropriate mitigation should be provided through relevant conditions such as requiring appropriate design, suitable materials and landscaping, and adequate opportunities for archaeological excavation and recording where relevant.

Issue 5: *Increasing development pressure including at present changes in farming practice, large-scale renewable energy schemes, telecommunication infrastructure, army rebasing and the increased size of replacement dwellings*

Development pressures

7.4.6 Changes in European and national policy and the economic climate have had measurable impacts on development pressure within the WHS. The availability of subsidies has a significant effect on the number and scale of applications for renewable energy schemes both within the WHS and in its setting.

Renewable energy and telecommunication infrastructure

7.4.7 At Avebury since 2010 there have been an increasing number of applications for solar arrays, photovoltaic

cells and wind turbines. Most of these have been in the setting of the WHS and a number have been fairly substantial proposals. Those that have gained permission within the WHS have been roof-mounted and negotiations on the scale and design have ensured that harmful impacts were largely avoided. Guidance would be very helpful for managers, officers and developers. Although the government appears to be reconsidering the financial support it is offering for on-shore developments it may alter its policies at any point and relevant guidance should be prepared as part of an SPD as a proactive management tool. In additional infrastructure related to telecommunications such as masts and other related infrastructure have the potential to have significant negative impacts on the setting of monuments and in some cases their physical remains.

Army Basing Programme

7.4.8 Government policy on rebasing of British troops currently posted in Europe has increased development pressure at Stonehenge which lies close to Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA), the chosen focus for the MoD. The Army Basing Review was announced by the Secretary of State for Defence on 5 March 2013, taking its lead from the new Army 2020 Plan outlined in July 2012. An extensive options appraisal was carried out in 2014 to identify the most appropriate and sustainable sites in Wiltshire to house around 4,000 additional military personnel and their dependants. Options considered included Larkhill Garrison.

7.4.9 The MoD undertook a consultation process in partnership with Wiltshire Council before identifying sites for inclusion in its Master Plan. The Statement of OUV assisted in the screening process by enabling partners to assess and articulate the potential impacts on the WHS and its setting. Options that will not adversely impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV have been identified for the development.

Agricultural development

7.4.10 Farming is the mainstay of the rural economy at both Stonehenge and Avebury and WHS landowners and farmers are key stewards of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Working in partnership with the farming community through environmental stewardship schemes provides crucial protection for the areas of sensitive archaeology vulnerable to cultivation while ensuring agricultural livelihoods are supported.



Photomontage prepared as part of pre-application planning discussions for a grain store at Avebury

7.4.11 Changes in farming practice in response to European policy and the economic climate have led to an increasing number of applications for large-scale grain stores within the WHS and its setting. There have been four applications for substantial grain stores in the Avebury landscape since 2010. Three of these were given permission after substantial negotiations and amendments to the original plans to minimise impact. Adequate mitigation is not always possible and will depend to a great extent on the sensitivity of the proposed location.

7.4.12 Large-scale, industrial grain stores have the potential to impact negatively on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. This could be through direct impact on the physical remains of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments and sites and visual impact on their settings as well as the interrelationship of monuments and the character of the WHS landscape. They are often accompanied by consequential developments such as additional tracks which present further potentially negative impacts.

7.4.13 To assist in managing development and helping maintain the vital synergy between farming and conservation and positive, productive relationships it is important to assist landowners and farmers in identifying ways to develop their businesses while protecting the WHS. Guidance to assist in articulating possible impacts and clarification of the evidence required to support any planning application would be helpful as would information on approaches to mitigating impact related to location, scale and design. A clear process for engaging with statutory and non-statutory curators would assist both developers and planners to identify possible solutions. This could be form part of a planning guidance in the form of an SPD or equivalent for the WHS.

Replacement dwellings

7.4.14 Another area of increased pressure particularly in Avebury is the challenge of replacement dwellings. There have been a number of significant applications since 2010. Where these proposals, for example, substantially exceed the original in scale and/or radically alter the design and materials they may negatively impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. To assist in reaching acceptable solutions additional guidance should be provided on the nature of unacceptable impacts and how to avoid them. Insensitive developments in Conservation Areas have the potential to harm their relationship to the wider landscape and attributes of OUV. This too should form part of the WHS SPD or appropriate planning guidance.

Issue 6: *The significant relationship of the historic built environment to the attributes of OUV including that set out in Conservation Area Statements could be damaged by inappropriate development*

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

7.4.15 Within the WHS and its setting and particularly at Avebury the historic built heritage, including a range of vernacular buildings, is of great interest and importance, especially in the light of its juxtaposition with the prehistoric monuments.

7.4.16 Both the villages of Avebury and West Kennett are designated as Conservation Areas. Specific development control policies are contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment. The policy states that the special character or appearance of Conservation Areas and their settings will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced. The Conservation Area Statements published by Kennet District Council in 2003 for Avebury and West Kennett highlight the important interrelationship between the development of these historic villages and the prehistoric monuments within the WHS. The Statements also outline priorities and opportunities for enhancement of the built environment.

7.4.17 There are 84 Listed Buildings within the Avebury part of the WHS and development management focuses on retaining their architectural or historic interest and their setting through the requirement for Listed Building Consent (LBC) from Wiltshire Council. Many of the local buildings have been in part constructed from broken sarsen stones taken from the stone circles and avenues.

7.4.18 Issues can arise when there are applications for replacement dwellings within a Conservation Area or an application is made for an area outside the WHS but within its setting. Inappropriate development in this area can have a negative impact on the relationship of the historic built heritage to the WHS and its attributes of OUV. To reduce this it would be helpful to articulate, as part of the WHS planning guidance or SPD, how the built environment relates to the WHS and its attributes of OUV and provide guidance on how harm could be avoided through appropriate location, scale and design for replacement dwellings or other buildings. With the removal of limits of development on some villages in the Wiltshire Core Strategy this guidance will be particularly pertinent.

Issue 7: *The need to manage potentially damaging activities within the WHS which are not normally subject to planning control such as agricultural developments, utility installations and micro-generation*

Potentially harmful permitted development

7.4.19 There are currently a number of activities which are potentially damaging to archaeological remains, their setting and the setting of the WHS but do not require planning permission or other forms of consent. The limited Article 4 Direction at Stonehenge and new inclusion of WHSs as Article 1(5) land do not combat these risks. These activities include:

- New planting not funded by the Forestry Commission, and not requiring consent by them as afforestation in a WHS
- Hedge removal not covered by the Hedgerows Act or hedge planting
- New ploughing or increased ploughing depth on land which is not scheduled
- Utility installations on land which is not scheduled
- Metal detecting or treasure hunting on land which is not scheduled, not in the ownership of the National Trust or the Ministry of Defence, and not on known archaeological sites within areas covered by Stewardship agreements
- Swimming pools below a certain size
- New permitted development rights related to micro-generation such as ground source heat pumps.

Installation of utilities

7.4.20 There is particular concern that measures should be taken to avoid or mitigate potential damage caused by the maintenance and installation of essential services (gas, water, electricity, sewage and telecommunications). Telecommunication masts and overhead transmission lines may not require planning permission. The digging

of holes and trenches for underground pipes and cables has affected parts of the WHS in the past, and has the potential to cause archaeological damage. The roll out of superfast broadband may be a current issue. Providers should discuss with curators how to mitigate any impact on WHS and its attributes of OUV. In many cases setting and landscape enhancements can be achieved through careful partnership to plan route, establish appropriate methodologies a sensitive design and placement of related equipment.

Metal detecting

7.4.21 Potential damage from the uncontrolled use of metal detectors is also a cause for concern. Metal detectorists and casual fieldwalkers have made a number of important finds in the area in the past. However, these are often made without the full and reliable recording of their archaeological context. When this is the case, it diminishes our understanding of the artefact and its context, and can also lead to the damage or destruction of archaeological features. Although metal detecting can be a useful technique when used as part of a properly conducted archaeological project, its uncontrolled use within the WHS should be discouraged. This is discussed further at Section 8.2.12 (Conservation).

7.4.22 Further Article 4 Directions may be necessary to control these activities.

Article 4 Directions

7.4.23 To address damage from activities that do not require planning permission it will be advisable to review the current risks and identify any Article 4 Directions that need to be put in place to protect the WHS; inclusion in Article 1(5) restricts only certain specific small-scale development rights. The PPG accompanying the NPPF suggests that if the protection provided by Article 1(5) land is inadequate, which it appears to be at Stonehenge and Avebury, that planning authorities restrict development further by using Article 4 and Article 7 (minerals operations) directions under the 1995 Order. The process for putting in place Article 4 directions has been made more streamlined and should now be less time consuming. **(Policy Id/Action 8)**

7.4.24 A complementary measure during the process of review and application or where these directions are not considered appropriate is to work closely with the community and utilities' providers to encourage them to consult with the County Archaeologist and the WHS Coordination Unit for advice. A code of practice for utility companies was prepared for Avebury in 1998

and this should be updated if necessary to include Stonehenge. The community could be reached through the *Megalith* newsletter or other communications tool. It is very important to work with landowners, farmers and householders to enable them to understand the sensitivities prior to applications being submitted. Pre-application advice can also help to identify workable solutions that meet the applicant's needs without compromising the WHS and its attributes of OUV.

(Policy Id/Action 10)

Issue 8: *The need to ensure understanding of the spatial implications of OUV are understood and adequate weighting is given to them, particularly where staff changes take place or resources are reduced*

Training for planners

7.4.25 One of the major challenges related to the severe reduction in funding for local authorities from central government is the impact on the availability of resources. Further cuts are planned for 2015. Reduction in funding may impact on the number of planning policy officers available to work on the production of a SPD and also on the number of planning officers responsible for development management. In addition, increased workload, redundancies and restructuring can result in changes to personnel and a loss of officers experienced in dealing with determining applications within the WHS and its setting. It is important to ensure that officers are provided with regular training. This will help them understand the implication of WHS status and the attributes of OUV and assist them in giving the WHS the correct weighting in line with the Core Strategy that recognises the need to give precedence to the protection of the World Heritage Site and its setting to sustain its OUV. Training is also important to update existing officers and relevant councillors when there are changes in policy or guidance related to WHSs. **(Policy Id/Action 9).**

Policy Id – Development which would impact adversely on the WHS, its setting and its attributes of OUV should not be permitted

ACTIONS

- 8** Review the existing Article 4 Directions and update as required.
- 9** Regular liaison, information exchange and training for planning officers and councillors. Every two years or when new policies or guidance come into effect.
- 10** Raise and maintain awareness of the WHS through liaison with landowners and householders.

Public sector cuts: maintaining engagement

7.4.26 These impacts are also evident in other areas of the public service. Reduction in resources led to the loss of the English Heritage Stonehenge Curatorial Unit in 2012 which included a dedicated curator for the WHS as well as a research assistant. The Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Wiltshire is now required to deal with the WHS as part of the Inspector's countywide caseload. This will inevitably lead to the need to prioritise and the danger that issues may be missed or cannot be given the time required.

7.4.27 It is common practice for English Heritage and the Archaeology Service of Wiltshire Council to be consulted by the local planning authority about applications within or around the WHS which may have an impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV and the management objectives as set out in the WHS Management Plan. Changes in call-in procedures noted at paragraph 4.2.12 above emphasise the key role of English Heritage in safeguarding the WHS and its attributes of OUV. It will be essential to ensure that this level of engagement is maintained when the New Model for English Heritage is put in place and the curatorial responsibilities transfer to Historic England. It will also be important to maintain liaison between the key curators on major applications within the WHS and its setting.

Light pollution

7.4.28 Light pollution needs to be carefully considered in relation to development or highways schemes within the WHS. It has the potential to cause harm to the setting of monuments and impact negatively on solstitial alignments, both attributes of OUV. Clear guidance for applicants and planners needs to be developed for inclusion in the agreed WHS planning guidance or SPD.

Policy 1e – Minimise light pollution to avoid adverse impacts on the WHS, its setting and its attributes of OUV

ACTIONS

11 Develop guidelines building on existing evidence and guidance to avoid light pollution and negative impacts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV as part of the wider WHS planning guidance/SPD. Use guidance to advise on developments including highways schemes to ensure new intrusion is avoided and existing light pollution minimised. (NB impact on biodiversity interests should also be considered).

Tourist facilities and attractions

7.4.29 As discussed in Part Two, Section 9.0 (Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism) it is important that visitor numbers and movement are carefully monitored and managed to avoid negative impacts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV as well as the amenity of local communities. In considering the appropriateness of development related to additional tourist facilities these issues need to be carefully considered. Any such development would need to contribute to the understanding and enjoyment of the WHS as well as positively managing visitor pressure. The possibility of providing a permanent visitor facility outside the WHS as a successor to the new Visitor Centre at Stonehenge should be reviewed in the longer term if a suitable opportunity arises.

(Policy 1f/Action 12)

7.4.30 Licensing authorities should only approve applications for intermittent vendors such as street traders, mobile snack bars and other licensable activities in the WHS following wide consultation and careful consideration of its impacts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV.

Policy 1f – Any additional tourist facilities and attractions must contribute to the understanding and enjoyment of the WHS and its attributes of OUV as well as ensuring visitor dispersal and the positive management of visitor pressures

ACTIONS

12 Review opportunity for a visitor facility outside the WHS.

7.5 WHS boundary and the setting of the WHS

Aim 2: The WHS boundary should ensure the integrity of the WHS is maintained and enhanced by including significant archaeological features and interrelationships that reflect the attributes of the OUV

Issue 9: The need to review the boundary of the WHS

Boundary extension at Avebury

7.5.1 The UNESCO World Heritage Committee agreed a proposed boundary extension to the Avebury half of the WHS in July 2008. The committee recognised that the extension would rationalise the WHS boundary originally drawn up in 1986, and rectify certain

important omissions and thereby improve the integrity of the WHS in line with its OUV.

7.5.2 Quantitatively, the minor boundary changes included approximately a further 307 hectares in the WHS, representing approximately 14% of the current area (7% of Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites). Around 35 additional archaeological sites and monuments are now included within the new boundary, most of which are scheduled. This includes a prehistoric monumental complex; a multi-period settlement and field system complex; a well-preserved Neolithic long barrow; at least ten scheduled round barrows; and numerous linear features and enclosures. Further details can be found in section 5.5 of the Avebury Management Plan (2005).



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East Kennet Long Barrow. Part of the WHS since the boundary extension at Avebury approved by UNESCO in 2008

Stonehenge Boundary Review

7.5.3 The case for revision of the boundary at Stonehenge was discussed at length in the 2000 Plan. The Plan recognised that the existing boundary was to some extent arbitrary and excluded features which, if included, might enhance the integrity of the WHS. It noted too that previous studies had been divided on whether or not the Site should be extended and concluded that the boundaries of both the Avebury and Stonehenge parts of the WHS should be addressed using the same criteria. The Plan included an Objective (no 14) that the 'WHS Boundary should capture all significant archaeological features and landscapes related to Stonehenge and its environs'. The 2009 Plan included a policy requiring a review of the boundary (2c).

7.5.4 There are a number of minor discrepancies concerning the Stonehenge boundary requiring resolution as well as some more major issues to be considered. Minor changes such as those undertaken at Avebury can

be dealt with relatively easily – the State Party has to make a proposal to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and the Committee then takes a decision after evaluation of the proposal by ICOMOS. Significant changes affecting the definition of the OUV of the Site would at present require a full re-nomination. The Government has specifically excluded a re-nomination of the site for the foreseeable future.

7.5.5 As noted in the 2000 and 2009 Plans, similar approaches on boundary issues should be used for both parts of the World Heritage Site. At Avebury, a detailed study was carried out in 2004 prior to submission to UNESCO in 2008. A similar approach to minor changes could be adopted for the Stonehenge part of the site. The principles used in the Avebury study to develop recommendations were that the WHS boundary should as far as possible:

- Remain true to the spirit of the original inscription of the Site on the World Heritage List, with its emphasis on the Neolithic and Bronze Age, megalithic and sarsen stone elements in the landscape
- Not be changed unless it is perceived that the Site's Outstanding Universal Value is not protected adequately within the existing boundary
- Reflect current knowledge and understanding of the WHS and its surrounding landscape as a WHS in the 21st century as defined in the World Heritage nomination in 1986
- Include physically-related archaeological features and the whole of a group of archaeological features such as burial mounds, including in particular all Scheduled Monuments
- Have regard for the setting of individual monuments and groups of monuments and for their overall context in archaeological and landscape terms
- Avoid changes which include inhabited villages
- At Stonehenge important astronomical alignments are apparent through key sight-lines in the WHS landscape and its setting.

7.5.6 To these might be added the need to rectify the discrepancies between the mapped boundaries and written description in the original nomination dossier. An initial study similar to that carried out for Avebury in 2004 was undertaken in 2013 for Stonehenge. It remains for partners to agree on the new boundary and the scale of any extension, as well as how these will relate to the planned Setting Study for the WHS. **(Policy 2a/Action 13)**



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Robin Hood's Ball named in the original nomination documentation but currently outside the WHS boundary at Stonehenge

Policy 2a – Propose to UNESCO a minor modification of the boundary at Stonehenge to enhance the integrity of the WHS

ACTIONS

- 13** Agree the extent of the modification with WHS partners following the completion of the WHS Setting Study and submit to UNESCO.

Issue 10: The need to improve understanding of the setting of the WHS in order to protect the WHS and its attributes of OUV

Buffer zones

- 7.5.7** The World Heritage Committee Operational Guidelines recommend (para 103) that ‘wherever necessary for the proper conservation of the property, an adequate buffer zone should be provided’. It does leave open the option that the setting of the World Heritage Site can be protected in other ways. Proposals for a buffer zone have to be approved by the World Heritage Committee following proposal by the State Party. This does not require a full re-nomination.
- 7.5.8** The 2005 Avebury Management Plan concluded that a ‘buffer zone needs to be defined effectively protecting

the WHS, its monuments and their landscape settings from visual intrusion and other adverse impacts’. The justification for this was to protect the landscape setting of the WHS and to provide stronger protection against inappropriate development.

- 7.5.9** The Stonehenge Management Plan 2000 concluded there was no compelling justification for a formal buffer zone in that part of the WHS. The 2009 Plan highlighted the discrepancy with the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan 2005 and proposed that a joint study of the WHS as a whole could be undertaken to resolve this.

Setting of heritage assets

- 7.5.10** Since these discussions on the need for a buffer zone, the approach to protecting the setting of WHSs has developed. This has occurred in a climate of increasing and broadening understanding of the contribution of setting to the significance of heritage assets more generally.
- 7.5.11** English Heritage’s publication *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011) which was supplemented in 2014⁸⁰ offered dedicated formal guidance for the first time on the concept of setting and how to manage change



© Beth Thomas

Existing development within the setting of the WHS from Durrington Walls

in the setting of heritage assets. The importance of setting for both upstanding monuments and buried archaeology was emphasised in the guidance and the concept of setting broadened to include not only the visual but the contextual and all other elements of the environment in which the asset is experienced including, for example, elements such as noise and light. *The Setting of Heritage Assets* expanded on the definition of setting given in Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5): ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced’. This definition included the recognition that the extent of an asset’s setting is not fixed and may change as its surroundings evolve.

WHS Setting Study

7.5.12 The NPPF retains the recognition of the importance of setting and states that an asset’s ‘significance can be harmed or lost through (inappropriate) development within its setting’. The accompanying PPG, *Further Guidance on World Heritage Sites*⁸¹, recognises that it may be appropriate to protect the setting of a World

Heritage Site with a buffer zone or in other appropriate ways. The Guidance underlines that the setting requires protection and that it is essential that the Local Plan sets out how this will take place. The Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy 59 states that this will be done by undertaking a Setting Study for the whole WHS. In addition to the effective implementation of the existing planning policy framework a Setting Study will provide further information and a preferred methodology for the assessment of proposed development for its potential impact on the WHS. For example, the immense scale of the Solstice Park distribution centre would have been more carefully assessed for its impact on the WHS if a comprehensive Setting Study had been in place. The same would have applied to Boscombe Down. The Core Strategy recognises that the setting of the WHS includes a range of elements such as views and historical, landscape and cultural relationships that is not precisely defined and will vary depending on the nature and visibility of the proposal. The negative impact of light pollution and skyglow is mentioned. It should be noted that astronomical alignments will extend beyond the WHS and form part of its setting which requires protection. The Setting Study should be adopted as an SPD or appropriate planning guidance to ensure change in the setting of the WHS is appropriately managed. **(Policy 2b/Action 15)**

7.5.13 There has been widespread recognition that a line on a map may not adequately reflect the setting which will vary depending on the nature and scale of the proposal put forward. There are a number of examples of setting studies for WHSs which reflect this approach notably the *Saltire World Heritage Site Environmental Capacity Study*⁸²



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Silbury Hill the largest artificial prehistoric mound in Europe

and the *Bath WHS Setting Study* produced by Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES) in October 2009. The latter's contextual setting extends into Wiltshire and this is acknowledged in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

7.5.14 This work with Bath WHS demonstrated best practice from both Wiltshire and BANES in the area of the Duty to Cooperate introduced under the Localism Act 2011. The *Bath WHS Setting Study* has been adopted as an SPD by BANES. The Study produced for Stonehenge and Avebury could form part of the planned WHS planning guidance/SPD referred to in Policy 59 of the Core Strategy.

Interim indication of setting

7.5.15 While the Setting Study is developed, it may be helpful to provide an interim indication to planning management officers and administrators of the extent of the setting by providing an alert zone for consultation on significant development.

(Policy 2b/Action 14)

7.5.16 The Avebury part of the WHS lies entirely within the North Wessex Downs AONB which might be considered adequate to protect its setting. However it should be noted that the AONB has its own attributes which it has a statutory duty to protect and these are largely related to conserving and enhancing the special qualities and character of the North Wessex Downs. This would not in all cases ensure the protection of the WHS whose attributes of OUV are different and therefore susceptible to different impacts.

Policy 2b – Put in place appropriate additional guidance to ensure that development within the setting of the WHS protects and enhances the Site and its attributes of OUV

ACTIONS

14 Map an indicative setting area for planning management purposes as an interim measure prior to the completion of the Setting Study and related guidance.

15 Produce a WHS Setting Study to include related guidance and a methodology for assessing impacts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Identify and map key views between the attributes of OUV and both into and out of the WHS as part of this process. Adopt as part of wider WHS planning guidance/SPD.

8.0 CONSERVATION

Aim 3: Sustain the OUV of the WHS through the conservation and enhancement of the Site and its attributes of OUV

8.0 Introduction

8.0.1 This section considers conservation of the monuments and sites and their settings which form part of the attributes of OUV of the WHS, the wider historic environment and the natural environment.



West Kennet Long Barrow with Silbury Hill in the background

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8.0.2 The *Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Condition Survey* (2012) highlighted a number of issues related to cultivation and burrowing animals, the main two threats to the attributes of OUV. Wider protection of the WHS requires consideration of both the Site and its setting. The conservation aspects of the setting are considered in this section. The setting issues related to planning policy and development management are discussed in Section 7.0.

8.0.3 Protection of the WHS is delivered through the World Heritage Convention, the planning policy framework and the legislative protection given to individual Scheduled Monuments. A number of the records contained within the National Heritage List for England have some inaccuracies and other recently discovered monuments are not protected. This issue is considered and actions to remedy the situation set out.

8.0.4 Also included in this section are aspects of conservation related to agriculture and in particular the agri-environment schemes which have done so much to protect individual monuments and their landscape setting. Although inscribed as a cultural WHS, Stonehenge and Avebury WHS relies to a large extent on schemes aimed primarily at the conservation of the natural environment for its protection and enhancement and to enable the local community and visitors to understand and enjoy the wider landscape. This section sets out the policies and actions related to working with partners to develop strategies which will both protect the historic environment and improve biodiversity.

8.0.5 Finally, this section considers the impact of climate change on the conservation of the historic and natural environment and considers how other partner organisations manage risks within the WHS and how any gaps might be filled.



Badger damage to barrow

© Nick Croxson Historic England

8.1 Condition of archaeological monuments and sites in the WHS

Issue 11: *The damage caused to archaeological sites within the WHS by burrowing animals*

Burrowing animals

8.1.1 The issue of burrowing animals and the risk they pose to fragile archaeological remains in both parts of the WHS was highlighted in the *WHS Badger Survey* (Natural England 2011) and the *WHS Condition Survey* (2012). The main species causing these problems are moles, rabbits and badgers. Moles are the commonest source of damage. However, the damage that they cause is slight in severity. Rabbits are a source of severe damage particularly to upstanding monuments. The rise in the badger population in recent years has become a major source of damage to the WHS and its attributes of OUV. The Condition Survey noted that 'there has been a substantial increase in the incidence of damage from badgers'. In 2002 the number of monuments affected by badgers was seven, but the 2012 survey identified badger damage at 34 monuments. Of these 30 are in barrows with surface earthworks, meaning that 13% of these characteristic monuments across the WHS are suffering significant damage from this source. In short, badgers are becoming a major cause of damage to the very monuments that actively contribute to the attributes of OUV of the WHS. Monuments that have been reverted to grass to protect them are often attractive to badgers looking for setts. This amongst other issues needs to be considered in their management.

8.1.2 Badgers are protected under the Badgers Act 1992. Excavations have shown the extensive damage they can do to archaeological remains. There is general guidance from Natural England and Defra⁸³ and English Heritage/Historic England⁸⁴ on this subject. Measures to counter badger damage include their licensed removal after which vulnerable monuments are either covered with a suitable mesh or surrounded by fencing. However, none of these measures is suitable for large monuments such as hill forts, and all have considerable cost implications for large areas of land such as the WHS.

8.1.3 The territorial nature of badgers in particular means that local, small-scale solutions are generally inappropriate as they may simply cause the problem to move elsewhere. A landscape-wide burrowing animal strategy for the WHS is required to focus on how monuments can be protected from the damage caused by moles, rabbits and in particular badgers. This work should also use information supplied by the Natural England's *Badger*

Survey and the *WHS Condition Survey*. Updated and additional detailed survey data, for example mapping badger territories, will also be needed to help inform the strategy and develop specific solutions for the protection of the monuments. Recommendations might include legal exclusion of badgers from threatened monuments within a reasonable time period and reviewing potential alternative non-damaging locations and suitable designs for artificial badger setts. Any strategies or solutions developed should be shared and case studies written up to assist the management of archaeological landscapes elsewhere. WHS guidance and case studies for land managers and owners should also be developed using the latest research and practical experience from work within the WHS and elsewhere.

(Policy 3a/Action 16)

Issue 12: *As a result of recent discoveries, there is a need to review the Scheduled Monuments and their boundaries within the WHS. A number of new sites should be scheduled, others extended and errors in Scheduling corrected*

Statutory protection

8.1.4 Statutory protection only covers approximately 50% of the monuments within the WHS. There are many archaeological features which are attributes of OUV but are not Scheduled Monuments. The Condition Survey (2012) also notes that there are a number of Scheduled Monuments which are incorrectly mapped and a number of features discovered since the last Monument Mapping Project was carried out in 1999. This issue was noted in the Stonehenge 2009 Plan and should be remedied as a matter of urgency to ensure that all significant sites and monuments, particularly buried archaeology, are adequately protected. ASHRG has noted this issue and hope to assist the Historic England Designation Team in identifying those monuments which need further investigation and designation. **(Policy 3a/Action 17)**

8.1.5 At the time of writing the Stonehenge 2009 Management Plan, a draft 'Heritage Protection Bill' was proposed which would have made changes to the statutory protection of the WHS. The Bill, however, was not included in the 2009 legislative programme. Since 2009 a number of changes have been made to the planning policy framework at a national level and these are outlined in Section 7.2 of this document. However, since 2009 there have been no substantive changes in the legislation to protect Scheduled Monuments. The questions remain at a national level of whether there is justification for revoking the current Class Consents for continued ploughing for certain sites and whether there should be further protection for certain types of sites

such as surface artefact scatters which are currently not included under the Ancient Monuments Act 1979 as amended in 1983.

Issue 13: *The conservation of designated elements of the historic environment*

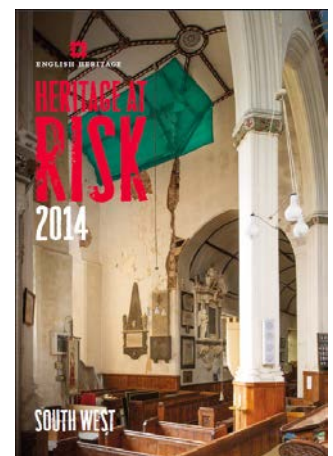
Conservation of other parts of the historic environment

8.1.6 There are a number of other notable historic assets within the WHS which – although not attributes of the Site's OUV – also require conservation. Many of these, including most of the Listed Buildings, are in private ownership and it is in the owner's interest to keep them well maintained. Grants may be available from the local planning authorities and Historic England for the most urgent and important of repairs.

8.1.7 Sometimes, the values related to various parts of the historic environment may be in conflict. For example, as a general rule, it is not good practice to have trees within hillforts or on their ramparts because of the damage this may cause. However, the planting at Vespasian's Camp is an integral part of the historic Grade II* park and garden of Amesbury Abbey, and has a historic value in its own right. A large area of the Henge is within the Avebury Conservation Area which contains a number of buildings listed on the National Heritage List for England although there is little conflict in the conservation of these assets. Consideration needs to be given to identifying local historic assets within the WHS in need of repair or change, agreeing programmes of work, and then setting them in hand. Identifying local historic assets could be carried out by volunteers following training by the appropriate authority and any remedial work by the landowners agreed as appropriate.

Heritage at Risk

8.1.8 Historic England produces a Heritage at Risk Survey each year which can be accessed online.⁸⁵ The Heritage at Risk Register records Grade I and II* Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments and is updated annually by the Heritage at Risk team within Historic England. In the 2013 Register there is one



Heritage at Risk 2014 South West

Listed Building (Gay's Cave and Diamond at Amesbury Abbey) and 42 Scheduled Monuments at risk within the WHS, mostly from cultivation. It is important to note that these are only the Scheduled Monuments and there are many more undesignated archaeological features within the WHS which are not recorded in this way but of equal significance and equally at risk from cultivation and other impacts.



© Wessex Archaeology

Undertaking the Condition Survey in 2010

To remain effective continuing partnership working is required and the LMA needs to be re-negotiated in a timely fashion in order to ensure the best protection for Guardianship monuments. **(Policy 3a/Action 26)**

8.2 Monument management

Issue 14: Enhancing management arrangements for monuments and sites in the WHS

Managing in partnership

8.2.1 The management of the monuments of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS is a complex issue with multiple ownership and responsibility. Only a small number of monuments are in the care of the State as 'Guardianship' monuments (Stonehenge, Durrington Walls (part), Woodhenge, Avebury Henge and Stone Circles, West Kennet Avenue (part), Silbury Hill, West Kennet Long Barrow, the Sanctuary and Windmill Hill). The remainder of the monuments are in private hands. Some are protected by being 'scheduled' and others are not scheduled and have no statutory protection.

8.2.2 The vast majority of monuments are managed by private land owners with some support through agri-environment schemes. All Historic England 'section 17' Management Agreements, which provided payments for the positive management of Scheduled Monuments, have now lapsed within the WHS. This mechanism may be appropriate in some cases in the future, particularly where agri-environment schemes are not possible. Whatever mechanisms are used, the effective partnership which exists between Historic England, Natural England, the County Archaeology Service of Wiltshire Council, and the WHS Coordination Unit needs to continue in order to provide the best protection and use of available resources to maintain and enhance the attributes of OUV.

Local Management Agreements

8.2.3 English Heritage and the National Trust work together closely in both parts of the WHS and in particular at Avebury where a Local Management Agreement (LMA) is in place. English Heritage and the National Trust share the costs of the conservation work carried out by the National Trust on monuments held in Guardianship. This LMA has worked successfully over recent years.

Issue 15: *There is a need to repeat the monument condition survey of all sites on a regular basis, building on the established methodology. This should include accurate monitoring of erosion rates for sites in cultivation*

WHS Condition Survey

8.2.4 A condition survey is a 'snapshot' of the monuments of the WHS and provides a valuable management tool to help prioritise work. *The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Monument Condition Survey*⁸⁶ was carried out in 2010. Following a review of methodologies used in previous condition surveys an agreed approach was developed that would provide a baseline to compare against in future surveys. The background is discussed in Section 2.0 of the Condition Survey 2012. In the case of Avebury a number of monuments were surveyed for the first time following the minor boundary change approved by the World Heritage Site Committee in 2008.⁸⁷ Some 1,002 monuments were surveyed (341 Avebury, 661 Stonehenge) and reviewed against the two separate condition surveys for Avebury (1999) and Stonehenge (2002).

8.2.5 The summary of the Condition Survey (2012) noted that: 'The survey revealed a positive change to the overall condition of monuments with increases in the number of monuments recorded as *fair* and *poor* with a decrease in monuments considered to be of *very bad* condition.' It goes on to report: 'This analysis is confirmed by the broad stability of good and fair monuments. The majority (87%) of good monuments are stable with no monuments undergoing moderate or rapid deterioration.' This reflects a great deal of positive management by the partners of the WHS of the attributes of OUV within both parts of the WHS.

8.2.6 The results of the Condition Survey show that the main threats to the archaeological features of the WHS in order of severity are: cultivation, burrowing animals, vegetation and erosion, particularly from vehicles.

8.2.7 The Condition Survey report was widely circulated to key partners within the WHS to enable them to use the information to prioritise repair and maintenance work within their estates. Further work should be undertaken to use the information contained within the Condition Survey to target areas or look at landscape-scale solutions to the issues that threaten the condition of the archaeological remains within the WHS.

(Policy 3a/Action 18)

8.2.8 The WHS Condition Survey should be carried out at least every 10 years to provide monitoring information on the condition of the archaeological remains within the WHS over time. It is essential that the information gained is shared with the relevant partners working within the WHS and used proactively to target available funds. **(Policy 3b/Action 27)**

***Issue 16:** Conservation statements should be produced and implemented for all the major monuments, incorporating the archaeological interests as a basis for sustainable visitor management*

Conservation statements

8.2.9 Conservation statements are concise management documents presenting the current understanding of a site, its significance and its conservation issues. A conservation statement for Stonehenge and its immediate environs is in the final stages of completion by English Heritage at the time of writing this management plan. This statement will help to prioritise any immediate conservation issues and to identify future management actions. **(Policy 3a/Action 22)**

8.2.10 A conservation statement for each individual monument or groups of monuments would assist in identifying key actions and priorities. Writing conservation statements for every monument will be a huge task. Plans for monuments currently in the guardianship of the State should be prioritised during the lifetime of this management plan. A schedule for the completion of conservation statements of Scheduled Monuments and the remaining undesignated attributes of OUV within the WHS should be agreed by the relevant partners and landowners.

(Policy 3a/Action 19)

Utility companies

8.2.11 Many utility services are buried underground and from time to time repairs or renewals need to be undertaken. Guidelines have been agreed by utility companies with the WHS for more extended consultation than would be normal in less sensitive areas. These guidelines should be reviewed to ensure that they are up to date for both parts of the WHS and that the utility companies are fully aware of the sensitivities of the WHS. The County Archaeology Service for Wiltshire, WHS Coordination Unit and Historic England work together to share information and ensure that all parties are aware of works taking place within the WHS and that any impact, particularly on below-ground archaeology, is carefully considered before proceeding with any works.

(Policy 3a/Action 20)

Metal detecting

8.2.12 Metal detecting can be useful as part of well thought through archaeological research projects. The risks posed by unauthorised metal detecting on any archaeological site is well documented. The use of metal detectors within a WHS is not illegal, although it is the subject of criminal law under certain circumstances. For example, under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, it is illegal to use a metal detector on a Scheduled Monument without a 'Section 42' licence from Historic England. Moreover, artefacts must not be removed from land without the landowner's permission, and all finds of Treasure (as detailed by the 1996 Treasure Act) must be reported to a coroner within 14 days. The National Council for Metal Detecting has its own Code of Conduct to guide the responsible use of metal detectors. The National Trust does not permit the use of metal detectors on its land unless as part of an approved archaeological project. Permission is also required by Natural England for metal detecting on a known archaeological site included within a Countryside or Environmental Stewardship Scheme. The use of metal detectors is prohibited on MoD land. A Finds Liaison Officer for Wiltshire, based at the Salisbury Museum, is building better lines of communication between archaeologists and detectorists, which has helped to increase the reporting of archaeological finds. In all other areas metal detecting should only be carried out with the permission of the landowner. It is important that the WHS Coordination Unit works with landowners to discourage metal detecting in the WHS to prevent the loss of important evidence. Where unauthorised metal detecting takes place the WHS



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Vehicle damage on the Ridgeway within the WHS

partners should work with landowners and the local police to discourage this. **(Policy 3a/Action 21)**

Issue 17: *Damage is evident on rights of way within the WHS which are used by a combination of pedestrian and motorised vehicles, and where these routes pass through areas of chalk grassland vegetation*

Visitor and vehicle damage

8.2.13 The impact of vehicles on visible and buried archaeology can be severe particularly during periods of poor weather conditions. In the Condition Survey

(2012) it was noted that instances of vehicle damage have increased from previous surveys. There were vehicle impacts recorded on 29 monuments at Stonehenge and 23 at Avebury. These are divided into damage on tracks and ad hoc damage within fields. Particular areas of concern are monuments on Byway 12 in Stonehenge at Normanton Down and elsewhere, the long barrow crossed by an access track on the Cursus, and on the Ridgeway and Green Street in Avebury. Damage has also been recorded along the B4003 at Avebury. These issues are dealt with in Section 11.0 on Roads and Traffic. A review of the impact of vehicle damage should be undertaken and a prioritised schedule of works developed to reduce or remove the impact of vehicle erosion on the attributes of OUV. Multiple owners and responsible authorities mean that a partnership approach is essential to achieve successful outcomes. **(Policy 3a/Actions 23, 24, 25)**

8.2.14 Damage caused by footfall, particularly at Avebury, has been a concern for some time. However, the Condition Survey (2012) notes that at Avebury: 'Damage as a result of visitor pressures affects just 1% of monuments, down from 2% and the trend at Stonehenge is also down.' The effect of the new

Policy 3a – Manage the WHS to protect the physical remains which contribute to its attributes of OUV and improve their condition

ACTIONS

- 16** Produce a landscape-scale WHS Burrowing Animal Strategy using latest evidence and information from the 2010 *WHS Condition Survey* and *Badger Survey*. Develop good practice guidance and example case studies to encourage a landscape-scale approach building on existing studies. Identify priority actions.
- 17** Undertake a review of Scheduled Monuments and current undesignated monuments which are of potential national importance with a view to prioritising and developing proposals for a designation review.
- 18** Use Condition Survey to identify and prioritise works for continued targeted management and conservation work to mitigate negative impacts from cultivation, burrowing animals, stock, scrub and vehicle and visitor erosion. (Arable reversion opportunities mapping related to minimising damage from cultivation).
- 19** Prepare (or update where existing) conservation statements for all guardianship and other major sites.
- 20** Review guidelines for utility companies working within the WHS and its setting. Liaise with companies to ensure guidelines are adhered to
- 21** Work with landowners to discourage metal detecting within the WHS and develop WHS policy.

Stonehenge

- 22** Finalise and publish English Heritage's Stonehenge Conservation Statement (2015) and implement recommendations. Undertake a risk assessment to assess the susceptibility of stone carvings and dressing to damage. Design appropriate monitoring indicators
- 23** Design and implement management system on Byway 12 to prevent damage to both surface archaeology and buried archaeology
- 24** Divert access track currently running across Cursus long barrow to avoid damage

Avebury

- 25** Design and implement management system on the Ridgeway National Trail to prevent damage to both surface and buried archaeology. Produce case study/standards guidance applicable to other archaeologically sensitive locations.
- 26** Local Management Agreements (LMA) will be renewed on time with adequate funding to facilitate best practice conservation and management.

Visitor Centre at Stonehenge on changes to footfall and possible damage should be carefully monitored by English Heritage and the National Trust and action taken as appropriate. The management of visitors around the WHS is discussed further in Section 9.0 (Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism).

Issue 18: Monitoring, maintaining and improvement of the condition of archaeological remains within the WHS

Monitoring

8.2.15 The condition of the archaeological sites and monuments is monitored in a number of ways:

- The carrying out of surveys both by individual landowners and landscape wide such as the WHS Condition Survey
- Monitoring by landowners including the National Trust
- Through Higher Level Stewardship scheme and SSSI after care visits
- By the Historic England Heritage at Risk Project Officer (formerly Historic Environment Field Advisers).

8.2.16 Despite the frequent and ongoing work undertaken by the partners throughout the WHS there are a number of monuments that are not monitored as regularly as would be desirable for the proactive management of archaeological remains. The Condition Survey, as already noted, only provides a snapshot at one point in time. Historic England employs a Heritage at Risk Projection Officer (HARPO) to monitor the Heritage at Risk for Wiltshire, Swindon and parts of Somerset. This is a considerable reduction on the previous arrangement where a Historic Environment Field Adviser (HEFA) covered just the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, albeit on a part time basis. More proactive monitoring would enable WHS partners to make more informed management decisions to minimise harm to the attributes of OUV.

8.2.17 The reduction in resources for both the public and charitable sector means that alternative means to increase monitoring of the WHS monuments need to be explored. In particular, the use of volunteers should be investigated. Appropriate training would need to be provided to ensure accuracy and consistency, along with a suitable reporting mechanism. Examples of schemes established elsewhere include the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Parks.⁸⁸

Monitoring indicators

8.2.18 Monitoring indicators were included in both the Avebury 2005 and the Stonehenge 2009 Plans but they have not yet been consistently applied. These monitoring indicators should be reviewed by relevant partners for both parts of the WHS and reporting procedures agreed to ensure the WHS maintains an up to date picture of the condition and emerging threats to the WHS and its attributes of OUV to enable timely management decisions. **(Policy 3b/Action 27, 28, 29)**

Laser scan survey

8.2.19 Archaeologists are increasingly using technology to learn more about archaeological features both visible and buried. English Heritage carried out a detailed laser scan survey in 2011/12 of the Stonehenge stone circle. This digitally mapped the surface of all stones of the Stonehenge circle and provides a clear picture of wear on the monument since its construction. The results of this survey have informed the development of English Heritage's Stonehenge Conservation Statement (2014) which sets out the conservation principles for the monument and its immediate environs and will inform management decisions made by English Heritage. It is anticipated that repeat laser scan surveys will be carried out at regular intervals in order to assess any negative impacts on the monument over time.⁸⁹ Monitoring indicators to assess the condition of the stone carvings and evidence of stone dressing need to be designed.

Policy 3b – Review regularly the condition and vulnerability of all archaeological sites and monuments throughout the WHS to guide management actions and future priorities

ACTIONS

- 27 Undertake repeat WHS-wide Condition Survey using as a basis the methodology established in the 2010 Survey.
- 28 Review WHS monitoring indicators and agree a reporting procedure with relevant partners.
- 29 Review headline priorities on an annual basis for conservation works in response to WHS monitoring indicators. Report to WHSCs and WHSPP.



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Landscape setting of West Kennet Long Barrow looking towards the Sanctuary

8.3 The setting of the WHS and its attributes of Outstanding Universal Value

Issue 19: *There should be an appropriate setting for the WHS and its attributes of OUV*

The setting of the WHS

- 8.3.1** The setting of the WHS is characterised by a rolling open landscape which is particularly sensitive to development.
- 8.3.2** At Stonehenge, with the exception of the grassland areas in and around key monuments, the landscape of the WHS is more or less wholly farmed with extensive areas of very large arable fields. There are also limited (but visually prominent) areas of woodland. Principal features of the landscape include the distinctive ridgelines with their concentrations of visible archaeological remains, including the Stones themselves, and dry valleys which cut deeply into the surrounding downland. The strongly contrasting slopes and floodplain of the River Avon form the eastern boundary of the WHS and contain distinctive historic buildings and villages.
- 8.3.3** At Avebury the WHS is a mosaic of landscapes which includes a number of settlements indicating its long

history of occupation. As at Stonehenge principal features of the landscape include the distinctive ridgelines with their concentrations of visible archaeological remains. Another distinctive feature is the sarsen stones which have been worked for millennia for the construction of monuments and buildings. The Avebury landscape contains dry valleys, a river valley – the Kennet – and the winterbourne valley whose stream is entirely dependent on the height of the water table in the porous chalk sub-soil. Avebury is towards the north-western edge of the North Wessex Downs AONB.

8.3.4 The landscape character of the WHS is described further in Part One, Section 2.2 and 2.5 above. More information can be found in the National Character Areas⁹⁰ developed by Natural England, the North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment and the Wiltshire Historic Landscape Characterisation project currently underway.

8.3.5 Both halves of the WHS share the key aspects of the relationship between monuments and sites and the landscape which include:

- The location of prehistoric barrow groups along visually prominent ridgelines alongside and visible from river courses
- Strong visual relationships between each of the other principal archaeological sites

- The change in viewpoints of key monuments such as Stonehenge and Silbury Hill which suggest that anticipation and expectation in the form of views and movement towards monuments may have been an important element of historic ceremonies and rituals.
- At Stonehenge important astronomical alignments are apparent through key sight-lines in the WHS landscape and its setting

8.3.6 The WHS is inscribed as a Cultural World Heritage Site. There have been discussions in the past about the possibility of looking for a redesignation of Stonehenge and Avebury WHS as a Cultural Landscape. This idea is no longer current due to the cost of redesignation and because the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value 2013 (Statement of OUV) recognises that the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS are 'landscapes without parallel' and greater emphasis in the Statement of OUV has been placed on the landscape values of the WHS. Although the WHS remains a Cultural WHS this in no way implies that it sits in isolation from the natural environment that surrounds it. The close relationship of the historic and natural environments at Stonehenge and Avebury has been reflected for many years in the close partnership between the WHS landowners and managers and Natural England in managing the Site.

8.3.7 The main pressures on the landscape continue to include development and changes in land use which can alter or even destroy these often subtle, but important visual and contextual relationships. Such relationships are in themselves attributes of the OUV of the WHS. Improved understanding of these relationships enhances enjoyment of a visit to the WHS as a whole, rather than limiting experience to key monuments such as the Henge at Avebury and the Stones at Stonehenge and a few set-piece viewpoints. The mechanisms for managing the pressures of development are outlined in Section 7.0 (Planning and Policy).

8.3.8 The WHS represents just two areas of Wiltshire. The county contains an abundance of archaeological remains and monuments, some of which are nationally significant and belong to the Neolithic and Bronze Age. This provides a wealth of questions about the shaping of the landscape by our prehistoric ancestors and should be reflected in the emerging Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Research Framework, see Section 12.0 (Research). The WHS Setting Study discussed in Section 7.0 (Planning and Policy) should consider the wider context within which the WHS sits and may help to inform the WHS boundary review at Stonehenge.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

8.3.9 An Historic Landscape Characterisation assessment (HLC) is currently being carried out by Wiltshire Council with funding from Historic England. This project is due for completion in 2015. This HLC is being carried out for the whole of Wiltshire but case studies of both parts of the WHS will be finished by the time this Management Plan is published. This assessment will deepen understanding of how the present landscape character of the WHS relates to its historic usage and development and inform management decisions and planning policies. **(Policy 3c/Action 30)**

8.3.10 In previous Management Plans for both Stonehenge and Avebury there have been a number of attempts to assess the relative sensitivity of known archaeological remains in the WHS to visual impact. The intervisibility of sites is an important attribute of the OUV which should be maintained and protected. Improvements in technical capabilities have meant that this can be graphically represented more easily. This is reflected in Maps 11 and 22; however, any map can only provide a limited indication of possible issues or areas of concern. Any new development needs to be carefully considered on an individual basis to assess its impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV.

WHS Setting Study

8.3.11 A Setting Study of the WHS (see Section 7.5.12) will allow planners and developers to more fully appreciate the impact of development on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. At Stonehenge, the important solstitial alignments explored by archaeo-astronomers both within and outside the WHS boundary should be taken into account in the production of the Setting Study for the WHS.

8.3.12 There are issues of setting not only for the WHS as a whole but also for individual attributes of OUV. The issues around setting of monuments and sites and its impact on their significance is discussed at Section 7.5.11 above. Some key monuments would benefit from an improvement in their setting to enhance the visitor experience and understanding of their significance. In many cases this enhancement would include the removal of modern intrusions. For example, a partnership approach would benefit the setting of Durrington Walls/Woodhenge. Multiple owners and changes in the road network have resulted in an unsatisfactory arrangement for this area. The discoveries made during the Stonehenge Riverside Project (2005–8) have led to an increased interest from

visitors and the improvements in the interpretation scheme at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre and across the landscape have added to this interest. The landscape setting of these important monuments is poor. There is a small car park close to the monuments and the site is bisected by Fargo Road leading from the A345 to Larkhill. The former road bed of the A345 still crosses Durrington Walls. This area is owned and managed by a number of partners. A feasibility study for improvements to this area was undertaken in 2006 but no firm plans have been developed. A working group of relevant partners together with the local community is required to find solutions for the enhancement of this location and the setting of the monuments. **(Policy 3c/Action 36)**



Vehicle travelling along B4003

© Colin Shell



Durrington Walls information point

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8.3.13 At Avebury, the area around Overton Hill, the Sanctuary and the start of the Ridgeway National Trail would similarly benefit from a review of current arrangements to benefit the setting of those monuments and improve the visitor experience. **(Policy 3c/Action 40)**

WHS Landscape Strategy

8.3.14 The wider context of the WHS within the natural landscape is an important consideration. The WHS lies at the heart of England's chalk downland landscape, the 'Wiltshire Chalk County'. The WHS straddles Salisbury Plain, the largest tract of chalk grassland in North-West Europe, and is situated between the North Wessex Downs AONB to the east and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB to the south and west. The role of the WHS as a window to both the wider historic and natural landscapes should thus be recognised, valued and reflected in future management and advocacy.

8.3.15 Continuing developments in the science of environmental archaeology means that we are increasing our understanding of what the natural environment of the WHS was like in the Neolithic and early Bronze Age, though we can never return to an authentic prehistoric landscape. However, opportunities do arise with changes of ownership, priorities and agendas to take steps to improve the landscape setting of the WHS. A WHS Landscape Strategy is required to articulate the landscape-scale aspirations for the WHS. This would reflect information from the *WHS Woodland Strategy* (2015), *WHS Condition Survey* (2012), the emerging WHS Chalk Grassland Strategy, National Character Areas developed by Natural England, the Historic Landscape Characterisations completed by the AONBs and Wiltshire Council and any WHS Setting Study. A WHS Landscape Strategy should consider new developments such as the new Visitor Centre at Stonehenge and its impact and whether any additional screening or other mitigation might be appropriate. This study should consider whether light pollution is an issue and if so how it can be addressed. **(Policy 3c/Action 35)** As our understanding of the historic landscape increases new challenges will emerge in relation to its management. **(Policy 3c/Action 32)**

Roads and setting

8.3.16 The issue of traffic and transport is dealt with in detail in Section 11.0. Roads undoubtedly affect the setting of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Both Avebury and Stonehenge are bisected by major roads, the A4 and A303 respectively. These not only make exploring the WHS difficult but affect the setting of monuments such as Silbury Hill, Stonehenge and the barrows on King Barrow Ridge. The B4003 runs along and across the West Kennet Avenue. Vehicles travelling along this road both affect the setting of the West Kennet Avenue and despite efforts to mitigate it, cause damage to the fragile archaeological remains in its verges. **(Policy 3c/Action 37)**

Policy 3c – Maintain and enhance the setting of monuments and sites in the landscape and their interrelationships and astronomical alignments with particular attention given to achieving an appropriate landscape setting for the monuments and the WHS itself

ACTIONS

- 30** Produce WHS HLC case studies based on Wiltshire Council HLC to inform WHS Landscape Strategy.
- 31** Identify key views between the attributes of OUV and both into and out of the WHS. Identify key astronomical alignments.
- 32** Produce a WHS Landscape Strategy to articulate a landscape-scale aspiration for the WHS. Informed by the *WHS Woodland Strategy*, *Chalk Grassland Strategy* and the *North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan* amongst other relevant documents.
- 33** Review the need for a specific policy on archaeological restoration and reconstruction in the WHS.
- 34** Work with planners and parish/town councils to reduce advertisements, banners and signage within the WHS both through the planning process and where formal planning permission is not required. Work with civilian and military partners to avoid overflying the WHS.

Stonehenge

- 35** Undertake a review of impacts (including visual) of Visitor Centre and associated development on the WHS landscape. Reflect results in WHS Landscape Strategy.
- 36** Agree and implement actions to improve the setting and integrity of Woodhenge and Durrington Walls.

Avebury

- 37** Reduce the intrusion of the B4003 and traffic on the West Kennet Avenue. Halt road-edge erosion of scheduled areas and manage parking.
- 38** Replace 1950s conservation measures at West Kennet Long Barrow to improve condition and integrity of the monument with a less intrusive design and materials.
- 39** Lessen intrusion in the setting of Silbury Hill, the Sanctuary and Overton Hill Barrow Cemetery along the A4 from roads and traffic
- 40** Improve setting of the Sanctuary and Overton Hill Barrow Cemetery. Remove scrub and trees and manage recent hedgerow planting to restore the silhouette of barrows from the east.

Aircraft and setting

8.3.17 The setting of the WHS includes all aspects of the environment in which the attributes of OUV are experienced. Low flying by aircraft (including drones, helicopters, microlights and similar aircraft, and the launching of hot air balloons) represents an intrusion in the setting and detracts from the WHS Vision of a rural and tranquil environment for the WHS and should be avoided. The WHS Coordination Unit should look for opportunities to work with civilian and military partners to avoid overflying the WHS. Overflying may be necessary for some types of conservation and research projects eg Lidar surveys. **(Policy 3C/Action34)**

Modern clutter

8.3.18 Street furniture, signage and advertisements are all part of normal daily life but ill thought out street furniture, banners and signage can be intrusive. Modern clutter should be kept to a minimum and location and design should be carefully considered. Where planning permission is required this should be reflected in any decisions. Intrusions which do not expressly require planning permission or other consent, especially those within the setting of monuments and sites, should be avoided. This should be dealt with at a local level by parish and town councils. **(Policy 3c/Action 34)**

Restoration and reconstruction

8.3.19 On occasion questions are raised about whether monuments should be restored or reconstructed. This issue is a sensitive one and there are a number of differing viewpoints. Debate on the subject is closely linked to the issue of authenticity, a key criterion of OUV. There is a range of international guidance on the matter. *The International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites*, *The Venice Charter* (ICOMOS, 1964) remains, despite its vintage, a valuable guide providing a flexible framework that allows for professional analysis of individual cases. In addition relevant guidance is provided at a national level in documents such as English Heritage's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008). The need for a specific WHS policy should be considered to allow future queries to be dealt with in a coherent and consistent manner by the appropriate bodies involved. Currently at Avebury, English Heritage is working with the National Trust on a project to restore and improve the failing conservation measures installed in the 1950s at the West Kennet Long Barrow. WHS partners should consider the requirement for specific policies for archaeological reconstruction and restoration within the WHS. **(Policy 3c/Actions 33, 38)**

Undergrounding cables

8.3.20 Cables and pylons for electricity or telecommunications are often visually intrusive in the landscape. The wish to improve the setting of monuments and the wider WHS landscape and the further knowledge that might be gained from any excavation should be balanced against any potential damage to buried archaeology. Excellent partnership working resulted in a project to bury cables underground and remove modern clutter from the landscape at Overton Hill in Avebury in 2010. Opportunities for further undergrounding of cables should be identified in both parts of the WHS so that the Coordination Unit can respond when funds are available in the future. **(Policy 3d/Action 41)**

Impact of fences and other structures on monuments

8.3.21 The Condition Survey notes that in the Stonehenge part of the WHS there is some inappropriate fencing cutting across monuments or not encompassing the entire monument. A great deal of work has been undertaken by the National Trust, particularly in the Stonehenge part of the WHS around the Cursus Barrow group and the Cursus, to improve fence lines providing better protection and visibility. Wherever possible, fence lines should be removed from upstanding monuments and also provide a sufficient buffer area not only to protect the monument but also to assist in the interpretation and visibility of monuments within the landscape. **(Policy 3d/Action 42)**

8.3.22 At Silbury Hill, the balance between preventing access to this fragile monument with providing a suitable setting that is not marred by intrusive fencing is a difficult one. More work is required to reach a suitable solution and reduce unauthorised access to the monument. The solution will also need to ensure that the Silbury Hill SSSI can still be grazed to maintain the notified chalk grassland and associated species. **(Policy 3c/Action 45)**



Fencing and signage at Silbury Hill

8.3.23 At Avebury, the location of the Avebury and District Club House close to the Henge detracts from the setting of the monument. Finding an alternate location would undoubtedly be difficult but this long-term aim should remain in order to take advantage of any future opportunities. **(Policy 3d/Action 46)**

Redundant structures

8.3.24 Structures such as the redundant sewage outfall infrastructure which cuts across the Cursus monument at Stonehenge should be removed. **(Policy 3d/Action 43)**

8.3.25 At Stonehenge, the Larkhill sewage works is under review due to expansion within the area controlled by the MoD. This facility sits very close to the northern boundary of the Cursus and consideration should be given in any plans to reducing the impact on the Cursus and views from Stonehenge close by. The MoD has programmed works to address this for summer 2015. **(Policy 3d/Action 44)**

Policy 3d – Improve the WHS landscape by the removal, redesign or screening of existing intrusive structures such as power lines, fences and unsightly buildings where opportunities arise

ACTIONS

- 41** Identify intrusive power lines and seek opportunities for further undergrounding.
- 42** Remove redundant fences where possible and appropriate and ensure necessary fencing is maintained in a good state of repair to enhance WHS landscape.

Stonehenge

- 43** Remove redundant sewage outfall infrastructure from the Cursus and Stonehenge Bottom.
- 44** Complete planned works to reduce adverse impact of Larkhill sewage works. Look for opportunities to relocate and enhance the WHS and its setting.

Avebury

- 45** Review fencing to reduce visual intrusion while still providing an effective deterrent to climbing Silbury Hill and enable safe grazing of the SSSI.
- 46** Review opportunities for long-term relocation of Avebury and District Club House to a less sensitive position.



Charlie Waite © K930754 Historic England

Arable farming within the WHS. Below the Ridgeway, Avebury

8.3.26 A good deal of ongoing work is undertaken by all partners in the WHS to control scrub and burrowing animals to protect archaeological features and to enable visitors to read and understand the landscape better. **(Policy 3e/Action 47, 48, 49)**

8.3.27 Some features such as the West Kennet Palisade Enclosures and parts of the Avenue at Stonehenge are invisible. Consideration needs to be given to how such features can be made more visible or interpreted to visitors more clearly. This needs to be based on the most up to date research to ensure that we have the most accurate information available. More details can be found in Section 12.0 (Research) and in the *Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework 2015*. **(Policy 3e/Action 50)**

8.4 Agriculture

Issue 20: *Scheduling has increased the survival rate of monuments in the WHS. However, a good proportion of Scheduled Monuments within the WHS are still adversely affected by agriculture*

Agriculture

8.4.1 Whilst there has been a great deal of success in reverting arable to grassland to protect both visible and

Policy 3e – *Conserve and/or make more visible buried, degraded or obscured archaeological features within the WHS without detracting from their intrinsic form and character*

ACTIONS

- 47** Continue and carry out additional scrub control and manage woodland and hedges to enhance landscape views.
- 48** Remove damaging or intrusive fences where possible to improve condition and visibility of monuments
- 49** Undertake appropriate management of burrowing animals with advice from NE to protect the monument without harming the setting of the affected monuments.
- 50** Develop a sensitive evidence based approach to enhancing the visibility of buried monuments such as the West Kennet Palisade Enclosures.

buried archaeology, the Condition Survey 2012 noted that in terms of ongoing impacts for both sections of the WHS, cultivation of monuments remains the biggest threat. In the Stonehenge area, ongoing cultivation impacts affected 216 monuments (33%) of which 104 are scheduled. In addition there were a further 125 monuments that were cultivated of which 70%, although not scheduled, can be considered to contribute

to the attributes of OUV due to the monument type and period classification. In the Avebury area, ongoing cultivation impacts affected 127 monuments (37%) of which 61 are scheduled. There are a further 66 monuments that are cultivated of which 85%, although not scheduled, can be considered attributes of OUV due to the monument type and period classification. The WHS Coordination Unit should continue to work with Natural England and landowners to seek opportunities for further reversion to grassland but it is recognised that this will not always be possible and other approaches need to be considered.

Agricultural practices impact on archaeological features

8.4.2 Research jointly funded by English Heritage and Defra (trials to identify soil cultivation practices to minimise the impact on archaeological sites, Oxford Archaeology and Cranfield University⁹¹) has shown that even inversion tillage to a constant depth over a site where cultivation has already eradicated all upstanding earthworks will continue to erode the archaeological deposits (albeit slowly), unless a suitable soil buffer exists between the archaeology and cultivation horizons. In cases where field operations are undertaken in wet weather however, soil compaction will bring archaeological deposits into the cultivation horizon much more rapidly (and accelerate degradation and loss). In cases where cultivation is being undertaken on sites which have never been ploughed, damage will be both immediate and much greater, although this is not currently a serious problem at Stonehenge and Avebury. Factors which affect the degree of archaeological loss from continued cultivation include the local topography (sites on slopes will be more vulnerable to damage than others on flat areas, because of soil movement and the loss of buffer deposits). Similarly, soil type, rainfall and the nature of the archaeology also have a bearing upon survival and risk.

8.4.3 Historic England has recently completed its Conservation of Scheduled Monuments in Cultivation (COSMIC) 3 project – a desktop assessment of risk and recommended mitigation/management for over 1,500 Scheduled Monuments nationally affected by cultivation (including some within the WHS). Further survey is however required within the WHS to extend this approach to undesignated archaeological sites with a view to prioritising which monuments currently in cultivation are in most urgent need of management intervention either through reversion to grassland, or in many cases simply by changing the way in which cultivation is undertaken. This might be through switching

to non-inversion minimum tillage or direct drilling techniques, or more simply still, by not sub-soiling. Other techniques might include using the latest precision farming machinery and techniques using GPS mapping to avoid archaeology. The degree of survival of remains on a specific site, and its vulnerability, could be tested using relevant field techniques, although this would be relatively time-consuming and costly given the number of monuments under cultivation within the WHS. In light of the success of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme Special Project, and the New Environmental Land Management Scheme, Defra, Natural England and the WHS Coordination unit, together with local farmers and landowners, should continue to be involved in the resolution of these complex issues.



The Trials Project: faux archaeological deposits used to assess the effects of various cultivation practices

Issue 21: Agricultural practices within the WHS – balancing the needs of farmers with those of the historic environment

- 8.4.4** The 2014 *Phase 1 Habitat Survey* demonstrated that around 75% of the WHS is in arable use.
- 8.4.5** On some National Trust land, there are agreements which restrict livestock numbers, ploughing depths, fertiliser application and sprays. Such restrictions also apply to some areas which are within agri-environmental schemes. Elsewhere, land managers are not required to distinguish between land within and outside the WHS. Visible archaeological features are generally not cultivated, but those which are not obvious on the surface are often cultivated in the same manner as the rest of the farm.
- 8.4.6** There are a number of benefits to the WHS of increasing the extent of permanent pasture for the character of the WHS. These include:
- A reduction in the potential damage caused to known and unknown archaeological remains by ploughing

- A consistency with archaeological evidence that much of the Avebury and Stonehenge landscapes would have been grassland in the period contemporary with Stonehenge and Avebury's use in prehistory and therefore its restoration in this area offers an appropriate land cover in historical terms
- The replacement of arable crops which tend to obscure more subtle earthworks and barrows, thus hindering interpretation
- The facilitation, subject to stock control, of greater public access and freedom of movement (eg permissive access is allowed on much of the National Trust's pastures)
- The potential to enhance the WHS's nature conservation value by establishing semi-natural chalk grassland communities in a nationally important area for chalk grassland reconnection and defragmentation
- The potential to enhance the visitor experience by managing and interpreting colourful wildlife-rich grasslands
- The potential to enhance visual understanding of monuments invisible on the ground by, for instance, differential grass-cutting.



Sheep scrape

© Wessex Archaeology

8.4.7 Further work is needed to seek long-term sustainable arable reversion for monuments and sites currently affected or vulnerable to cultivation. Priorities should be based on the Heritage at Risk Register, the *WHS Condition Survey* and the WHS arable reversion opportunities map created for both parts of the WHS which identified key areas of archaeological sensitivity within the WHS.

8.4.8 At Stonehenge, the vast majority of permanent grassland in the WHS occurs in and around Stonehenge itself. Here the National Trust and private owners have successfully converted large areas of former arable land to grassland, often with the support of agri-environmental grants. At Avebury, there are key areas of pasture on Waden Hill, the Avebury Circle, the West Kennet Avenue, Overton Hill Seven Barrows, river valley grassland, Fyfield Down (SSSI/NNR), Silbury Hill (SSSI) and Windmill Hill.

8.4.9 Many upstanding and uncultivated monuments are not otherwise managed and are viewed by some landowners as obstacles to straightforward cultivation, resulting in added costs to farmers. They then become vulnerable to scrub growth which can ultimately cause root damage and attract burrowing animals. Fences around monuments can interfere with access for maintenance mowing. Some farmers do allow grazing stock into the enclosures for a few days under good ground conditions, in order to graze off the vegetation. Deer, rabbits and hares have relatively little impact on keeping scrub growth down, though burrowing can cause problems on monuments. Initiatives such as Stock Keep or Sheep Keep, a website that aims to match livestock to grazing, could be explored.⁹²

8.4.10 Whilst it is generally agreed that reversion to pasture is the best method to protect upstanding and buried archaeology from the impact of the plough, the use of grazing is not without its own dangers. Attention needs to be given to levels of grazing, scrapes and other issues arising from pastoral management of monuments. Work should be undertaken to develop and build on existing guidelines which help landowners and managers manage pastoral areas sustainably.⁹³ A methodology needs to be agreed for monitoring the impact of grazing levels in advance of the next WHS Condition Survey.

(Policy 3f/Action 53)

Issue 22: Defra's agri-environmental funding is changing in 2014 and the future impact is as yet unclear

Agri-environmental land management schemes

8.4.11 The Special Project agri-environment funding which began in 2002 from Defra⁹⁴ was enormously helpful in creating incentives for local farmers in both parts of the WHS and resulted in significant increases in areas taken out of the plough and reverted to pasture. In 2005, a successor Agri-Environment scheme, Environmental Stewardship, was set up which had different rules, payments and management options. Specific Historic Environment options to protect buried archaeology, similar to the CSS special project, were introduced and made available in all target areas. Many farmers have remained committed to grass reversion transferring to the successor Natural England scheme Environmental Stewardship. However buoyant cereal prices meant that farmers were faced with difficult decisions when considering whether to take up HLS schemes. Where farmers are unable or reluctant to take up agri-environment schemes other possible arrangements and sources of funding should be considered. Alternative agreements such as Heritage Partnership Agreements with Historic England should be considered.

Opportunities for funding reversion through developer funding could possibly be explored where schemes contribute to biodiversity. Protection might be achieved through encouraging best arable practice following the review of the least harmful form of cultivation with a technique such as the Conservation of Scheduled Monuments in Cultivation (COSMIC) methodology or similar to establish the least harmful cultivation method. Guidance produced following such a review should be made available to landowners, farmers and managers. Monitoring of impact of monuments in cultivation should be included in the WHS Condition Survey to establish whether the guidance is fit for purpose.

(Policy 3f/Action 55)

8.4.12 A number of agri-environmental schemes have expired since the Management Plans of 2005 and 2009. Natural England, Historic England, Wiltshire Council Archaeological Service and the WHS Coordination Unit have worked closely together to try to obtain the best result for the WHS and its attributes of OUV. In most cases farmers have entered new schemes despite uncertainty over the terms of the agri-environmental schemes due to start in 2015. However, there have been some losses in both Avebury and Stonehenge, where amongst other reasons such as change of ownership, farmers did not feel that the payments were sufficient to outweigh the potential income from arable crops following the loss of the enhanced incentives. It is important to ensure that schemes offer sufficient financial incentives.

8.4.13 A new Countryside Stewardship Scheme will be launched in 2015 as part of a European-wide review of the Common Agricultural Policy. It is currently planned that farmers and land managers can start applying for Countryside Stewardship from July 2015. Agreements and payments will begin in 2016. The priority is to deliver Biodiversity 2020 and Water Framework Directive targets. Elements to help protect the historic environment and Scheduled Monuments remain. The WHS Coordination Unit will need to work closely with Natural England, Historic England and the County Archaeology Service for Wiltshire to ensure that the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme can be used to best advantage to continue to protect the WHS and its attributes of OUV. The



CAP leaflet Defra

Countryside Stewardship Scheme is expected to deliver multiple benefits. In the WHS there is a track record for the extension of permanent wildlife-rich grassland to deliver multiple benefits including nature conservation, amenity, archaeological conservation and landscape benefits. There is however a real risk that farmers and landowners will be reluctant to renew agreements unless economic incentives are adequate to make business sense. The WHS Coordination Unit will continue to advocate at a national level for the historic environment

Policy 3f – Encourage land management activities and measures to maximise the protection of archaeological monuments and sites as well as their settings, and the setting of the WHS itself

ACTIONS

- 51** Seek conversion to grassland for monuments and sites vulnerable to or currently affected by cultivation. Prioritise based on the Heritage at Risk register, the WHS Condition Survey and the WHS Arable Reversion Opportunities Mapping. The latter includes those currently unscheduled attributes of OUV. Refer to relevant documents including NWDAONB Chalk Grassland Strategy and Arable Biodiversity Strategy.
- 52** Seek to maintain and establish semi-natural, species-rich grassland to achieve a more appropriate landscape setting for archaeological sites and monuments.
- 53** Agree methodology for monitoring grazing levels on the condition of the WHS in advance of the next Condition Survey.
- 54** Continue to develop and improve relationships with farmers and landowners to encourage uptake of agri-environment schemes and *WHS Woodland Strategy* and other guidance produced. Produce leaflet, web resource or offer targeted workshops following consultation with farmers on their preferred approach to communication.
- 55** Explore other arrangements and sources of funding where conservation is required but agri-environment schemes may not be appropriate or taken up:
 - (a) Encourage arable best practice. Employ the Conservation of Scheduled Monuments in Cultivation (COSMIC) methodology or similar to establish to least harmful cultivation method. Produce guidance on arable management opportunities within the WHS. Include monitoring of impacts on monuments in cultivation in Condition Survey.
 - (b) Encourage alternative agreements, eg Heritage Partnership Agreements between HE and landowners.
 - (c) Identify opportunities for developer funding to contribute to biodiversity enhancements.

and the special case of the WHS as well as the need for adequate incentives for farmers. **(Policy 3f/Action 52)**

8.4.14 There is some concern from farmers that schemes may restrict their ability to operate freely in the future and affect the value of their landholdings although there is no evidence of the latter. It is therefore essential to continue to develop and improve relationships with farmers in order to encourage uptake of agri-environment schemes and the recommendations of the *WHS Woodland Strategy* which will help to protect the attributes of OUV. Consultation should take place to establish the preferred mechanism for communication with landowners, agents and farmers to make contact easier and more open. An event could be held in each part of the WHS which would provide an opportunity for discussion between key partners within the WHS such as Natural England and Historic England, the Coordination Unit and landowners, agents and farmers. **(Policy 3f/Action 54)**

8.4.15 It will be considerably more difficult in the years to come to maintain current levels of grassland if funding for agri-environment schemes is further reduced and/or economic incentives for cultivation increase. Priorities for any further areas of grassland need to be assessed through the Arable Reversion Opportunities Map developed for both parts of the WHS and WHS Chalk Grassland Strategy discussed at paragraph 8.5.15. In particular, unscheduled archaeological features should be considered for inclusion in target areas.

8.4.16 The WHS Coordination Unit should continue its strong links with both Natural England and Historic England at both local and national level to make the case for the World Heritage Site as a priority area which can deliver a range of benefits including protection of the historic environment, contributing to the natural environment and in particular Biodiversity 2020 targets and public enjoyment. **(Policy 3g/Action 56)**

Policy 3g – Maintain, enhance and extend existing areas of permanent grassland where appropriate

ACTIONS

- 56** Establish a working group to explore the approaches to retaining previously reverted land and possible longer term funding/management agreement. Feed recommendations to Defra, NE, HE and other relevant national bodies to make the case for continued funding and targeting of the WHS using examples of achievement and multiple public benefits.

8.5 Nature conservation

Understanding the value of conservation within the WHS



Wildflowers on Stonehenge Down

© Beth Thomas

8.5.1 The landscape biodiversity values of the WHS are discussed fully in Section 2.5.1–2.5.27.

8.5.2 The process of mapping the ecological value of the WHS can begin using the *Phase 1 Habitat Survey* (Section 2.5.13) and the 2014 Bird Survey discussed in Section 2.5.22 above as a basis. In addition, a WHS stone-curlew strategy was prepared in 2008 for Stonehenge and will be updated for the whole WHS during the course of this Plan with a view to promoting opportunities to establish further stone-curlew plots and scrapes compatible to historic interests and public access. Further information from other Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species such as bumble bees, arable plants, bats and brown hare can be added during the lifetime of the next plan so that the ecological value of the WHS can be fully understood. **(Policy 3h/Action 61)**

8.5.3 Farmland birds are particularly important in the WHS due to their decline nationally over the past 50 years. Species include stone-curlew, corn bunting, skylark, tree sparrow, yellow wagtail, lapwing and wintering golden plover. The River Avon SSSI/SAC is, in part, the eastern boundary of the WHS. Reversion and management as extensive grassland in the catchment will also benefit the River by reducing the potential impacts of fertiliser and other agricultural inputs and diffuse pollution. Some of the adjacent water meadows are also designated as SSSI for wet grassland and diverse plant communities, breeding and wintering waders/wildfowl and European Protected species such as Desmoulin's whorl snail. This is in addition to the historic landscape value of the



© Trace Williams RSPB

Cowslips on disc barrow

meadows and importance of the river in the Stonehenge landscape's development. The head of the River Kennet occurs within the Avebury WHS and is an important wildlife habitat. The Avebury part of the WHS also contains lichens and mosses of national importance associated with the sarsens found on Fyfield Down SSSI/NNR and Piggledene SSSI.

8.5.4 It is important to retain the mosaic of different types of land use as this enhances its biodiversity value. Arable land is valuable as a habitat for specialist wildlife such as farmland birds, arable plants and hares. Therefore it should be an aim to balance the needs of the archaeology, habitats for rare flora, and the opportunities for farmland birds, for example by providing wild bird food cover, grass margins and fallow plots when looking at strategic locations of reversion whilst reflecting the primary significance of the site. **(Policy 3h/Action 59)**

Issue 23: The enhancement of the nature conservation values of the WHS

Chalk grassland

8.5.5 More than three-quarters of England's chalk grassland heritage has been lost in the last 100 years.⁹⁵ Half of that remaining – 18,000 hectares – is in Wiltshire. Both parts of the WHS play an important role as stepping stones between Salisbury Plain SAC, Parsonage Down SSSI/SAC/NNR and Porton Down SAC/SSSI, which are all key chalk grassland areas. The diversity and national importance of surviving areas of unimproved chalk grassland both in areas around the WHS and, at a much smaller scale, on barrows and steeper slopes within the WHS, provide an opportunity for downland re-creation

to link, buffer and extend the existing areas. The typical chalk grassland sward is diverse and species-rich with a mixture of grasses and herbs. The characteristic downland herb-rich flora can support a huge variety of fauna, especially butterflies, bees and other insects, and birds.

8.5.6 These areas are not only important for the high quality chalk grassland they contain but also as a possible source of seed for chalk grassland (re)creation and the enhancement of existing permanent pasture in the future. By buffering and linking the surviving fragments of chalk grassland habitat and extending the areas of recreated chalk grassland, the nature conservation value of the WHS as a whole could be enhanced. Changes in grazing management on existing grassland can also enhance the structure and value for birds and invertebrates.

8.5.7 The Environmental Stewardship Scheme and previous agri-environmental schemes have encouraged farmers to protect archaeology, encourage wildlife and maintain and enhance the landscape setting. Some areas have been reseeded with a species-rich calcareous grass and wildflower seed mix where soil nutrient levels were suitable. In others, the existing grass leys have been over sown with wild flowers. Overall the schemes aim to establish species-rich semi-natural grassland and protect historic monuments and their landscape setting.

8.5.8 Management involves extensive grazing with no fertiliser or herbicide use (except where necessary for weed control). Grazing times and duration are managed to provide a variety of sward lengths and structure, to take account of bird species and to encourage flowering

plants. This depends on the species present and whether the sward has been botanically enhanced or whether it is currently grass-dominated semi-improved or improved grassland. There are opportunities to enhance the nature conservation of the more fertile fields over time, through the introduction of suitable plants; alternatively they can be managed to provide structurally diverse grassland for insects and birds. The re-created grasslands and enhanced semi-improved grasslands will take years to develop into diverse flower-rich grassland.

Political and environmental developments in conservation

- 8.5.9** There have been a number of changes in the natural environment context since the Management Plans of 2005 and 2009.
- 8.5.10** In 2011 the Government released its Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) outlining its vision for the natural environment. The Government's new biodiversity strategy Biodiversity 2020⁹⁶ emphasises the importance of landscape-scale action not just for biodiversity but also to improve the provision of ecosystem services and help us adapt to climate change. Biodiversity 2020 acts as a tool to help deliver the commitments in NEWP and sets out targets for protected sites, maintenance, reversion and creation of key BAP habitats, species conservation and emphasis on increasing people's engagement with biodiversity issues, aware of the value and taking positive actions.
- 8.5.11** Biodiversity needs space, diversity and complexity if it is to thrive and this is best achieved at a landscape scale. Professor Sir John Lawton characterised this as England needing spaces for biodiversity that were 'bigger, better and more joined-up'.⁹⁷
- 8.5.12** One way that Natural England supports landscape-scale working is through the 159 National Character Area profiles⁹⁸ which provide information, advice and guidance that can help maximise the benefits of landscape-scale working for biodiversity, communities and the economy.
- 8.5.13** One of the developments of the NEWP included the setting up of Local Nature Partnerships (LNP). 'These partnerships will work at a strategic scale to improve the range of benefits and services we get from a healthy natural environment. They will aim to improve the multiple benefits we receive from good management of the land.'⁹⁹ In Wiltshire, the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Partnership was set up.¹⁰⁰ The LNP works with a number of partners on landscape-wide initiatives. These include the RSPB's Futurescape – Wiltshire

Chalk Country project,¹⁰¹ the Environment Agency's work relating to the Water Framework Directive,¹⁰² the Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes Initiative,¹⁰³ the Marlborough Downs Nature Improvement Area (NIA)¹⁰⁴ and the Stepping Stones¹⁰⁵ (AONB/NE) project. It is essential that the WHS Coordination Unit engages with all relevant partners when developing programmes of work related to natural conservation in the lifetime of this plan.

(Policy 3h/Action 60)

- 8.5.14** The most recent BAP for Wiltshire was published in 2008.¹⁰⁶ The current thinking in the management of the natural environment is the development of landscape-scale frameworks using the evidence provided by the most recent BAP habitat and species data. The new Landscape Conservation Framework for Wiltshire and Swindon¹⁰⁷ looks for the best opportunities for conserving and enhancing these habitats at a landscape or ecosystem scale.

WHS Chalk Grassland Strategy

- 8.5.15** The Wessex Chalk Forum has recently re-formed with a view to ensuring that chalk grassland initiatives are coordinated across Wiltshire and the wider Wessex area. This forum provides an opportunity for the WHS to play a part in creating important nature corridors to improve the biodiversity values of the site. During the lifetime of this Plan a small working group will develop a WHS Chalk Grassland Strategy which will identify key areas where improving or increasing chalk grassland will be beneficial to the natural environment. This will then be prioritised within the WHS where these areas will also benefit the historic environment and enhance the attributes of OUV. **(Policy 3h/Action 57, 58)**

Issue 24: Scrub and woodland within and around the WHS and its impact

Scrub

- 8.5.16** The encroachment of scrub onto monuments is a cause for concern. The Condition Survey of 2012 noted that damage from vegetation was up in both parts of the WHS (Stonehenge 2002 – 19%, 2010 – 20%; Avebury 1999 – 8%, 2010 – 12%). Scrub can damage fragile archaeological deposits through the action of roots, and can obscure earthwork sites. It should be removed wherever possible from archaeological sites, which thereafter should be kept free of scrub, usually through grazing with suitable numbers of stock. The *Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Woodland Strategy (2015)* examined the woody growth from hedgerows to plantations across

Policy 3h – Explore and develop synergies between the historic and natural environment to benefit the WHS and the maintenance of its OUV. Maintain and enhance the overall nature conservation value of the WHS, in particular: maintain, enhance and extend the existing areas of floristically rich chalk downland turf; enhance the biodiversity of permanent grassland to extend the area of species-rich grassland and provide habitat for birds, invertebrates, bats and other wildlife. Seek opportunities for the expansion of chalk grassland where consistent with protecting the WHS to sustain its OUV and relevant biodiversity targets. Extend and seek new links with relevant conservation bodies, programmes and initiatives

ACTIONS

- 57** Produce WHS Chalk Grassland Strategy to be informed by the WHS Arable Reversion Opportunities mapping project and other relevant data sets. Explore wider landscape studies identifying links to other areas of chalk grassland beyond the WHS.
- 58** Identify opportunities for improving biodiversity of permanent grassland areas and include in WHS Chalk Grassland Strategy.
- 59** Continue to protect and encourage S4I Biodiversity Action Plan species such as stone-curlews through appropriate management. Seek opportunities to establish further stone-curlew plots and scrapes where they do not adversely impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV, are away from public access and within or closer to areas of species-rich grassland via review of the stone-curlew strategy.
- 60** Expand existing and develop new links with conservation bodies, programmes and initiatives working in and around the WHS to explore integrated management opportunities, highlight the value of the WHS, its specific management needs/constraints and joint funding projects. Look for synergies with the implementation of natural environment targeted European directives including the Water Framework and Habitat Directives and River Basin Management Plan as well as the approach to management of national natural designations such as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR) that may also benefit the WHS and its attributes of OUV.
- 61** Collate data from partner monitoring and produce mapping of ecological value and connectivity within the WHS and surrounding areas and incorporate into WHS GIS.

the WHS and has made a number of recommendations for works to protect the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Its recommendations should be reviewed and prioritised by a task and finish group of relevant partners. The recommendations of the *WHS Woodland Strategy* should also be disseminated to all landowners, farmers and managers.

- 8.5.17** The WHS Bird Survey carried out in 2014 demonstrated the importance of a variety of habitats in the success of the farm bird priority species in both parts of the WHS. A certain level of scrub is desirable for biodiversity and scrub removal programmes should consider this point with the relevant authorities. There is also a need to consider protected species such as nesting birds when looking at scrub works, ie undertaking clearance outside of the breeding season.

Woodland in the WHS

- 8.5.18** Woodland is a relatively prominent feature in the landscape of the WHS. Some of it is historic and relates to the planned landscape developed around Amesbury Abbey and Avebury Manor in the 18th and 19th centuries and on the ‘hedgehog’ barrows around Avebury, while other woodland provided coppice products. Much of the rest consists of recent plantations, often planted to screen intrusive elements in the landscape or as cover for game birds.
- 8.5.19** The mosaic of individual trees and/or woodland is important for wildlife because it provides the variety of habitat required to encourage species diversity.
- 8.5.20** All work classified as afforestation or deforestation requires consent from the Forestry Commission within a WHS if it might have a significant environmental impact, and should be notified to them. Currently English Heritage/Historic England is the statutory adviser to the Forestry Commission on Environmental Impact Assessment and Woodland Grant Scheme applications within the WHS. The new environmental land management schemes currently being developed by Defra to start in 2016 will be incorporating woodland grant and creation grant schemes and Historic England will continue to be a statutory adviser.

Woodland Strategy

- 8.5.21** The *Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Woodland Strategy* was completed in 2014¹⁰⁸. This project was managed by the National Trust and funded by Natural England. The work was carried out by Chris Blandford Associates and Wessex Archaeology. The *WHS Woodland Strategy*



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Barrow planted with beech trees

aims to promote a coordinated approach to woodland management that reflects the primary need to sustain and enhance the World Heritage Site, while giving due consideration to the needs of farming, nature conservation, visitor access and the local community.

8.5.22 The Strategy seeks to facilitate appropriate planting, replanting and management of woodland within the World Heritage Site, but promotes a general presumption against new or replacement planting where these would cause a negative impact on the attributes of the Site's OUV. The Strategy particularly advocates the removal of woodland and scrub cover from key monuments, views between monuments and from their landscape settings.

8.5.23 The *WHS Woodland Strategy* is designed to aid landowners in both parts of the WHS when considering any works involving hedges or trees. The five policies of the *WHS Woodland Strategy* are supported by 15 objectives and management opportunities for each area of woodland, scrub or hedgerow. It is recognised that a good deal of this land is privately owned and so it will be important for the relevant organisations working in the WHS to maintain good relationships with landowners and managers. A small working group of key partners would be helpful in identifying and prioritising those areas of work which can be achieved within the lifetime of this plan. Others will be long-term or opportunistic aims. **(Policy 3i/Action 62)**

The WHS Woodland Strategy (2015) Policies

1. The Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS should be sustained and its attributes enhanced by appropriate woodland management in accordance with the *Woodland Strategy*.
2. Conservation of archaeological monuments, their settings and views between monuments to sustain the outstanding universal value of the WHS and enhance its attributes.
3. Maintain suitable screen planting for extant built structures where necessary to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS.
4. Promote appropriate management of existing woodland in the WHS consistent with the overarching aim of conserving and enhancing the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.
5. Promote understanding of the historical and ecological significance of woodland in the WHS landscape and how woodland can impact on the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.

Screening

8.5.24 The positive screening role of woodland can be important where designed to hide existing modern development which cannot be removed in views within

and towards the WHS. Such woodland is important in and around the Larkhill Garrison. Some plantations are already over-mature and will require replacement. It is important that such screening, for instance the Cursus plantation, does not damage underlying archaeological remains. Much less attention has been paid to restoring important views from the other attributes of OUV, such as the Monarch of the Plain barrow, and from the principal approaches to Stonehenge. There is a potential to decrease woodland cover in such situations. There are also opportunities for selective removal of trees at archaeological sites which are attributes of OUV (as has been achieved in Fargo Plantation and along King Barrow Ridge where trees previously masked the width of the Cursus and threatened the archaeological features below ground), thereby visually returning barrows and earthworks to the landscape.

(Policy 3i/Action 63, 64)

Policy 3i – Sustain and enhance the attributes of OUV through woodland management while taking into account the WHS’s ecological and landscape values

ACTIONS

62 Promote the WHS Woodland Strategy recommendations and encourage their implementation.

Stonehenge

63 Remove trees from north-eastern end of Cursus to prevent damage to monument. Agree replanting scheme with appropriate archaeological mitigation to improve setting and protection of monument whilst providing for screening of existing intrusive features. Maintain screening of existing buildings in line with WHS Woodland Strategy.

Avebury

64 Retain and manage critical beech screening of an appropriate height on boundary at Rawlins Mobile Home Park.

8.6 Climate change

Issue 25: The effects of climate change on the WHS

8.6.1 Damaging climate change, driven by greenhouse gases, is now widely recognised as a defining issue of our times. The historic environment is not immune from the impacts of climate change. Shifts in temperature, storminess and flood risk could all take their toll on historic sites and places.

8.6.2 The UNESCO World Heritage Committee has considered the likely impact of climate change on World Heritage Sites and has published a strategy proposing an approach to addressing this issue.¹⁰⁹ The Committee has requested all World Heritage Sites to integrate climate change issues into new and revised management plans (as appropriate) including risk preparedness, adaptive design and management planning.

8.6.3 As a response to an action in the 2009 Plan, a workshop was arranged by English Heritage in March 2013 to consider the issue of climate change in both parts of the WHS. As a result of this workshop a *Climate Change Risk Assessment* (March 2014) was prepared which was developed with the help of a number of professionals working locally and nationally in relevant areas. This *Climate Change Risk Assessment* lists foreseeable risks to the monuments and their surroundings and makes an assessment of their likelihood and severity. These risks include, amongst others, higher precipitation, damage to monuments from people, livestock and vehicles, increase in burrowing animals, change in vegetation and invasion of non-native species, pathogens and pests.

8.6.4 The historic and natural environments are closely interrelated in the landscape of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS. It is human interaction with the natural environment over time that has led to the historic landscape features for which the WHS is inscribed. Changes in the ecology of the chalk grassland may affect the setting and conservation of NNR, SSSI and SAC. The effects of climate change are still unclear but milder and wetter winters and drier summers are anticipated and some weather extremes are projected to become more common including heavier precipitation in both summer and winter. Recent weather events such as prolonged precipitation in both winter and summer months have already led to some issues regarding ground erosion by visitors, vehicles and animals. The risk assessment contains a number



Localised flooding prevents access to West Kennet Long Barrow 2014

© Beth Thomas

of recommendations and actions. It needs to be reviewed every five years starting in 2019 and a working group is required to implement any recommendations effectively across both parts of the WHS. The issues are discussed in further detail in the *Climate Change Risk Assessment* which is available on the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website¹¹⁰.



Climate Change Risk Assessment 2014

(Policy 3j/Action 65)

- 8.6.5 There is increased support and demand for renewable energy schemes as a means of mitigating against the effects of climate change and to reduce the use of fossil fuels. Changes in the subsidies available for renewable energy may change the demand for this kind of development. These schemes may have an impact on monuments, their setting and the setting of the WHS. The impact of renewable energy developments is considered more fully in Section 7.4.7.

8.7 Risk management and counter-disaster preparedness

Issue 26: Counter-disaster preparedness in the WHS

- 8.7.1 The UNESCO World Heritage Committee recommends that Management Plans consider the risk of potential disasters and how these might be countered, itemise those disasters which present a foreseeable threat to the property and what steps have been taken to draw up contingency plans for dealing with them, whether by physical protection measures or staff training.¹¹¹ They have placed great emphasis on the need for preparedness and forward planning and have published guidance on the matter.¹¹²
- 8.7.2 In the Stonehenge 2009 plan the question of counter-disaster preparedness was raised but no mention was made in the Avebury 2005 plan. There is currently no risk assessment or register for the WHS as a whole. Individual organisations within the WHS with management responsibilities have their own counter-disaster plans for their own estates or areas of responsibility. An audit of counter-disaster plans should be undertaken by a small working group and a risk register should be prepared to help identify any gaps that need to be considered. **(Policy 3j/Action 66)**

Policy 3j – Produce risk management strategies; keep under review and implement as necessary

ACTIONS

- 65 Implement monitoring and adaptation strategies identified in the *Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Climate Change Risk Assessment* (2014). Review the Risk Assessment every 5 years.
- 66 Identify potential risks to the WHS, its attributes of OUV and its management. Ensure WHS partners' risk registers reflect these. Identify and respond to any gaps.

9.0 VISITOR MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Aim 4: Optimise physical and intellectual access to the WHS for a range of visitors and realise its social and economic benefits while at the same time protecting the WHS and its attributes of OUV

9.0 Introduction

- 9.0.1 This section looks at the changes in the tourism environment within Wiltshire and the UK and in particular the changes at Stonehenge and Avebury since the 2005 and 2009 plans. The priority for the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS is the protection and conservation of the WHS and its attributes of OUV and for this reason the priority must be sustainable tourism in relation to the impact tourism has on the WHS and the local community and infrastructure. A review of the workability of a Limits of Acceptable Change model would help to inform a wider sustainable tourism strategy developed in partnership with VisitWiltshire. There is a discussion of sustainable transport in Section 11.0 (Roads and Traffic).
- 9.0.2 Tourism is an important element of the economy of Wiltshire and the South West and the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS is fundamental to the tourism economy of Wiltshire. The WHS supports jobs, infrastructure and services which in turn benefit the local community. The WHS Coordination Unit will work with VisitWiltshire to create sustainable growth which benefits the local economy without harming the WHS, its attributes of OUV or the amenity of its residents. The solution to the congestion on the



A303 at Stonehenge and beyond will also affect the opportunities or otherwise to build on the economic benefits of the WHS. Section 9.4 looks at a more strategic approach to tourism and improving the economic benefit of the WHS.

9.0.3 At present visitors are concentrated on the 'honey pot' sites at Stonehenge and Avebury Henge and there is limited understanding by visitors of the extent of the WHS. Further work is required to widen access and help visitors to explore the less well-known areas of both parts of the WHS whilst ensuring that this does not have a negative impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. To deliver greater economic benefit to the county the desire is to encourage visitors to stay longer and thereby spend more money in the local economy.

9.0.4 Many visitors come to the WHS to celebrate the Summer and Winter Solstices and other pagan observances. These observances require sensitive management by the many WHS partners involved to ensure the protection of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. This subject is discussed in Section 8.0 (Conservation).

9.1 Recent developments in the tourism context of the WHS

9.1.1 The VisitWiltshire *Economic Impact Study* published in 2014 using results from 2012 shows that Wiltshire attracted 18 million day visitors and 1.7 million staying

visitors. Wiltshire's visitor economy generates £1.4bn and supports over 27,000 jobs.

9.1.2 Stonehenge, with more than 1.25 million visitors in 2013, has long been one of the top 10 major paid attractions at a national level.¹¹³ Alongside Salisbury Cathedral (c 250,000 visitors a year), the stone circle is a key reason for visiting Wiltshire. VisitWiltshire's content, photography, video and social media activity related to Stonehenge are used extensively by VisitBritain in their overseas campaigns as a national icon.

9.1.3 Both parts of the WHS appeal to many different types of visitor. Stonehenge is a popular destination for coach tours. Over 60% of paying visitors travel to Stonehenge as part of a group. Avebury is less well-known by overseas visitors but receives a number of groups. However, in contrast to Stonehenge in 2012, 94% of visitors travelled independently to the site by car or on public transport.

Stonehenge

9.1.4 At Stonehenge, one of the most important achievements in the lifetime of the 2009 Plan was the opening, by English Heritage, of a new visitor facility at Airman's Corner in December 2013. This Visitor Centre meets the needs outlined in Section 9.7 of the 2009 Plan with an exhibition explaining the landscape, its history and features, an indoor café space and larger retail facility. A shuttle system takes visitors from the Visitor Centre to the Stones, a distance of around 2km. A stop at Fargo Plantation allows visitors easy



Stonehenge Visitor Centre

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Salisbury Museum

access into the Stonehenge Landscape managed by the National Trust. An orientation leaflet given to visitors on arrival shows the extent of the landscape, access gates and information points at key locations within the landscape and approximate walking times between key monuments. Before this facility opened in 2013, a large proportion of visitors used Stonehenge simply as a brief refreshment and convenience break on route to other destinations in the South West as they travelled along the A303. Wiltshire is already seeing a significant increase in staying visitors and length of stay as a result of the changes at Stonehenge, with overnight stays reportedly up 10%. Visitors are now asked to pre-book their visit to the Site which should result in less congestion during the high season but will reduce the number of people who will be able to make a spontaneous visit when travelling through the area.

9.1.5 The Stonehenge Visitor Centre is one part of the Stonehenge Museums Partnership which also includes new displays at the Wiltshire Museum in Devizes (opened in 2013) and Salisbury Museum (opened in 2014). English Heritage is committed to promoting the two museums to Stonehenge visitors as part of a strategy to bring wider economic benefits to Wiltshire.

Avebury

9.1.6 At Avebury, the National Trust team worked in collaboration during 2011–12 with the BBC to make a television programme,¹¹⁴ *The Manor Reborn*. This project involved a team of historians, experts and volunteers reinterpreting the 500-year-old Avebury Manor and restoring it as an immersive experience. The Manor re-opened to visitors in the spring of 2012 following the completion of the project and has seen an increase in the number of visitors to the Manor and a change in the visitor patterns. Visitor numbers to the Alexander Keiller Museum have also increased but the National Trust report that there are few signs of increased erosion on the Henge.

9.1.7 The WHS is just part of the visitor offering in the county of Wiltshire and the South West. It is important that the managers of the WHS work with partners such as VisitWiltshire, North Wessex Downs AONB, the Ridgeway Partnership, Wiltshire and Swindon Local Economic Partnership (LEP), LEADER Local Action Groups, the National Trust and English Heritage to enable tourism that takes into account the needs of the local communities and respects the high quality natural and cultural heritage.

VisitWiltshire

9.1.8 VisitWiltshire is the Destination Marketing and Management Organisation for Wiltshire and is responsible for developing the county's visitor economy by raising awareness of Wiltshire as a tourist destination locally, nationally and internationally and generating additional tourism visits and spend. VisitWiltshire became a company limited



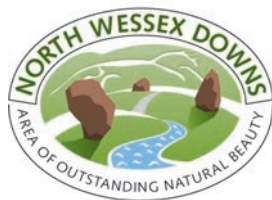
VisitWiltshire 2015 Brochure

by guarantee in August 2011 and now has 550 funding partners. VisitWiltshire is a key partner in developing good relationships with other tourist attractions and services within the local area and ensuring that the economic benefit of the WHS spreads to the local community. VisitWiltshire partners with VisitEngland and VisitBritain. VisitWiltshire has an integrated marketing programme of consumer, trade and press activity which includes hosting familiarisation visits for travel trade and media, print (260,000 copies distributed), website¹¹⁵ (1 million unique visits per year), national thematic marketing campaigns (2013/14 themes: countryside, romance, city breaks, food and drink and activities),

Customer Relations Management, digital marketing, social media and other trade and press activity. The draft *Destination Management and Development Plan*¹¹⁶ produced by VisitWiltshire in 2014 reflects the aims, policies and actions of the WHS Management Plan including the development of a WHS Sustainable Tourism Strategy in partnership with the WHS. It recognises the importance of the WHS to the visitor economy of Wiltshire but also notes that ‘the WHS has to strike a balance between meeting the needs of visitors, the environment and community interests’.

North Wessex Downs AONB

9.1.9 The North Wessex Downs AONB is working with businesses and other organisations involved in tourism to recognise the value of the landscape in their own promotion and visitor experience and to build reciprocal economic and other links. In 2013 the AONB launched a Visit North Wessex Downs Toolkit,¹¹⁷ containing materials such as maps, images and text which are free to use by associated businesses. This work has a national marketing platform in the ‘Our Land’ initiative. ‘Our Land’ is designed to market responsible tourism in UK protected landscapes to domestic visitors, with an emphasis on overnight stays. In 2014 ‘Our Land’ involved 25 AONBs and National Parks across the UK, with Responsible Travel as the private sector partner.



Other WHSs

9.1.10 There are also other opportunities to work with other World Heritage Sites within the South West, UK and internationally. In the last six years, some work has been undertaken particularly on the issue of sustainable transport with the three other World Heritage Sites in the South West: The City of Bath, Jurassic Coast and Cornish and West Devon Mining. More could be done to refer visitors to other sites across the South West and the rest of the UK. There is some scope to look at linking Stonehenge and Avebury with other megalithic and prehistoric sites across the UK and Europe to create a megalithic or prehistoric network creating itineraries for tourists and opportunities for study and research. Both of these opportunities would raise the profile of such sites in general and provide a mechanism for less well-known sites to be supported by those which are more familiar.

9.1.11 The Ridgeway National Trail starts on Overton Hill

within the Avebury part of the WHS. It was agreed in October 2014 to establish a new National Ridgeway Trail Partnership, with membership open to principal stakeholder organisations such as the WHS as well as the local authorities concerned. The new partnership will be in place from 1 April 2015. This partnership will operate under Natural England’s New Deal for National Trails which includes emphasis on opportunities for economic development and environmental enhancement along the Trail corridor. This offers a new potential source of collaborative energy to generate projects that could help meet WHS aims.

9.2 Sustainable tourism

Issue 27: *The application of the principles of sustainable tourism is essential to secure the primary objectives of management: the long-term protection and presentation of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. This can only be achieved through the partnership of all individuals and organisations involved, and their interaction in all decision making*

Sustainable tourism

9.2.1 The word ‘sustainable’ is used in a number of contexts. In this context, the UNESCO definition of sustainable tourism as ‘tourism that respects both local people and the traveller, cultural heritage and the environment’¹¹⁸ or the United Nations World Tourism Organisation’s definition: ‘tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities’¹¹⁹ seem the most appropriate. The ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter (1999)¹²⁰ provides useful guidance on the management of tourism at places of heritage significance in a sustainable manner. It advises ‘tourism promotion programmes should protect and enhance Natural and Cultural Heritage characteristics.’¹²¹

9.2.2 Successful management of public access and tourism at Stonehenge and Avebury WHS will depend on an integrated monitoring programme that can identify where visitor pressure may be damaging archaeology, ecology or the landscape and then tackling these problems with a successful programme of actions.

9.2.3 Although the impacts of unsustainable tourism: traffic congestion, overcrowding, inappropriate development, damage to monuments and the impact on local community are common to both parts of the WHS they are, perhaps, felt more directly at Avebury. Here, overcrowding, traffic congestion and competition for parking can affect the day to day lives of the community



© Beth Thomas

Impact of footfall in Avebury Henge

who live in the village that is set within and around the Henge monument. Any negative impacts are less intensely and more indirectly felt at Stonehenge as the communities are more distant from the main monuments. Even so the recent closure of the A344 has elicited concerns from some residents who feel that it has resulted in greater traffic flows and congestion in their villages. This issue is discussed in Section 11.0 (Roads and Traffic).

WHS Sustainable Tourism Strategy

9.2.4 A WHS Sustainable Tourism Strategy needs to be developed working with key partners such as VisitWiltshire, the North Wessex Downs AONB and the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Economic Partnership (LEP), the National Trust, English Heritage, Amesbury Town Council and Avebury Parish Council. It also needs to be linked with the VisitWiltshire Business Plan and Wiltshire's *Destination Management and Development Plan (2014)*.¹²² The development of branding, positioning, marketing and promotion all need to take into account the WHS and its attributes of OUV. The economic benefit gained from the WHS needs to benefit the local community, businesses and the conservation organisations charged with managing the assets of the WHS who require funds for conservation and maintaining archaeological collections. Types of tourism which are inherently more sustainable should be encouraged, including linking the WHS with other attractions such as the museums, market towns, public access to downland and the Avon Valley. **(Policy 4a/Action 71)**

Wise growth

9.2.5 The tourism sector use the term 'wise growth'¹²³ which recognises that any growth should take into account the need to protect those aspects of our cultural and natural heritage which draw visitors from both within the UK and from overseas. Wise growth within the WHS would focus on increasing revenue rather than visitor numbers.

9.2.6 There is a need to balance the wider economic and employment benefits of tourism with its impact on the WHS. Adverse impacts on both the WHS and the local community should be avoided. A balanced WHS Sustainable Tourism Strategy should include:

- Protecting and enhancing the quality of the historic environment
- Enhancing the quality of the visitor experience
- Managing the number and timing of visits
- Monitoring the impact on the community amenity
- Providing a net benefit to the local community and economy
- Exploring ways that the profits of tourism could benefit conservation and interpretation
- Ensuring the sustainability of archaeological collections from the WHS
- Collaborating with, and complementing, rather than competing with, other attractions in the region
- Ensuring maximum and coordinated use of public transport to get to and from the WHS
- Ensuring adequate transport infrastructure to assist the tourist trade and tour operators in accessing the WHS and the wider area
- Encouraging private tour companies and guides to provide sustainable tourism experiences
- Appropriate and sustainable regeneration opportunities
- Skills development and apprenticeship opportunities across the wide range of sectors involved in the management of the WHS from tourism and leisure to heritage and nature conservation **(Policy 4b/ Action 78)**
- Improving access for walking, cycling, horse riding and activity holidays
- Securing appropriate low impact accommodation
- Developing a managed events programme throughout the year and across the WHS.

9.2.7 There is a tension between the impact of tourism on fragile archaeological remains and the amenity of the local community, and the economic benefit that tourism brings to the local community. Related income can also support conservation work. Both English Heritage and the National Trust, as non-profit making organisations, rely partly on the income which the visitors to Stonehenge and Avebury respectively provide. Placing restrictions on the commercial activity at these sites; such as a policy of 'non-promotion' which was discussed in the Avebury Management Plan 2005, might reduce erosion. It could however reduce income that is currently used for conservation work. Other sources would need to be available to cover any shortfall in funding. There is a difficult balance to

achieve. The protection of the WHS and sustaining its OUV must remain the primary focus of activity. Stonehenge in particular is a 'must see' attraction for many visitors to the UK and will always attract visitors even without any direct marketing. English Heritage has now introduced a pre-booking policy for Stonehenge. This aims to smooth out peaks and troughs in visitor numbers and over time should reduce congestion in the area at peak times. At Avebury, the National Trust plans its events programmes to avoid attracting additional visitors at times of peak demand.¹²⁴ It remains important that where the attributes of OUV are at risk, their protection takes precedence over financial and commercial interests.

9.2.8 The main visitor facilities run by the National Trust and English Heritage at Avebury and Stonehenge respectively have limits to their capacity most particularly in the amount of car parking available. There is a saved policy in the Wiltshire Core Strategy (TR9) that actively prevents any significant net increase in the number of formal car parking spaces in the Avebury half of the WHS as discussed in Section 11.0 (Roads and Traffic).

Issue 28: *The use of a Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) model as an integrated monitoring tool for improved management of the WHS should be explored. Gaps in monitoring need to be identified and addressed*

Limits of Acceptable Change

9.2.9 The poor visitor experience that results from overcrowding is not in the interest of any organisation or local community. Promotional activity for the WHS should not encourage unsustainable visitor numbers. Promotional activity needs to be agreed by partners and should be considered as part of the LAC model and the Sustainable Tourism Strategy. A LAC model which all partners agree on and consider in business and management planning should provide a pragmatic tool to ensure that tourism is maintained at a sustainable level. Capacity may exist outside of peak periods but it should be noted that these may also be periods of unfavourable weather conditions when erosion would be more likely. This should also be taken into consideration. Any proposed new development of visitor facilities in either part of the WHS must contribute to managing visitor pressures.

(Policy 4a/Action 70)

9.2.10 The principle of 'carrying capacity' discussed in the *Avebury WHS Management Plan 2005* as a means of preventing harm to tourist sites is no longer current

because the environment in which we work is not stable and there are too many variables to assess fixed numbers of visitors that any particular site can carry. However, the development of a simple and workable Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) model by all partners would set out triggers for actions to maintain a sustainable level of visitors in terms of monument condition, community amenity and visitor experience and available resources. These triggers may also be affected by issues such as climate change outside the control of the WHS partners.

9.2.11 Any LAC model will depend on an integrated monitoring programme that can identify where visitor pressure may be damaging archaeology, ecology or the landscape. It should also be designed to monitor changes in the visitor experience or the amenity of the local communities.

9.3 Visitor management

Issue 29: *The management of visitors to the WHS*

Code of respect

9.3.1 Visitors of course play a role in sustainable tourism. Their behaviour can have both a positive and negative effect on the places that they visit. The development of a 'WHS code of respect' for visitors to the WHS would be a useful tool to encourage the kind of behaviour that protects the WHS and does not impact on residents in a negative way. There are other relevant examples available already such as the 'Countryside Code' and the 'Every Footstep Counts'¹²⁵ code developed by the Hadrian's Wall Trust. The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS code would build on these and other examples and help visitors to understand how they can prevent harm to the WHS and its environment. Once developed, an integrated, multi-channel strategy for the dissemination and promotion of the code is required.

(Policy 4a/Action 72)

9.3.2 One approach to reducing the visitor impacts in the WHS and at the same time increasing benefit to the wider area would be to create and promote opportunities for visitors to enjoy the wider landscape. This could be achieved through providing information on other things to see and do in the area, encouraging visitors to explore other sites within and outside the WHS or supporting businesses and initiatives that seek to offer guided experiences

Visitor management at Stonehenge

9.3.3 Stonehenge has long been a popular visitor destination and attracted over 1.25m visitors in 2013. The triangle of land at Stonehenge between the A303, former A344 and Byway 12 is managed by English Heritage. As long ago as the 1970s, the numbers and behaviour of visitors to Stonehenge raised concerns. The physical environment at the Stones proved unable to withstand pressure from such large numbers of visitors, with the result that strict visitor management measures were introduced in the late 1970s, such as roping off the Stones and provision in some areas of a hardened path (on the line of formerly disturbed land). A low-level and reversible 'bridge' was placed above the fragile earthworks of the Avenue, in order to protect them and allow a circular walk around the monument. These arrangements have made it possible to return the centre of Stonehenge to grass.

9.3.4 A well-researched grass management regime is in place in areas where there is no hard-standing. Visitors are allowed to walk within roped areas, which are relocated by staff according to when erosion looks to be likely to happen.¹²⁶ In this way, the large number of visitors to the site for the main part does not have an adverse impact on the grass around the Stones. However, in the last few years the established maintenance regime has been increasingly tested with long periods of wet weather and high visitor numbers. The grass maintenance regime at the Stones needs to be monitored and reviewed following the changes resulting from the completion of the Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project (SEIP).

Stone circle access at Stonehenge

9.3.5 English Heritage operates a Stone Circle Access scheme, which allows a limited number of visitors to enter the stone circle before and after the monument is open to the general public. This type of visit, which must be booked in advance, allows visitors to get closer to the Stones than is possible during normal visiting hours. This access is restricted at certain times of the year to allow grass to recover. Management of solstice and other pagan observances is discussed at Section 9.6.

9.3.6 Access to the Stones and the resilience of the immediately surrounding ground will remain key issues as long as visitor numbers are high and challenged by recent changes in climate. The desire of visitors to get physical access to the centre of the Stones has to be balanced against the conservation needs of the monument, and additionally raises issues of security and control. Climbing on the Stones, and even touching them may have serious

implications for their long-term preservation. This applies in particular to their ancient carvings and evidence of stone dressing, the importance of which have been more fully recognised following the laser scan survey of 2011. This is also the case for the important colonies of fragile lichen. Visitor access will need to continue to be carefully and intensively managed in the immediate area around the Stones. **(Policy 3a/Action 22)**

Virtual access

9.3.7 Virtual access to the Stones and Landscape is provided through the English Heritage Stonehenge website¹²⁷ which was updated in 2013/14 as part of the SEIP. This provides a 360° view experience of being inside the stone circle and also includes an interactive map of the Stonehenge landscape to enable visitors to find out more about the site before or after their visit and for those who are unable to visit the site due to limits in their physical mobility or distance.

Seasonal visitor patterns

9.3.8 Visitor pressure is compounded by the highly seasonal nature of tourism at Stonehenge, together with peaks created by the influx of visitors at certain times of the year, mainly at the Summer and Winter Solstices and Equinoxes. The growth in visitor numbers has also led to increasing demand between different user groups who seek access to the Stones for different purposes. New initiatives such as the special exhibition space and a winter events programme at the new Visitor Centre will help to encourage visitors out of peak times.

9.3.9 Visitors to Stonehenge are given information regarding other attractions in the surrounding area by VisitWiltshire's digital posters at the Visitor Centre and are actively encouraged to visit Devizes and Salisbury to see the collections at the Wiltshire and Salisbury Museums. However, public transport to Stonehenge is poor, although there is a good Stonehenge Tour Bus service that travels to the Visitor Centre from Salisbury Station and returns via Old Sarum. There are no public transport links to any other local communities. This issue is discussed in Section 11.0 (Roads and Traffic).

9.3.10 One issue that has arisen since the opening of the new Visitor Centre is the question: How do people access the Stonehenge Landscape without using the new centre? This question is particularly related to organisations, such as the National Trust, which as the owner of the land around Stonehenge, organises activities such as guided walks and tours and events held in the Landscape. A review of available car parking and possible options for

those who wish to explore the Stonehenge Landscape without using the Visitor Centre is required. This issue is discussed further in Section 11.0 (Roads and Traffic). **(Policy 4c/Action 87)**

Impact of the new Visitor Centre

9.3.11 The impact on the visitor experience created by the new Stonehenge Visitor Centre needs to be further explored and monitored during the lifetime of this Management Plan and a number of questions will need to be answered: What is the demand for visitors to extend their visit by travelling to Avebury via Devizes, both by car and using public transport? How do people learn about the WHS? What planning do they need to do before they travel? Are they aware of the alternative methods of transport to the site? How does the Centre impact on traffic? How does the new interpretation scheme impact on more distant parts of the WHS to the Visitor Centre and Stones? Is there an impact on the condition of the monuments? How will it impact on visitor numbers at Avebury?

9.3.12 It is too early to tell how the SEIP has changed the potential harmful pressures, identified in the 2009 Plan, on the immediate vicinity of the monument. Although the closure of the A344 and the previous visitor facility has immensely improved the surroundings of the Stones, there continues to be vehicular access along Byway 12 and it is not yet understood how this may impact on the monument and the management of the Stonehenge Landscape. The changes in the landscape and visitor movement should be under review during the lifetime of this Management Plan and adaptations to the new arrangements made as necessary. English Heritage and the National Trust meet regularly to discuss joint operational issues at Stonehenge and the surrounding landscape and this regular dialogue should facilitate the completion of any necessary adjustments. **(Policy 4a/Action 68)**

Conservation Statement for Stonehenge

9.3.13 A Conservation Statement for the English Heritage estate at Stonehenge is being published by English Heritage in 2015. This will outline any recommendations for the protection and care of the guardianship monument. All monuments within the WHS should, in time, have a conservation statement which would address any management issues or concerns (see Section 8.2.9–10).

9.3.14 It is essential that any changes to visitor management do not adversely affect the special qualities of the WHS or



Which? Travel January 2013

of Stonehenge itself, including its mystical appeal, which, for many people, lies at the root of its attraction.

Visitor management at Avebury

9.3.15 For hundreds of years visitors have been drawn to Avebury by a fascination with the origin and significance of the prehistoric landscape. Today, the National Trust which manages the site aims to provide public access in ways consistent with preservation that will ensure future generations can enjoy the same benefits.

9.3.16 Avebury was voted the second best World Heritage Site experience by *Which? Travel* magazine in January 2013 citing 'the quiet, bucolic setting, the lack of crowds and the ability to wander freely' and 'In very few places in the world are monuments of such importance left alone to gently integrate with the landscape.' In general visitors feel that the facilities there meet their expectations and the site offers a less structured experience than that at Stonehenge. However, the layout of visitor facilities at Avebury in relation to the visitor car park means that not all visitors are aware of the Alexander Keiller Museum, Avebury Manor, café, toilets and shop and results in many visitors leaving Avebury without a full understanding of the site's importance or experiencing the kind of facilities that one would expect at a World Heritage Site. In recent years, the National Trust has

improved orientation and welcome at the site with the introduction of new signage (2011), a mobile information trailer manned by staff and volunteers in the car park and an orientation leaflet which shows the location of the site facilities. Some, including a number of local residents, would prefer a less cluttered signage scheme at the pedestrian approach to the village in and from the southern car park. A branding strategy for the WHS is discussed at 10.8.9 (**Policy 5e/Action 124**) which addresses this issue. More work could be undertaken to raise awareness of the World Heritage Site status, its extent and the outlying monuments such as Silbury Hill, Windmill Hill and the Sanctuary.

9.3.17 Due to the open nature of the site, estimating annual visitors to Avebury is difficult but the number of users of the car park, visitors to the Alexander Keiller Museum Barn and Stables Galleries and Avebury Manor give some indication. This is supplemented by the recently introduced pedestrian counters at key locations within the landscape. It does not provide a total number of visitors but gives an indication of how many people have passed through a specific point. These are particularly useful for indicating trends in numbers and providing data for assessing the impact of total numbers of visitors on ground surfaces. It is currently estimated that up to 300,000 people access the Avebury WHS landscape per annum.

9.3.18 Tourism does provide substantial economic benefit to Avebury but this needs to be balanced with the interests of visitors and the quality of life of the community. This is perhaps most noticeable in the area of traffic and parking congestion.

Local Management Agreements (LMAs)

9.3.19 There is a long history at Avebury of discussions regarding the capacity levels of the site in relation to visitor numbers. As discussed above the theory of carrying capacity is no longer current but the discussion continues. There is concern, particularly from residents, that an increase in visitor numbers will adversely impact on their quality of life due to parking congestion and traffic. The ability to manage any visitor impact on the monuments of Avebury, and in particular the Henge which is most heavily visited, is an issue of resources and management. English Heritage, which is responsible for the six Guardianship sites at Avebury, has a Local Management Agreement (LMA) with the National Trust who owns the land and manages the Guardianship sites and visitor facilities. This LMA and completion of renegotiations for its renewal is extremely important for the successful management of the Scheduled

Monuments it relates to. The current LMA is scheduled for agreement in 2014 and review in 2017.

9.3.20 *The Manor Reborn* programme mentioned at 9.1 did result in an increase in visitors but apparently has not seen an increase in visitors to the Henge and related monuments. It seems that the programme has excited interest in visitors who before the re-opening of the Manor would not previously have considered Avebury as a place to visit. A reported increase in visits to the museum has provided these visitors with information about the WHS.

Car parking in Avebury

9.3.21 Car parking at Avebury continues to be a problem particularly on busy days and on days when there are pagan observances. On these days cars are turned away from the car park and advised to return later in the day or visit nearby National Trust properties. Timed tickets for the Manor are bookable in advance or available on the day. In the period following the opening of the Manor in 2012, the local community reported an increase in parking in the High Street but this now seems less of a concern locally. The installation of planters on the High Street in 2013 has helped to reduce parking but a more permanent solution needs to be found. The *WHS Transport Strategy* has advised that a residents' parking scheme would be the most appropriate solution. There is concern that changes in visitor patterns due to the new Visitor Centre at Stonehenge will lead to an increase in visitors to Avebury. Currently there is no public transport between Stonehenge and Avebury and the need for this should be investigated. Any visitors who decide to travel to Avebury having visited Stonehenge will mostly travel by car and this could have a negative impact on the already limited parking at Avebury, particularly in the high season. More coach tours may visit Avebury rather than Stonehenge. Should visitor numbers regularly exceed the current parking provision then the situation will need to be reviewed. There are car parks located at satellite areas such as Silbury Hill, the Sanctuary and Fyfield Down and more could be done to raise awareness of these additional facilities for walkers and others wishing to explore the landscape independently. There is an excellent bus service from Swindon which could be promoted more. The situation needs to be closely monitored and any mitigation put in place. The *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy (2015)* addresses many of the issues and will be discussed in more detail in Section 11.0 (Roads and Traffic).

(Policy 4c/Action 88)



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The Valley of the Stones, Fyfield Down National Nature Reserve

Fyfield Down NNR

9.3.22 The whole of the Fyfield Down National Nature Reserve was added to the WHS in 2008 as a result of the minor boundary extension approved by UNESCO.¹²⁸ The importance of this area and its relationship with the rest of the WHS is little articulated. Sustainable access and interpretation of the archaeological landscape of the Fyfield Down NNR should be improved in partnership with Natural England and landowners, assisted by the National Trust, English Heritage, Historic England and ASAHRG. This should form part of the planned Avebury Interpretation and Learning Framework (see Section 10.0). **(Policy 4c/Action 89)**

Tourist Information Centres

9.3.23 The closure of the Tourist Information Centre discussed at Section 9.4.11 below means that information on the wider WHS, accommodation, travel and other visitor attractions in the local area needs to be accessed through other means. There has been no survey on the effect this has had on visitor experience and circulation around the WHS and the surrounding district. The need for such a facility needs to be



© Beth Thomas

Erosion control on the banks of Avebury Henge

reviewed and any recommendations implemented as necessary **(Policy 4b/Action 81)**. It would be useful to undertake a visitor and non-visitor survey to improve understanding of visitor motivation, needs and behaviours. This could include reviewing the current levels of marketing and information provision and should result in an action plan to address issues and implement recommendations.

Issue 30: Visitors can cause erosion and other problems

Visitor erosion

9.3.24 Large numbers of visitors can cause problems to fragile archaeological remains both above and below ground. However, the *WHS Condition Survey 2012* noted that such damage was limited. Appropriate management regimes carried out by the land managers of the WHS helps to keep this to a minimum. Footfall needs to be carefully managed to avoid negative impacts on the monuments.

Avebury

9.3.25 At Avebury the Henge is vulnerable to visitor erosion, particularly where visitors climb onto the banks and along the top of the Henge bank. In 2008 'drapes' were installed on the bank of the south-east quadrant to prevent further erosion, improve safety and reduce the potential loss of archaeological material. A number of stakeholders are concerned about their impact on the monument. An assessment of the effectiveness of these structures would be useful to inform future conservation works. There have been some incidents of a relatively small number of visitors climbing Silbury Hill. Climbing Silbury Hill is forbidden to prevent damage to the monument, harmful impacts on the SSSI and health and safety risks. Managers are seeking ways

to discourage this through fencing, signage and effective communication with visitors to explain the need to protect the site. **(Policy 4a/Action 76)**

Stonehenge

9.3.26 Apart from the Cursus Barrows, relatively few monuments at Stonehenge are at present suffering from visitor erosion. Visitor numbers at Stonehenge itself are carefully managed (see Section 9.3.3–9.3.4 above), but if more visitors are dispersed around the WHS, then the condition of monuments will need to be monitored closely.

Effects of climate change

9.3.27 Although in general erosion from visitor footfall has decreased through the development of a careful management regime, there remains a risk that increased numbers could have negative impacts. This could be further exacerbated by changes in climate.

Other damage

9.3.28 As well as problems caused by footfall, visitors can damage archaeological sites in other ways, such as erosion of stone carvings and evidence of stone dressing, damage to signs, litter, graffiti and fires. Archaeological features both above and below ground can be damaged by the effects of fire. These issues can pose a greater risk during the Summer Solstice. The *WHS Condition Survey* carried out in 2010 and published in 2012 noted that visitor damage was minor compared with other possible impacts and most damage resulting from human use of the landscape was in fact from vehicles (see Section 8.2.13). Most visitors demonstrate considerable respect for the monuments and act in a responsible manner. However, there is a continual low level of litter, graffiti and damage at sites within the WHS which needs to be monitored and addressed, as it is at present. A 'WHS Code of Respect' should be developed and widely disseminated to help protect the WHS and reduce impact on the residents. Provisions relating to fire including the lighting of barbecues, Chinese lanterns and candles should be included in the WHS Code of Respect. **(Policy 4a/Action 72)**

Issue 31: *Lack of visitor data for Stonehenge and Avebury WHS including visitors to outlying monuments, and visitor movement and knowledge of WHS beyond the EH and NT estate to help inform the management of visitors in the wider WHS*

9.3.29 To be able to manage the WHS in a proactive and effective manner its managers need to improve their



'Drapes' laid over the monument to protect it from erosion by visitor footfall

© National Trust/Nick Snashall

understanding of visitor numbers and movements by reviewing the data available, identifying gaps and introducing appropriate data collection where required. It is desirable to encourage visitors to explore the wider WHS landscape further both to fully understand its extent and to reduce potential visitor erosion at key monuments. However, the number of visitors exploring various parts of the WHS is little understood and more work needs to be undertaken to further understand how people move through the WHS, the impact that this has on the WHS and its attributes of OUV and inform the development of appropriate management regimes. Data collected from the pedestrian counters installed at key points in both parts of the WHS needs to be used effectively to target appropriate mitigation and resources. The impact of visitors on the monuments and landscape should be reduced by developing targeted access and dispersal strategies such as the appropriate location of gates and information points.

(Policy 4a/Action 67, 68)

9.3.30 Pedestrian counters were installed in the Stonehenge Landscape before the opening of the Visitor Centre and these will enable trends in visitor movements at key points in the landscape to be tracked over time. Pedestrian counters have also been installed by the National Trust in partnership with English Heritage at Avebury.

9.3.31 Data on visitors to the North Wessex Downs AONB, the NNR at Fyfield Down and along the Ridgeway National Trail is limited and more work needs to be done to understand how many visitors are exploring these areas of the Avebury WHS.

9.3.32 The WHS and its partners should review current visitor experience surveys and identify gaps in order to demonstrate that the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS is

managed in an exemplary manner and also to measure whether public understanding of the World Heritage Site and its status is increasing. **(Policy 4a/Action 69)**

Family visitors

9.3.33 Appropriate facilities to meet the needs of family visitors should be provided together with information suitable for children of different ages. The National Trust, English Heritage and the museums at Avebury, Salisbury and Devizes provide material for family visitors such as children's guides and audio tours. A review of provision should be included in the review of the *Stonehenge WHS Interpretation, Learning and Participation Strategy* and the proposed Avebury WHS Learning and Participation Framework.

Visitors from overseas

9.3.34 Finally, as a World Heritage Site, Stonehenge and Avebury perhaps have to be particularly aware of the needs of visitors to the site whose first language is not English. Information needs to be available and proactively marketed to target markets on websites for visitors from overseas planning their visit and then on site itself in terms of interpretation and other facilities. A review of what information is available in key languages needs to be undertaken and action taken to fill any gaps that are identified. **(Policy 4a/Action 75)**

Visitors with disabilities

9.3.35 One key community of people who need special

Policy 4a – Management of visitors to the WHS should be exemplary and follow relevant national and international guidance on sustainable tourism

ACTIONS

- 67** Improve understanding of visitor numbers, movements and impacts by reviewing data available, identifying gaps and introducing appropriate data collection where required. Make data available to WHS partners.
- 68** Manage the WHS sustainably by developing targeted access and dispersal strategies eg appropriate location of gates and information points. Monitor and respond appropriately to changes in visitor numbers and patterns including any changes following the opening of Stonehenge Visitor Centre (including any impact on Avebury). Use data collected from pedestrian counters to enable partners to target their resources to mitigate impact of visitors on monuments, landscapes and local communities. Refer to *Ecological Management Strategy* for visitor access to the landscape at Stonehenge.
- 69** Review existing data on visitor understanding and awareness of the WHS. Where necessary improve or commission new research to establish a base line from which this can be measured over time.
- 70** Investigate the feasibility with WHS partners of a workable method for sustainable management such as a simplified Limits of Acceptable Change model. Maintain a sustainable level of visitor impacts in terms of monument condition, community amenity, visitor numbers and experience. This will be affected by factors such as weather conditions, drainage, grazing, other management regimes and available resources.
- 71** Produce a WHS Sustainable Tourism Strategy with WHS partners which reflects the LAC. Ensure

branding, positioning, marketing and promotion reflects and sustains the OUV of the WHS. Economic benefit should reach the local community and WHS partners requiring funds for conservation and maintaining archaeological archives. Link with VisitWiltshire's tourism strategy.

- 72** Develop a 'WHS code of respect' for visitors to the WHS to encourage behaviour that protects the WHS and reduces impact on the amenity of its residents. Disseminate and promote the code.
- 73** Seek to work with commercial and charitable organisations and others to ensure that events and activities fulfil the WHS Vision and have no adverse impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV, and the amenity of the local community.
- 74** Carry out a review of existing provision for people with disabilities. Identify opportunities for increasing access for disabled visitors where required without harming the integrity of the WHS. In a rural landscape this is likely to include virtual access. Improving access for hard to reach groups and non-attendees should also be explored.
- 75** WHS partners to encourage the provision of reasonable pre-visit information in major languages.

Avebury

- 76** Carry out informal review to consider whether equally effective and safe yet less visually intrusive alternatives to the 'drapes' are available to prevent erosion on Henge banks whilst allowing access as appropriate.

consideration regarding access to the WHS are people with disabilities. The Office for Disability Issues calculated in 2011/12²⁹ that there are 11.7 million people in the UK with a disability. The open rural landscape of the WHS can provide difficulties for people with disabilities, particularly if they have mobility issues, but reasonable adjustments can be made so that the landscape is made as accessible as possible. Adjustments made can often help a wide number of people, for example the replacement of stiles with gates will not only assist users of mobility aids such as all-terrain scooters but also families with pushchairs and buggies. Access points and crossings should take into account people with disabilities in their design without harming the WHS and its attributes of OUV. The development of suitable accommodation is also required. Other disabilities can be catered for with the provision of facilities such as audio tours, touch tours and other forms of interpretation which are often also appreciated by visitors without disabilities. Partnerships with organisations such as the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) may be able to assist with developing schemes to improve access for hard to reach groups and non-attendees. Interpretation is discussed further in Section 10.0 (Interpretation, Learning and Community Engagement). **(Policy 4a/Action 74)**

9.4 Economic benefit of the WHS to the wider community

Issue 32: The WHS, tourism and the local community

9.4.1 The WHS is a working landscape. Villages in the Woodford and Kennet Valley, the Army and civilian housing at Larkhill, and settlements such as Beckhampton, Avebury Trusloe, East and West Kennett and Winterbourne Monkton, Bulford, Shrewton, Amesbury and Durrington and the farms in the Site are all living communities and key stakeholders in the future of the WHS. The WHS has further potential to benefit the local community, by generating business and employment through direct and indirect tourist spending on local accommodation, restaurants, shops and amenities.

9.4.2 At Avebury, as already noted above, the local community plays a more central role, with many living within the WHS. The Community Shop, the Post Office, a number of bed and breakfasts accommodation providers, the Henge Shop and the pubs including the Red Lion are all key community services which are sustained by visitors to the area.



The Henge Shop, Avebury

9.4.3 At Stonehenge, up to December 2013, the surrounding settlements did not benefit significantly from tourism at Stonehenge with many people passing through and the majority of visitors only staying at Stonehenge for an average of 45 minutes. However, the completion of the Stonehenge Visitor Centre in December 2013 has led to a change in how visitors engage with the site and the dwell time. English Heritage recommends that visitors allow at least two hours for a visit to Stonehenge and if all facilities are fully explored, with even a short walk in the landscape the length of visit can be extended much beyond that.

9.4.4 Working with VisitWiltshire, the Salisbury Museum and Wiltshire Museum, English Heritage has been proactively encouraging visitors to explore other parts of the county and extend their stay. This includes joint promotional activity, website links, joined-up travel trade, public relations and consumer marketing activity and joint digital information panels at the new Visitor Centre.

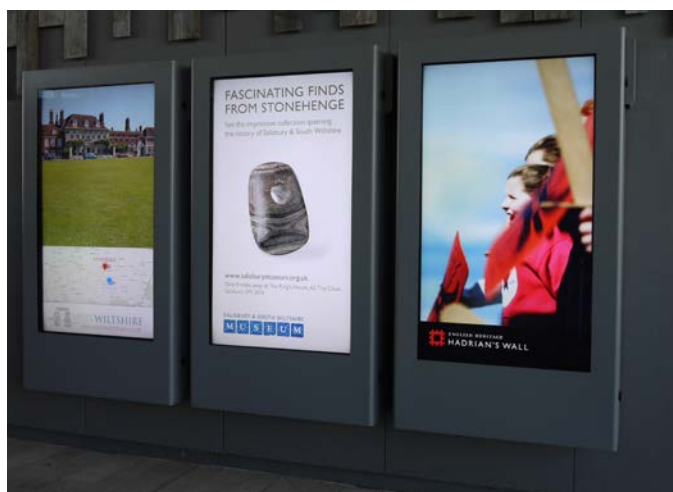
9.4.5 This provides an opportunity to maximise and spread the economic benefits of visitors to Stonehenge more widely within the locality. The increased facilities have led to greater employment opportunities for local people and the longer dwell time is already leading to increased length of stays and increased overnight visits from visitors to Wiltshire.

9.4.6 Many visitors to Stonehenge are unaware that it is just one half of the WHS and more work needs to be done to inform interested visitors about Avebury and the Alexander Keiller Museum. There is however, a car parking capacity issue at Avebury so it would not be appropriate to encourage visitors to travel there by car at peak times. In general, visitors are encouraged to use sustainable transport where possible. More work needs to be undertaken to develop bus travel from Stonehenge to Avebury, building on the success of the Stonehenge Tour Bus that travels from Salisbury railway

station to Stonehenge via Old Sarum. The 'Henge Hopper' pilot project took place in 2011/12, supported by the North Wessex Downs AONB and Wiltshire Community Area Board. This service which travelled via Wiltshire Museum in Devizes demonstrated that there is a demand for such a service and highlighted the significant resources required for promotion and integration with other transport. More work also needs to be done to develop cycling and walking routes.

9.4.7 Wiltshire Museum in Devizes opened its new prehistoric galleries in October 2013 and Salisbury Museum opened its new Wessex Gallery in July 2014. The terms of the loan agreements between Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums and English Heritage mean that within the exhibition at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre there are numerous references to those museums with an encouragement to visit and explore the archaeological collections of the WHS further. The landscape interpretation scheme, the exhibition at Stonehenge Visitor Centre and the two new museum galleries in Salisbury and Wiltshire provide a much enhanced visitor experience. Tour operators and visitors should be encouraged to make more of the destination in its own right. In addition, more work should be done to strengthen the relationship of English Heritage, the Salisbury Museum and Wiltshire Museum with the Alexander Keiller Museum at Avebury to ensure that the visitors gain a full understanding of the WHS and to derive the widest economic benefit. **(Policy 4b/Action 79)**

9.4.8 The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, as Britain's most visited archaeological site, should be used to encourage visitors to visit other heritage sites and museums in the wider area and to link their trips to the neighbouring settlements. More themed heritage, archaeology, walking itineraries should be developed and proactively



Digital marketing panels at Stonehenge

promoted to visitors and via the travel trade to encourage visitors to stay longer in the area and benefit other attractions and partners of VisitWiltshire in partnership with VisitWiltshire, Wiltshire Council's Archaeology Service, the National Trust, North Wessex Downs AONB and English Heritage. **(Policy 4b/Action 77)**

9.4.9 However, to enable the economic benefits of visitors to the WHS to reach local communities, information needs to be available and the links by road and public transport need to be clear. Currently, particularly from Stonehenge, there are very poor public transport connections. Salisbury is the only destination available by public transport. Well-promoted cycle and pedestrian routes and a strong public transport network are essential to enable sustainable access to the monuments and to enable visitors to access services available within the local community and maximise the benefit derived from the visitors to the WHS. More on transport can be found in Section 11.00 (Roads and Traffic).

9.4.10 English Heritage has worked closely with VisitWiltshire to provide information at the new Visitor Centre. There is no outlet for printed materials but digital screens provide information on other attractions in the area and encourage visitors to explore the VisitWiltshire website and download their Apps using the free Wi-Fi provided in order to find out further information, stay longer and stay overnight.

Tourist Information centres

9.4.11 The Tourist Information Centre which was located in the Avebury United Reformed Church (URC) Chapel on the High Street until September 2011 provided a useful information point for both residents and visitors, it helped to disperse visitors and income to adjacent areas, as well as providing a source of information for exploring the WHS landscape further. Partners should seek opportunities for providing tourist information locally and assist in identifying a sensitive use for the URC Chapel that would benefit the WHS. At Amesbury, the tourist information centre was scaled down to a limited provision in Amesbury Library and the Community Shop. The need for tourism information within Avebury and at Amesbury should be reviewed and if a need is established, there should be consideration of how such a facility would be funded. In the mean time, partners should provide web-based information and direct visitors to it and the VisitWiltshire website. **(Policy 4b/Action 81)**

9.4.12 Although community business initiatives should be

encouraged, it is important to ensure that these do not have a negative impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV or impact adversely on its tranquillity and the visitor experience. **(Policy 4a/Action 73)**

9.4.13 To provide a sustainable economic benefit to the surrounding area the WHS Coordination Unit should work with partners to identify appropriate and sustainable regeneration opportunities such as re-use of buildings and training and capacity building through apprenticeships and other skills development opportunities such as volunteering. In addition initiatives to enhance rural tourism and the local food and drink sector that might be related to the WHS should be explored. **(Policy 4b/Action 78)**

9.4.14 Further discussion on how the local community could become more engaged in the WHS is considered below in Section 10.0 (Interpretation, Learning and Community Engagement).

Issue 33: *There is insufficient tourist accommodation both formal and informal for those wishing to stay and explore the WHS*

Visitor accommodation

9.4.15 There is insufficient tourist accommodation to meet the demand for visitors who wish to explore the WHS. Main centres for the provision of tourism accommodation are Swindon for Avebury and Salisbury for Stonehenge. There is a range of bed and breakfast, inn and guest accommodation in the vicinity of the WHS but not necessarily within it. VisitWiltshire as the Destination Management Organisation for Wiltshire is responsible

for promoting tourism in Wiltshire published *Wiltshire and Swindon Visitor Accommodation Futures*¹³⁰ in July 2014. The report was commissioned by VisitWiltshire with support from the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). It identifies a significant lack of many types of different accommodation, and identifies significant opportunities for accommodation growth.

9.4.16 The report highlights a number of key opportunities for growth including: budget accommodation, holiday lodges, eco lodges, holiday parks, glamping developments, boutique hotels in market towns, pub accommodation, camping and caravanning sites, farm stay accommodation, bunkhouse barns, activity holidays and residential centres. It provides an assessment of future opportunities for visitor accommodation development across Wiltshire and Swindon, and sets out a five-year Action Plan that aims to create an additional 2,000 jobs by 2020, equivalent to an average annual increase in visitor accommodation employment of 6%. The WHS should work with VisitWiltshire to look for opportunities to develop appropriate accommodation for visitors to the WHS to increase the economic benefit to the local community. **(Policy 4b/Action 77)**

9.4.17 Helping new or existing tourism businesses through training and access to financial support is key to ensuring the quality of the visitor experience. One key ambition would be to help tourism providers to recognise the value of WHS and the services it provides to their business. An example of this is the recent work undertaken by North Wessex Downs AONB to provide free resources for use by associated partners through www.northwessexdowns.org.uk.¹³¹

Policy 4b – Spread the economic benefits from tourism related to the WHS throughout the wider community

ACTIONS

77 Identify and support opportunities across the VisitWiltshire membership to increase dwell time in Wiltshire using the WHS as a catalyst. Work with VisitWiltshire to identify accommodation needs of visitors to the WHS. Encourage accommodation provision that will allow for longer stays. Develop wider historic itineraries for visitors based on the WHS to encourage longer stays in Wiltshire.

78 Work with partners to identify appropriate and sustainable regeneration opportunities that enhance the WHS and maintain its OUV. This could include apprenticeship and other skills development opportunities such as volunteering

as well as initiatives to enhance rural tourism and the local food and drink sector.

79 Strengthen partnerships with Salisbury, Wiltshire and Alexander Keiller Museums and the Stonehenge Visitor Centre to increase income and provide benefits to the local economy.

80 Work with the Amesbury History Centre and other similar facilities to raise awareness of the WHS and the work of its partners.

81 Review the need for re-establishing a tourist information facility in Avebury and Amesbury. In the interim seek opportunities for providing tourist information locally following the closure of the TICs within Wiltshire.

9.5 Public access

Issue 34: Public access to, and awareness of, the whole WHS

9.5.1 The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS is recognised as being of international importance for its complex of outstanding prehistoric monuments. The survival of large numbers of both visible archaeological monuments and buried sites concentrated within the c 5,200 hectares of chalk downland has resulted in a landscape without parallel, preserving evidence of a long history from prehistoric times of human interaction with the environment.

9.5.2 However, the landscape of the WHS is not purely Neolithic and Bronze Age in nature, but bears the imprint of many successive centuries of human settlement and cultural activity. Although often of historic and cultural importance in their own right, these are frequently overlooked by visitors to the WHS (although many are not accessible). Examples include:

- Iron Age activity as evidenced by the remains of the hill fort known as ‘Vespasian’s Camp’
- Roman activity on Rox Hill, towards Oatlands Hill, near Durrington Walls and around the Cuckoo Stone and at Avebury around Silbury Hill and the length of the Roman road that forms the basis of the modern A4
- Saxon activity at Avebury, in Amesbury and in and around Countess Farm
- Medieval and post-medieval activity, currently known along the Avon and Kennet valleys, including historic villages, manor sites, including Avebury Manor, and their estates, and water meadows
- Military activity, including existing buildings and structures within Larkhill Camp. Many former military structures now only remain as below ground deposits, such as the Stonehenge Aerodrome, just to the north of Normanton Gorse, and the Larkhill Aerodrome on Fargo Road, which was probably the earliest military airfield in the world and was the site of the first military plane trials and airborne radio transmissions; Yatesbury just to the north-west of the Avebury part of the WHS was established in late 1916 to train pilots in reconnaissance. Associated with the airfield was a German POW camp which opened in 1917
- Monumental associations with military history such as ‘Airman’s Cross’
- The remains of parks and gardens associated with important buildings, and in particular plantations claimed to have been established in commemoration of famous people or events.

9.5.3 Current public awareness of and access to heritage assets in the wider WHS landscape is generally low, particularly at Stonehenge in the south of the Site and the Avon Valley and at Avebury beyond the Henge and West Kennet Avenue. Attention is focused on the key sites, with little appreciation of the surrounding archaeological landscape. This concentration is due to a number of factors including:

- The direct vehicular access to Stonehenge and Avebury provided by the A303 and A4361
- The location of the car park and visitor facilities
- The restraints on physical access imposed by fast-moving traffic on the A4 and A303, where there are no pedestrian or cycle crossing points
- The seemingly less significant and less dramatic nature of other archaeological components at Stonehenge
- The constraints imposed by the current pattern of land ownership and public access opportunities on foot, particularly to the south of the Site at Stonehenge and outside the village of Avebury
- Lack of adequate clearly marked WHS routes and circular walks.

9.5.4 More work needs to be undertaken to spread visitors more evenly across the WHS landscape so as to reduce the impact of visitors at key monuments and this should be considered when developing the Limits of Acceptable Change model and Sustainable Tourism Strategy discussed above in Section 9.2 and the Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework. There are a number of ways of doing this using the National Trust permissive open access land and the numerous public rights of way and permissive paths. It is important to engage relevant landowners, local groups and parish councils at an early stage of planning and promoting new routes or access opportunities. The WHSCU and NE



Visitors using the new landscape interpretation panels at Woodhenge

© Beth Thomas



Fingerposts on the High Street, Avebury

will work with farmers to encourage the maintenance and extension of permissive access.

(Policy 4c/Action 84)

9.5.5 Information should be provided before the visit on websites, leaflets and other media in major languages as well as English, to ensure that the extent of and opportunities provided by the World Heritage Site can be properly understood by overseas as well as domestic visitors. Pre-visit information should enable visitors to be well prepared before their visit. They will be aware of what facilities are available, the opportunities for walking and be able to allocate sufficient time to enjoy the many aspects of the World Heritage Site. They will be able to bring suitable clothing and footwear for the weather and ground conditions.

9.5.6 The Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project (SEIP) has delivered a more varied visitor experience with more encouragement to explore the wider landscape using the orientation leaflet, the drop-off point at Fargo Plantation and the scheme of interpretation panels installed by the National Trust in partnership with English Heritage. At Avebury, more work needs to be done to assist visitors to explore

the landscape on foot. The proposed Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework (see Section 10.0) together with the Avebury Transport Strategy (2015) should review the provision of information at key orientation and dispersal points to assist visitors in exploring the wider landscape.

9.5.7 A more extensive hierarchy of way-marked paths in both parts of the WHS to suit different visitor needs and those of local users would provide better access to the WHS as a whole. This should build on existing walks created by the National Trust on its land and using the established network of public rights of way. Preliminary studies on establishing a number of WHS Circular Walks in Avebury should be reviewed. The *WHS Transport Strategy* scheme suggests establishing additional routes where links are missing (Scheme 2.1 Connected Path Network). Cycling routes such as the route developed by the **www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk**¹³² website for Stonehenge should be promoted and cycle stands provided in key locations. The I South West (1SW) project, which aims to promote off-road cycling in the South West,¹³³ launched an interactive resource highlighting legally accessible cycling routes in the North Wessex Downs AONB graded according to experience. Links to the Sustrans national cycle network will also help to provide opportunities to access the WHS by sustainable means.

Cycling

9.5.8 Cycling around Stonehenge is made difficult by the current A303 arrangements. The cycling charity Sustrans are unable to complete gaps in the National Cycle Network because of safety concerns for cyclists travelling along and crossing the A303. The old A344 is available for cycling as a permissive path and public right of way. The Cycling Strategy of the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011–2026 should be considered in the development of a Sustainable Transport Strategy (see Section 11.5) for both parts of the WHS. Infrastructure such as bicycle stands in appropriate locations and waymarking would encourage more users.

Explore bus service

9.5.9 One way of increasing access to and within the Site might be an ‘explore bus’ service which could drop off and pick up tourists at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre or Avebury village centre, in local settlements and at various other points. This could further be extended with a shuttle service between Stonehenge and Avebury in order for the WHS to be explored to its full extent. A review should be undertaken of the

demand for and the possible impacts of a park and ride or increased commercial bus services on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. This topic is discussed more at Section 11.0 (Roads and Traffic).

- 9.5.10** Where physical access is limited, the widespread availability of digital technology could provide opportunities for visitors to experience less accessible areas both on site using hand held devices and from computers at home. This aspect of access is considered further in Section 10.0 which discusses interpretation. Another physical measure for increasing accessibility is the replacement of stiles with gates wherever possible.

Landscape Access Strategy

- 9.5.11** These issues would be addressed with the development of a Landscape Access Strategy for the WHS. This should include an examination of the current rights of way and cycle path network to identify where there are gaps in the network and look for opportunities for enhancement to the existing provision. Where possible replace stiles with gates to improve accessibility. The WHS Landscape Access Strategy should consider in particular access from surrounding communities providing accommodation to allow visitors to access the WHS on foot or by bicycle. It should also include a review of access between the two halves of the WHS including the possibility of establishing a walking route between Stonehenge and Avebury. The Great Stones Way proposed by The Friends of the Ridgeway has met with resistance from some quarters and has not been endorsed by Wiltshire Council. Such a route might best be approached through a partnership project which would need to assess the environmental impacts of any proposed route and include arrangements for monitoring and management. A review of the WHS signage and information at key dispersal points should be undertaken in the light of the recommendations of the *Stonehenge WHS Interpretation, Learning and Participation Strategy* (2010) and the proposed Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework and any further work carried out as necessary. The Strategy should include necessary impact monitoring and management regimes. The WHS Landscape Access Strategy should complement the Wiltshire Council *Countryside Access Improvement Plan* (CAIP 2014).¹³⁴
(Policy 4c/Action 83)

- 9.5.12** There is widespread evidence of the benefits of walking to the general population in terms of both physical and mental health. There are a number of initiatives to encourage people to walk in order to avoid many of the common ailments such as Type II Diabetes, cardio-

vascular diseases, mental health and obesity. The WHS provides excellent opportunities for people to both take exercise and learn more about the history of the site. Partnerships with organisations such as Get Wiltshire Walking¹³⁵ would meet the objective of helping people to access and understand the WHS whilst also meeting the health and wellbeing objectives of Wiltshire Council and other bodies responsible for public health. Other opportunities including the promotion of walks such as the White Horse Trail and safe cycling routes will encourage health promotion activity.

(Policy 4c/Action 85)

- 9.5.13** The objective of increased public access will, however, have to be balanced with the need to maintain working agricultural land, to protect archaeological sites and to create nature conservation sites. Increased recognition of the importance of the whole WHS will require an integrated approach that blends sound archaeological and land management with high quality visitor interpretation and access information. Improved access is only possible with the agreement of the landowners.

Charity and other large scale events

- 9.5.14** The route between Stonehenge and Avebury has become popular in recent years for charitable events such as the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Sarsen Trail (May 2014)¹³⁶ Alzheimer's Society Stonehenge to Avebury Trek¹³⁷ or Trail Run (September 2014), the Macmillan Stonehenge to Avebury Trekathon (August 2014), the Eve Appeal (September 2014) and many others. While these events are undoubtedly popular and successful fundraising events, it is important that the infrastructure required for the start and finish points and along the routes is managed carefully to reduce any potential impact on the WHS and local communities. This effect can be increased if weather conditions have been poor as hundreds of people travel down the same route in a short period of time creating ruts and wear with the potential to damage archaeological remains close to the surface. These events, where appropriate, need to be carefully and sensitively managed and the event organisers need to work with the relevant partners within the WHS from an early stage in the planning process. Although such events are not entirely under the control of either English Heritage or the National Trust, these and other relevant organisations could provide information on the considerations and processes that responsible event organisers should follow if thinking of organising an event in the area. The same applies to charity and commercial events such as open air concerts and rallies that attract large numbers.
(Policy 4c/Action 86)

9.6 Solstice management

Issue 35: *The need to manage carefully the Summer Solstice and other pagan observances to allow a reasonable level of access whilst ensuring that the conservation needs of the monuments are met*

- 9.6.1 There is a strong spiritual connection with Stonehenge and Avebury felt today by the growing pagan and druid religious communities. Both parts of the WHS are used for pagan and druid observances throughout the year with the Summer Solstice the main focus of activity at both sites.
- 9.6.2 Over recent years the trend has been an increase in numbers at all observances throughout the year at both sites. Management of these observances involves considerable staff and financial resources for all the organisations that work together to ensure that they take place in a safe and peaceful manner and with minimal impact on the monuments. **(Policy 4d/Action 91)**
- 9.6.3 Although activity is focused in the main henges at each site, other monuments throughout the WHS also attract smaller scale ceremonies and damage can be caused by fires and wax from candles.
- 9.6.4 It is essential that the proactive and inclusive management of solstice and other pagan observances in both parts of the WHS is continued to protect the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Managed access also needs to be monitored to ensure that unacceptable impacts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV are avoided, particularly in the case of the Winter Solstice which has increased in popularity in recent years and occurs at a time when damage to the ground and other upstanding monuments is most likely due to weather conditions. **(Policy 4d/Action 90)**



Winter Solstice 2012, Avebury

Policy 4c – Encourage access and circulation to key archaeological sites within the wider WHS landscape. Maintain appropriate arrangements for managed open access on foot within the WHS (taking into account archaeological, ecological and community sensitivities) to increase public awareness and enjoyment

ACTION

- 82 Maintain policy of permissive open access on NT land reverted to pasture.
- 83 Develop a WHS Landscape Access Strategy to include an examination of the current rights of way and cycle path network to identify opportunities for enhancement in line with the Wiltshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP 2014). Improve routes to the WHS for the local community and visitors staying in the surrounding area. This Strategy should avoid conflicts with historic and ecological interests and include necessary impact monitoring and management regimes.
- 84 Encourage greater exploration of the wider landscape by visitors and local community. Provide WHS signs at key dispersal points in coordination with the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy (2015)*, the *Stonehenge WHS Interpretation, Learning and Participation Strategy (2010)* and the *Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework*.
- 85 Encourage fitness and wellbeing initiatives which provide opportunities for visitors to explore the wider WHS.
- 86 Work with organisers of charity and other events to minimise impacts on the WHS and local communities. WHSCU to contact organisations to raise awareness of the sensitivities and necessary consents.

Stonehenge

- 87 Explore car parking options for those intending to explore the Stonehenge landscape without using the Visitor Centre.

Avebury

- 88 Raise awareness of parking facilities across the Avebury WHS.
- 89 Improve sustainable access to the archaeological landscape of the Fyfield Down NNR and its links to the rest of WHS.



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Close up view of the stone circle during the Summer Solstice sunrise

Avebury

9.6.5 The Avebury Sacred Sites Forum (ASSF) meets regularly throughout the year and operates as a forum for discussion and planning. It is attended by representatives of the National Trust, St James' Parish Church and Avebury PC together with members of the druid and pagan communities. Avebury Guardians, a group of volunteers, act as wardens and monitors of the Site, assisting the National Trust at key observances. The Avebury Solstice Operational Planning Meeting is a more formal group that meets regularly in the six months before Summer Solstice and consists of the National Trust, Wiltshire Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, St John Ambulance, Wiltshire Council, a security company, the landlord of the Red Lion, Avebury PC and two pagan representatives from ASSF.

9.6.6 No direct restriction is placed on access to the Henge which is open to the public 24 hours every day. However overnight parking is not permitted and limited camping is only permitted at controlled locations identified following a public consultation. In addition an Enforcement Order was put in place by Kennet District Council in 2006

preventing sleeping in vans parked overnight in the National Trust car park. A balance has to be struck between access to Avebury, the concerns of local residents and the protection of the monuments and the underlying archaeology.

9.6.7 The proximity of the residents of Avebury to the activities related to those attending pagan observances can cause conflict. Noisy drumming at night and disorderly behaviour by a minority causes stress and inconvenience to some local people who can feel threatened by what they see as invasions of large numbers of people, many of whom have a different lifestyle to their own.

9.6.8 Information is provided about the arrangements at solstice and other observances on the National Trust website.¹³⁸ In September 2006 Kennet District Council issued a planning enforcement notice which came into effect on 1 January 2007 regarding the use of the main car park at Avebury for high sided vehicles and camper vans entering the car park during Solstice. A height barrier has been installed to comply with local authority

regulations and affects all vehicles over 2.1m in height. No camping is permitted in vehicles in the main car park during Solstice.

9.6.9 As a result of this enforcement notice the National Trust carried out an options appraisal in 2007 to identify potential sites for the creation of a car park and overnight accommodation for pagan observances. The solution needed to balance the interests of Avebury's disparate groups as well as protect the archaeology of the World Heritage Site, minimise disruption to the village, ensure access for worship for the pagan community and conform to police concerns over traffic flows. The appraisal outlined nine potential sites. Following discussions, it became evident that the status quo was the best solution.

9.6.10 Unauthorised camping continues to be an issue and in particular on the Ridgeway National Trail. An approach to this issue needs to be agreed and implemented.
(Policy 4d/Action 90)

Stonehenge

9.6.11 The number of people attending the Stonehenge Summer Solstice (15,000–36,000) requires a greater scale of operation than at Avebury which attracts c 2,000–3,000.

9.6.12 At Stonehenge, the Round Table meets regularly and is attended by representatives of the pagan and druid community together with English Heritage, the National Trust, Wiltshire Police and Amesbury TC. This meeting is preceded by a Solstice Planning Meeting attended by all the organisations who are involved in the management of the observances throughout the year. Peace Stewards work with English Heritage and Wiltshire Police to monitor and steward those attending Summer Solstice and other celebrations.

9.6.13 Access to the Stones for the Summer Solstice has been historically controversial and in the mid 1980s it was banned. However, since 2000, English Heritage has worked in partnership with pagan and community groups, Wiltshire Police, the emergency services, Wiltshire Council, Highways Agency and other agencies and interested groups, and now opens the monument free of charge at the Summer Solstice to all who wish to visit. Conditions of entry are agreed by the interested groups in advance and English Heritage publishes these on their website. This means that visitors attending know what to expect in advance of their arrival.

9.6.14 Each year a temporary car park is set up in the western part of the WHS, 1km from the stone circle, but attendees are increasingly encouraged to make use of the public transport arrangements that have been developed since 2004. Up to 36,000 (2014) may now visit the Stones to celebrate and enjoy the Summer Solstice. The management of the Summer Solstice and other seasonal gatherings is now greatly improved and all recent periods of access have passed off peacefully. However, the planning, organising and operating of such events is a significant financial cost for English Heritage and others, and development and management work continues throughout the year. Visitor numbers, the traffic implications and the behaviour of visitors will need to continue to be closely monitored by the relevant authorities to ensure the protection of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Minor damage has been recorded over the last few years particularly at observances. The EH Property Curator monitors the condition of the site before and after the observances and organises appropriate conservation work if necessary. It is becoming increasingly challenging to accommodate all the differing needs and desires of the various groups of the public who wish to attend the Solstice and protect the monument at the same time.

(Policy 4d/Action 90)

Policy 4d – Manage special access at Stonehenge for significant occasions including solstices, and for stone circle access outside opening hours for small groups and all open access at Avebury to avoid harm to the WHS and its attributes of OUV

ACTION

- 90** Monitor the impact of open access and respond to results to ensure the least dis-benefit to the WHS and attributes of OUV. This is especially relevant where numbers have increased over the life of the Plan such as at Winter Solstice.
- 91** Continue proactive and inclusive management of solstice and pagan observances.

10.0 INTERPRETATION, LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Aim 5: Improve the interpretation of the WHS to increase understanding and enjoyment of its special characteristics and maximise its educational potential. Engage the local community in the stewardship and management of the WHS

10.0 Introduction

10.0.1 In this section the obligations to present and transmit the values of the WHS are considered. The interpretation of the WHS and its attributes of OUV is an important task, particularly when the period being interpreted is relatively difficult to understand. In many cases only traces of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages remain and their significance is difficult for many to grasp.

10.0.2 Education at all levels is important if the WH Convention objective to maintain World Heritage Sites for future generations is to be achieved. A great deal of work has been undertaken at Stonehenge as part of the Stonehenge Environmental Improvements Project (SEIP) but much more can be done and an overall framework for interpretation and learning remains to be done at Avebury. The continued partnership with the Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums together with the Alexander Keiller Museum is key to helping visitors and local communities to understand and appreciate what the WHS can teach us about the early inhabitants of Wiltshire.

10.0.3 The engagement of local communities in the work of the WHS is essential for the continued positive management of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Valuing the historic and natural environment is achieved through helping local communities to understand the values and attributes which have led to the creation of a World Heritage Site. More needs to be done to help local communities to understand the WHS through involvement in its management, creation of artistic events and activities, and good communication of the positive benefits that the Site provides. A communication strategy is required to help frame the key messages and how these should be communicated to specific groups of people involved with the WHS.

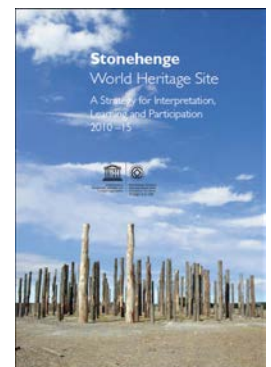
10.1 Developments in interpretation of the WHS

Issue 36: *There is a need to improve the interpretation of the WHS particularly the outlying monuments and the landscape as a whole*

10.1.1 There have been a number of improvements in the interpretation of the WHS since the 2005 and 2009 Management Plans most notably at Stonehenge. The opening of the Stonehenge Visitor Centre and the new interpretation scheme in December 2013 finally provided the quality of interpretation that a WHS deserves. However, there is still a need to complete the outstanding actions of the Stonehenge Interpretation, Learning and Participation Strategy (2010) (SILPS) and to create a holistic framework for Avebury. In particular more attention needs to be given to outlying monuments and the landscape as a whole which are less well understood and appreciated by visitors and local residents alike.

Interpretation at Stonehenge

10.1.2 The interpretation at Stonehenge now consists of a coherent scheme across the areas of the WHS managed by English Heritage and the National Trust. This scheme was a direct result of the *Stonehenge WHS: A Strategy for Interpretation, Learning and Participation 2010–2015*¹³⁹ which was published by English Heritage in 2011. This comprehensive document was developed



Stonehenge WHS: A Strategy for Interpretation, Learning and Participation 2011

by the English Heritage Interpretation Department in partnership with the WHS Interpretation and Learning Team which was a working group consisting of representatives from English Heritage, Salisbury Museum, Wiltshire Council, the National Trust, the Stonehenge WHS Coordinator, Avebury WHS Officer, Wessex Archaeology, Wiltshire Museum, Amesbury Town Council and Defence Infrastructure Organisation. Clear themes were agreed and the new galleries at Stonehenge and the Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums focus on different topics to provide a richer experience for visitors who take the trouble to explore all three places.

10.1.3 The WHS Learning and Interpretation Group has not met for some time. It should be reconvened to review



Alistair Deane © Historic England

Interior of Neolithic House

the actions of the SILPS. The review should consider completed actions and how to implement the outstanding ones. An update of the SILPS is required and actions for 2015–2020 developed. Particular consideration should be given to the provision of interpretation in the southern part of the WHS and any original aims or parts of the scheme that were not delivered due to budget or time constraints. This update should include a minor review of how the scheme and new landscape access is working including using the data from visitor counters.

(Policy 5a/Action 98)

10.1.4 The provision at Stonehenge now includes the exhibition in the Visitor Centre, an orientation leaflet which shows the wider landscape and the main monuments within it and a revised guidebook by Julian Richards which has been translated into six languages. There is also a children’s guidebook/activity pack. A revised audio guide in ten languages was produced together with audio tours for the visually impaired, and family visitors. A landscape interpretation scheme was produced by the National Trust in partnership with English Heritage. In addition, English Heritage published a map *Exploring the World Heritage: Stonehenge and Avebury* in 2013 which features both parts of the WHS and uses the latest evidence to show visible and buried archaeology in the WHS. It focuses on the Neolithic and Bronze Age but also includes information on more modern archaeology such as the Saxon settlement at Avebury and the former airfield at Stonehenge. This is a useful aid for visitors wishing to explore the WHS independently.

10.1.5 The Stonehenge Visitor Centre also includes a small special exhibition space which will enhance understanding, enjoyment and appreciation of the WHS. It is anticipated by English Heritage that this space will hold two exhibitions per year with a low key exhibition for the summer months and a more high profile exhibition for the quieter winter months. The exhibitions for the first two years have been agreed



Clare Kendall © Historic England

Standing in the Stones – interpretation at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre

with 'Set in Stone' the opening exhibition followed by an exhibition on Stonehenge and the First World War. This will be followed by Julian Richards' Stonehenge collection exhibition. A stakeholder forum has been established by English Heritage to contribute ideas and suggestions for future exhibitions. It is hoped that this will provide an opportunity to showcase projects related to the WHS such as exhibitions of the work of artists inspired by the Site or focusing on nature conservation and natural history.

(Policy 5a/Action 97)

10.1.6 In Amesbury, the History Centre located in the Melor Hall, Church Street is a local initiative to provide a centre to interpret the long history of the town of Amesbury for residents and visitors to the area. The History Centre is still in development but the WHS Coordination Unit should maintain links with Amesbury Town Council who are responsible for the Centre and the volunteers who manage it.

Interpretation at Avebury

10.1.7 The Avebury part of the WHS does not have a coherent scheme of interpretation across areas managed by different partners and there is no coherent interpretation scheme for visitors to the wider landscape. To achieve a coordinated approach to interpretation across the WHS as recommended in the Statement of Outstanding Value adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2013, an Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework (AIF) should be developed **(Policy 5a/Action 99)**. This should build on and adapt the concept of the Stonehenge Strategy to produce a document appropriate for the context at Avebury. The partnership approach employed at Stonehenge will be important for its success. Partners should include the National Trust, English Heritage, Natural England and Wiltshire Museum as a minimum. If none of the key partners have adequate resources to lead on its development, funding will need to be sought to employ a consultant. The Framework would be likely to take a less resource heavy approach than at Stonehenge and build on existing provision whilst still aiming to achieve a coordinated approach to the interpretation of the Avebury part of the WHS. It will need to explore how the shared OUV of Avebury and Stonehenge will be reflected. Initial work will need to include revisiting the aspirations of all WHS partners. A review of current provision is required and a visitor survey with up to date visitor numbers and profiles for the WHS. Similar data for educational visits should be collected. The Framework should include improved interpretation

of non-visible archaeology. In particular there is a need to include those areas within the boundary extension including Fyfield Down **(Policy 5a/Action 100)**. The Framework should as a minimum agree overarching principles for WHS panels and text within the WHS to assist in providing a coherent message and identity across the WHS alongside partners' own brands **(Policy 5a/Action 92)**. Any development of an integrated visual identity for interpretation across the WHS should harmonise with planned work on producing a single coherent signage scheme for the Site which is included in the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy*.



Interpretation panel installed at the Longstones in 2014, a partnership between the landowner, Natural England and the WHS

10.1.8 There are some key areas in Avebury that the Interpretation and Learning Framework for Avebury needs to consider such as improving presentation at the Sanctuary, where the concrete posts are deteriorating and becoming degraded making this already hard to understand monument even more challenging. At Fyfield Down NNR there are opportunities to develop interpretation, outreach and community engagement that would link the area more closely into the rest of the WHS.

Digital technology

10.1.9 Digital technology offers great possibilities for interpretation at both Stonehenge and Avebury whether through traditional web content, downloadable apps or GPS enabled content. In planning interpretation for the WHS, digital should be considered as integral from the start. Mobile content can be ideal for remote, unstaffed areas where the visual intrusion of panels needs to be kept to a minimum, but rural areas do not always provide good phone or network signals. Avebury Parish Council has sponsored a series of Wi-Fi hotspots in the High Street and Farmyard with the National Trust

in 2014. In the development of the Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework the availability of more Wi-Fi hotspots should be considered to enable the delivery of technology based solutions. This kind of delivery can encourage visitors to discover the wider WHS by providing interpretation and signage which encourages understanding and exploration of the wider landscape particularly at key dispersal points such as the main car park, the Ridgeway, Silbury Hill and Fyfield Down.

(Policy 5a/Action 94)

Needs of non-English speakers

10.1.10 As a World Heritage Site it is essential that the needs of visitors whose first language is not English are considered when developing interpretation provision in both parts of the WHS, and that both digital and on-site information is provided in a range of appropriate languages. **(Policy 5a/Action 96)**

Guided tours

10.1.11 As well as printed and digital interpretation, tours and guided walks are immensely popular and enable visitors to engage on a one to one basis with experts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. The National Trust, English Heritage and the RSPB should continue current provision and look to expand their current offers as part of a wider integrated strategy. However, it is essential that areas where increased footfall is encouraged are assessed for impacts and any necessary monitoring and management regimes established.

Off-site interpretation

10.1.12 Off-site interpretation and information is equally important and the WHS Coordination Unit should work with VisitWiltshire to develop a training programme with their tourism partnership to enable these businesses to act as ambassadors for the WHS, ensuring that key messages are given to visitors. This could take the form of familiarisation visits and written updates using the VisitWiltshire partnership network and identifying any training needs for Blue Badge Guides and others to ensure that they are giving their customers the most up to date information about the WHS. **(Policy 5a/Action 95)**

Interpretation of other values

10.1.13 Stonehenge and Avebury WHS is inscribed for its Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments but there are many layers of history present in the WHS. Interest in

the later history of the area is widespread, particularly in the military history around Stonehenge and in the way that Stonehenge and Avebury have been portrayed by artists and in popular culture over the centuries. It is important therefore that these areas of interest along with the natural environment are not forgotten. Partners working in the WHS should work together to interpret these additional areas of interest in an appropriate and sustainable way in keeping with the WHS interpretation and learning plans.

10.2 Museums and archives of the WHS

Issue 37: Museum and archive arrangements for the WHS

Museums of the WHS

10.2.1 There are three museums which curate and display unique and nationally important collections of archaeological material relating to the WHS: the Alexander Keiller Museum (AKM) at Avebury, Salisbury Museum (SM) and Wiltshire Museum (WM) at Devizes. The opening of the Visitor Centre at Stonehenge in 2013 meant that for the first time visitors could experience museum-quality exhibits to help interpret the Stonehenge Landscape within the WHS itself. The majority of the exhibits at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre are on loan from the Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums and visitors are encouraged to expand their visit by visiting both museums after their visit to Stonehenge. The Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums regularly host temporary exhibitions and events on themes related to the WHS and are intellectual gateways to the Site.

10.2.2 The AKM at Avebury has its own on-site museum and documentary archive, where there are interpretation facilities and archaeological displays. The AKM includes the Stables Gallery which houses the archaeological finds and the Barn Gallery which hosts interactive displays and activities for children bringing the archaeology and landscape of Avebury to life.

10.2.3 WM opened their four refurbished galleries to include 'Gold from the Time of Stonehenge' in October 2013 and SM opened their new prehistoric Wessex Gallery in July 2014. Both projects were funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, Wiltshire Council and others. These developments are a step change in the quality of interpretation of the WHS and the surrounding areas, and together with the new Stonehenge Visitor Centre exhibition provide the world class interpretation that the site deserves.



© Wiltshire Museum

Bush Barrow finds

10.3 Presentation, interpretation and visibility of archaeological monuments and sites

Issue 38: *The presentation, interpretation and visibility of archaeological monuments and sites*

10.3.1 The landscape of the WHS is full of monuments and earthworks that are clearly visible such as the stone circles at Stonehenge or Avebury and the great henges and barrows. There are also a host of remains that are no longer visible to all but the well-trained landscape archaeologist. There are the remains of barrows that have been ploughed flat over time, partial remains such as the Avenue at Stonehenge and the West Kennet Avenue at Avebury and also monuments such as Woodhenge and the Sanctuary which are examples of historical methods of interpretation that are perhaps confusing to the general public. Recent geophysical research such as the Hidden Landscape Project have revealed a substantial number of previously unknown or poorly understood features hidden within the landscape of the WHS many of them are yet to be analysed.

10.3.2 There are opportunities to enhance the visibility of buried archaeological sites in the wider WHS landscape to improve visitor appreciation. For example, 'earthwork enhancement' through selective mowing and/or grazing could be used to emphasise particular monuments that are not clear above ground (eg the ceremonial route of the Avenue to Stonehenge or the West Kennet Avenue at Avebury) or to define the location of other important sites, such as the Lesser Cursus, for which the surviving surface evidence is minimal or non-existent.

10.3.3 Interpretation and communication of non-visible or buried archaeology should be improved using a variety of methods. Initiatives such as the map *Exploring the World Heritage Site: Stonehenge and Avebury* published by English Heritage in 2013 provides information not only on the visible archaeology but also on buried archaeology and helps visitors to understand the extent of the features of the prehistoric landscape. Other methods such as digital applications on smart phones or websites would also provide opportunities to help visitors to understand the archaeological landscape more fully. Digital opportunities should be exploited to take full advantage of the evolving technology. **(Policy 5a/Action 94)**

10.2.4 The two galleries of the AKM are managed by the National Trust, which is undertaking a review of their present displays. It is likely that a project to redisplay the galleries will be developed by the National Trust, advised by the AKM Advisory Board (which includes representatives of English Heritage and other heritage and museum professionals). This project will require external funding and work needs to be done to explore how this can be achieved.

(Policy 5b/Action 101, 102)

10.2.5 Both the SM and WM provide digital access to their collections. At Avebury the desire has been expressed to increase digital access to the AKM collections and archives to enhance education and interpretation of the WHS and its OUV. This would require substantial external funding but would result in the collections being much more accessible. **(Policy 5a/Action 103)**

10.2.6 Specific links to all the WHS-related museums should be made in interpretation materials where relevant.

10.2.7 The proper archiving and storage of artefacts discovered in past, current and future fieldwork needs to be carefully considered and is discussed in Section 12.0 (Research).

Policy 5a – Improve the interpretation both on and off site to enhance enjoyment and appreciation of the WHS

ACTIONS

- 92** Agree overarching principles for panels and text throughout the WHS. Partners provide an integrated and coherent message and identity across both parts of the WHS alongside partners' own building on the SILPS.
- 93** Explore opportunities for interpreting the linkages between the historic and natural heritage in the updated SILPS and the Avebury Interpretation and Learning Framework (AILF).
- 94** Review opportunities to expand digital interpretation for the WHS landscape in line with the SILPS and AILF.
- 95** Develop a programme of training/familiarisation visits/ambassador scheme for VW and 'Our Land' partners including guides and businesses.
- 96** Review the provision of on-site information and interpretation for non-English speakers.

Stonehenge

- 97** Explore with EH opportunities for making use of the special exhibition space at the Visitor Centre to enhance understanding, enjoyment and appreciation of the WHS and its setting and links to other WHSs.
- 98** Review original aims of the SILPS to ensure they

have all been delivered. Explore opportunities for expanding interpretation of the Stonehenge WHS and in particular the southern part where land is in private ownership. Review interpretation across the WHS once landscaping works at Stonehenge completed. Review the signage and way-marking elements related to Policy 4c.

Avebury

- 99** Develop a WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework for Avebury. The Framework should consider provisions for improved 'visibility' of below ground archaeology and the feasibility of updating the interpretation of the Sanctuary and agree appropriate actions to improve.
- 100** Develop interpretation, outreach and community engagement opportunities at Fyfield Down in line with the developing AILF.
- 101** Explore possibility of developing project to redisplay the two public galleries of the Alexander Keiller Museum.
- 102** Develop and implement project to redisplay the two galleries of the Alexander Keiller Museum.
- 103** Increase digital access to Alexander Keiller Museum collections and archives to enhance education and interpretation of the WHS.

10.4 Developments in learning within the WHS

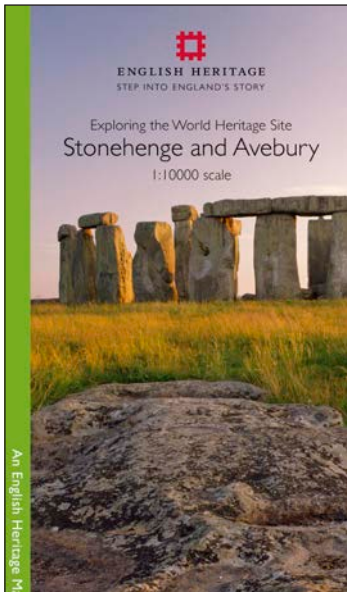
Issue 39: The WHS is used for education and lifelong learning

10.4.1 The WHS fulfils an important role in formal and informal education. Currently English Heritage employs a full-time Education Visits Officer for Stonehenge who manages the volunteer-led Discovery Visits programme and the educational resources including the 'Stones and Bones' Discovery Visit managed in partnership with the National Trust for Stonehenge. The National Trust Stonehenge Landscape intern programme ended in 2012 and is not to be continued. The National Trust's Guardianship scheme which was a partnership with a local school on a continuing project aiming to encourage a sense of custodianship through lessons based around local, cultural and natural heritage ended in 2012. At Avebury there is an education room that groups can pre-book and educational groups are able to visit the AKM free of charge, an arrangement which approximately 4,500 individuals benefit from each year. Under the Local Management

and Loan Agreement with English Heritage the National Trust employs a Museum Curator who is also responsible for Education provision. English Heritage manages a Heritage Schools Programme¹⁴⁰ which provides a variety of online resources as well as working with individual schools.

Learning and participation partnerships

10.4.2 The Stonehenge Learning and Outreach Coordination Group (SLOCG) partnership was formed as a result of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) projects at Stonehenge, the SM and WM. SLOCG was designed to assist in partnership working and avoid duplication particularly in those areas funded by the HLF. SLOCG was attended by staff members of English Heritage, National Trust, the WHS Coordination Unit, SM and WM and Wessex Archaeology and met around 3–4 times a year to exchange information and work on joint projects such as a Heritage Open Day at Bulford Camp in April 2012, The Big Draw joint activities and volunteer related projects.



Left: *Exploring the World Heritage Site: Stonehenge and Avebury*
 Right: *Wildlife leaflet produced jointly by the RSPB and the National Trust*

10.4.3 SLOCG undertook some joint initiatives including the development of a continuous professional development session for teachers. This is particularly relevant for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 teachers who will be teaching prehistory on the primary curriculum from September 2014, many for the first time, and are looking for assistance.

10.4.4 The focus on the project work related to the SEIP meant that the Stonehenge and Avebury Learning and Outreach Network Group (SALONG) was not as successful as SLOCG. Whilst the networking opportunities with a wider community of organisations such as arts and wildlife groups was appreciated, without a clear focus and programme of activities the group foundered.

10.4.5 SLOCG has been a successful partnership and in 2014 the membership was expanded to include the Avebury National Trust team to create the Stonehenge and Avebury Learning and Outreach Group (SALOG). This will enable projects to be developed across both parts of the WHS and improve connections with Wiltshire schools and other educational networks. There is scope to increase the network further to include arts and wildlife groups on an occasional basis or for specific projects. **(Policy 5b/Action 104)**

10.4.6 The WHS can be used not just as a resource for teaching about prehistory but in a number of areas of the curriculum. The value of educational resources embodied in a site such as Stonehenge and Avebury should be considered comprehensively in conjunction

with the rest of prehistoric Wessex, together with the museums at Avebury, Devizes and Salisbury. There is scope for widening the role of education of the WHS, to reach new audiences and cover themes such as recent history, wildlife, World Heritage and business tourism and to reinforce the conservation message.

10.4.7 The English Heritage website provides resources for both Stonehenge and Avebury which were developed in partnership with Wessex Archaeology¹⁴¹ who also host learning resources within their website¹⁴² and employ a full-time Community and Education Officer who undertakes educational work, including prehistory, at schools in the area.

Learning provision at Stonehenge

10.4.8 Since 2009 there have been substantial changes and improvements to the educational provision at Stonehenge. The Stonehenge Visitor Centre has a dedicated educational resource room which includes space for the storage of bags, a classroom area that can be used for sessions and the development of a number of interactive resources including handling collections and interactive models to explain various aspects of the prehistoric landscape. In addition, online resources have been expanded and updated including an interactive web-based game and information packs to assist teachers with their visit to Stonehenge and classroom learning.¹⁴³



Testing the Explorer Backpacks at Stonehenge

10.4.9 The SILPS helped to inform and direct a good deal of the educational activities not only for English Heritage but also for the partners of the SLOCG. The learning and participation actions of the SILPS need to be reviewed and any outstanding or new actions implemented through the new group, SALOG. **(Policy 5b Action 111)**



© Sarah Simmonds

Avenue to Learning

Learning provision at Avebury

10.4.10 At Avebury there have been fewer developments since the 2005 Management Plan. Avebury, like Stonehenge, offers an outdoor classroom across the whole curriculum. The National Trust has an Education Room at Avebury and also provides free introductory talks to schools; artefact handling sessions are also available. There is a great deal of potential to build on current educational provision, but there are limited resources to expand. One exciting project is the ‘Avenue to Learning’ project which was launched in 2012. The project was developed in partnership with local teachers, the University of Cambridge, English Heritage, the National Trust, Wiltshire Council, local farmers and the Avebury and District Club by members of the Avebury Archaeological and Historical Research Group (AAHRG). The project offers primary school children an inspirational day in an exciting outdoor classroom where they could put their geography, mathematics and science lessons into action. Working alongside professional archaeologists the children marked out the buried stone of the West Kennet Avenue using traditional surveying techniques and state of the art GPS equipment. Funding for the development of teacher resources needs to be sought to enable this activity to be repeated in a sustainable manner. **(Policy 5b/Action 113)**

10.4.11 An Avebury Learning Plan is required as part of an Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework to assist in developing educational potential **(Policy 5b/Action 112)**. The Plan should identify the responsibility and resources for this work. It should be developed in partnership with English Heritage, Natural England and WM. In order to inform the Avebury Learning Plan a survey of the various education groups using the WHS is required to understand the needs of different groups at all levels of education and to inform learning strategies for Avebury and Stonehenge. Opportunities should be sought wherever possible to develop WHS based projects in partnership with members of SALOG. **(Policy 5b/Action 104)**

Residential study centre

10.4.12 One issue is whether there is a need for facilities and infrastructure to assist in the development of an educational programme in both parts of the WHS. A residential study or education centre within the WHS or within easy reach would allow for more extended field trips and residencies and spaces for shelter would enable visits to take place all year round. Underutilised or redundant barns and outbuildings might be re-used as education shelters and spaces to facilitate learning across the whole of the WHS **(Policy 5b/Action 106)**. However there is no real understanding of the need for such facilities and how they might be achieved



Drawing by pupil of Avebury Primary School as part of the Silbury Hill Project outreach programme

if required. A needs analysis is required to investigate whether there is a need for a residential facility in either or both parts of the WHS, potential locations and if so how they might be resourced and actions taken as appropriate following its conclusion. **(Policy 5b/ Action 109)**

Relationships with local schools and colleges

10.4.13 Learning programmes are well established at primary and secondary level but there is more work to be done to expand connections with local primary and secondary schools and in particular develop lasting relationships which can have greater impact on the learning experience. For example, the UNESCO World Heritage Youth Summit initiative provided opportunities for local schools to meet with young people from other UK WHS in Dorset in 2009 and Greenwich, London in 2012. Sheldon School in Chippenham attended both of these events and has become a UNESCO Associated School.

Relationship with tertiary education

10.4.14 As well as this more traditional link with primary and secondary education, the WHS has links with a number of tertiary level institutions. The WHS Coordination Unit in partnership with members of ASAHRG should look at ways based on the Stonehenge and Avebury Archaeological Research Framework to develop existing and establish new links with universities and tertiary education institutions offering WHS, heritage and archaeological courses. The WHS Coordination Unit and other WHS partners can assist directly by continuing to offer placements to appropriate students for a variety of projects as required. The WHS Coordination Unit is available to talk to local groups and communities and further afield about the various aspects of the WHS and its management. **(Policy 5b/Action 108)**

Policy 5b – Develop learning opportunities offered by the WHS both on and off site

ACTIONS

- 104** Develop Stonehenge and Avebury Learning and Outreach Group (SALOG) to assist in partnership working across the WHS.
- 105** Conduct a survey of the various education groups using the WHS to understand the needs of different groups at all levels of education and to inform learning strategies for Avebury and Stonehenge.
- 106** Identify opportunities for working with local farmers to provide outdoor educational facilities.
- 107** Coordinate existing and establish new links with primary and secondary schools.
- 108** Develop existing and establish new links with universities and tertiary education institutions offering WHS, heritage and archaeological courses. Continue to offer placements to appropriate students.
- 109** Undertake a needs analysis of requirement for a residential field/education centre. Consider re-use of existing buildings within the WHS or within easy reach.
- 110** Offer presentations and publications on the WHS, its attributes of OUV and their management for a local, national and international audience.

Stonehenge

- 111** Review implementation of the *Stonehenge WHS Interpretation, Learning and Participation Strategy*. Complete any outstanding actions using Stonehenge and Avebury Learning and Outreach Group (SALOG) network.

Avebury

- 112** Explore learning opportunities as part of the Avebury WHS Interpretation and Learning Framework including developing educational potential and links with Stonehenge.
- 113** Develop educational resources based on the WHS 'Avenue to Learning' Project.

10.5 Community involvement in the WHS

Issue 40: *The importance of community involvement for the successful management of the WHS*

10.5.1 In 2007 the World Heritage Committee decided¹⁴⁴ to add 'communities' to the strategic objectives for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of credibility, conservation, capacity building and communication and create 'the 5th C'¹⁴⁵ This decision recognised that in many instances 'the control of heritage has been attempted without the support of surrounding communities and in some instances this has resulted in damage being done to both the heritage and the interests of the surrounding communities'.¹⁴⁶

10.5.2 The relations between the communities around Stonehenge and Avebury to the WHS differ substantially. At Avebury there is a closer more immediate link to the WHS with homes nestled within the Henge and in the setting of many other monuments in the WHS. Visitors, as discussed in Section 9.0, can have a more direct impact on the residents here. At Stonehenge, the focus of the WHS at the Stones is seen as more distant to the lives of those who live in the neighbouring communities. The recent developments there including the building of the new Visitor Centre and the closure of the A344 have been seen by some as being imposed upon them. All developments go through the usual planning process which allows for public involvement but engagement is usually limited to the formal processes through parish and town councils and those with a particular concern to voice. It can all seem very distant to the majority of the residents. In addition to this, there is a perception that the WHS and the management of Stonehenge by English Heritage is synonymous rather than the reality that English Heritage is one of many partners involved in the management of the WHS. More work needs to be undertaken to change this perception and help both the local community and the wider public understand that both parts of the WHS are managed as a partnership with a large number of public bodies and individuals involved.

10.5.3 At the time of its inscription in 1986, local communities had no involvement in the nomination process. However, as the governance arrangements of the WHS developed, communities have become involved in its management through the representation of the relevant local parish and town

councils on the two local committees. This form of formal engagement is limited in its effectiveness and awareness of the work of the WHS and its effect on local activities amongst the wider local community is generally low. More active engagement with the wider community has been limited to specific projects by partners and at Avebury, in the production of the *Avebury WHS Residents' Pack* in 2008.¹⁴⁷ The WHS could help contribute to removing clearly identified barriers experienced at a local community level from a social, economic and wellbeing perspective, including issues such as mental health. Solving such issues can be very complex and would involve a range of partners beyond the traditional environmental, heritage and local government structures. The lottery funded project officer approach worked well under Natural England's now completed Access to Nature Programme including one project local to the WHS at Larkhill and Bulford Camps engaging with military service communities. More work should be undertaken to understand how the local community wish to engage with the World Heritage Site and its partners.

Residents' Pack

10.5.4 The *Avebury WHS Residents' Pack* was launched in July 2008. 'The presence of a long-established village community at the heart of the Avebury World Heritage Site, partly within the vast stone circle, makes community engagement central to the sustainable management of this half of the Site's OUV.'¹⁴⁸ The pack contains a book, *Values and Voices*, and information leaflets from the main organisations involved in the management of the World Heritage Site such as the National Trust, Wiltshire Council, Natural England and English Heritage. *Values and Voices* 'includes short accessible pieces on Avebury's many different kinds of significance, from its official OUV to its very personal value to those born and brought up in the parish. Groups and individuals not usually represented on formal management committees, such as pagans and shop owners, also contributed pieces on their particular relationship to the site. The voices are heard side-by-side and equal weight is given to each: academics write alongside other professionals and local residents.'¹⁴⁹

10.5.5 The *Avebury WHS Residents' Pack* was very well received at the time of its publication but some of the leaflets are now out of date and many people have reflected that *Values and Voices* is strong enough to be a publication in its own right and would be of interest to many beyond the parish or WHS



© Brian Edwards

Launch of the Avebury WHS Residents' Pack July 2008

boundary. *The Residents' Pack* at Avebury should be reviewed, updated and reprinted as appropriate. A digital option should be considered. To complete this action, external funding or sponsorship will be required.

- 10.5.6** At Stonehenge, the 2009 Management Plan included an action to 'produce an information pack for all WHS landowners and householders'. This action was not completed, the main barrier being cost. The number of households involved in the Stonehenge WHS is substantially more than that at Avebury. During the review of the 2009 Management Plan it was evident that many believed that a residents' pack similar in content to that of Avebury would be of benefit to the Stonehenge WHS and provide an opportunity for the community to reflect on what the WHS means to them. It was recognised that with widespread access to the internet, the Stonehenge residents' pack could be produced with substantial elements using a lower cost web-based format. External grant funding or sponsorship would be required to help develop and publish the content. Information from partners at both Avebury and Stonehenge could be available digitally to reduce costs and to enable it to be more easily updated. **(Policy 5c/Action 118)**

Oral history

- 10.5.7** Both the National Trust and English Heritage have already embarked on an extensive oral history project in the Stonehenge WHS and this work should be continued and extended to Avebury.

Projects such as this which involve the local community are aimed at achieving a more positive relationship to the Site by valuing the voices and experiences of the local people as equal to academic or professional ones. Community-based programmes such as the Layers of Larkhill project run by Julian Richards in 2012 and community involvement at the Blick Mead excavations¹⁵⁰ in Amesbury demonstrate that local people are interested in their local history and keen to be involved if the right project is presented.

(Policy 5c/Action 117)

Localism Act and Neighbourhood Plans

- 10.5.8** The Localism Act of 2011 aims to 'devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities more control over housing and planning decisions'.¹⁵¹ In particular it provides for communities to develop 'Neighbourhood Development Plans' which would be approved if receiving 50% of the vote in a referendum. These neighbourhood plans establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood and allow communities to have a voice in how their neighbourhoods develop over time. As English Heritage note in their 2011 publication *Knowing Your Place*:¹⁵² 'When a community is planning its future, through a Community-Led Plan, it is important to consider its past. By including their heritage in the plan, communities can really get to know the place in which they live. They can ensure it keeps its vitality, sense of identity and individuality. They can choose the best ways for it to develop and grow. They can hand it on – as a place to be proud of – to future generations.' It is essential that the WHS Coordination Unit partakes in the development of Neighbourhood Plans in order to ensure that the WHS and its values and protection are incorporated into them.

- 10.5.9** Examples of areas where the local community could be invaluable to the work of the WHS and improve their neighbourhood are projects such as local research and an audit of the Avebury Conservation Area to assist in the development of design principles related to the *WHS Transport Strategy*.

- 10.5.10** It is important that the local community is kept involved with the management of the WHS and formal links such as parish and town council representatives on the two local Steering Committees should be maintained together with strengthening links with the Community Area Boards of Marlborough and Amesbury. Minutes of meetings are available to

all, once approved, on the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website. All task and finish groups (see Section 15.4(f)) should include a relevant local community representative where appropriate. This may require looking beyond the named usual parish representative in order to reach the most relevant group within the community. **(Policy 5c/Action 114)**

Communicating with the local community

10.5.11 A more targeted approach should be developed to communicate with the local community. The voice of the WHS is often hard to hear above the corporate messages from individual organisations. More is discussed on this under Policy 5e but a communication strategy is required to identify who the key target groups are that the WHS should communicate with and how this should be done. The local community is clearly a key group and a regular presence in publications such as parish magazines, *The Stonehenge Trader*, *Upper Kennet News* and others would provide a regular channel of communication and presence in the local community.

Community events

10.5.12 Providing an event for the members of the community from both Avebury and Stonehenge is problematic as it requires the expense and time of additional travel for at least one community. The same or similar event could be repeated in each half of the WHS. However, the joint identity of the WHS should be celebrated at least annually and an annual public event would provide a focus for both parts of the WHS and the activities taking place. It could incorporate formal and informal elements with presentations and updates together with stands from partners to show how they contribute to the work of the WHS together with some family activities. An annual forum would provide an excellent

opportunity to showcase the work of the WHS throughout the year and help forge a joint identity as well as providing an opportunity for people from each community to get together. The event might alternate between localities or be at a location such as Devizes, approximately half way between the two sites. **(Policy 5c/Action 115)**

10.5.13 The centenary of the Great War 1914–18 during the lifetime of this Management Plan is an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of the area around Stonehenge in the early development of military aviation and the infrastructure that developed prior to, during and after the Great War. The Wylde Valley 1914 project undertaken with the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB demonstrates a community-led approach to exploring community stories¹⁵³ as does the MoD-led ‘Digging War Horse’ project near Stonehenge.

Local community access to Stonehenge

10.5.14 The new Stonehenge Visitor Centre includes an education space for learning groups to use when visiting, if available and pre-booked. This room could provide a valuable community resource for twilight sessions and during the school holidays at times when educational groups are generally not using this resource. Talks and events could be held in this room without significant additional staff resourcing. A procedure for booking this room could be agreed with English Heritage together with agreed criteria for its use and any terms and conditions or fees that might be applied. **(Policy 5c/Action 120)**

10.5.15 At Stonehenge, a residents’ pass is available. This entitles qualifying residents to obtain a pass to allow free access to the Visitor Centre and Stones and is available from Amesbury Library. It is estimated that approximately 30,000 residents are entitled to this concession which dates back to 1921. This represents a substantial benefit to local people which has increased with the improvement of facilities and the temporary exhibition space at the Visitor Centre. It should also be noted that both visitors and residents alike are able to access and enjoy large parts of the landscape at both Avebury and Stonehenge through the permissive open access provided by the National Trust and the public rights of way network and permissive paths. This provides a valuable resource to the people living and working in the area. **(Policy 5c/Action 119)**



© Sarah Simmonds

WHS residents visit the Later Silbury dig, Summer 2011



Volunteer constructing Neolithic House 2014

James O Davies © DPI 63594 Historic England



© Ruth Butler

'Volunteers Together' social event Salisbury Museum

10.6 Volunteers in the WHS

Volunteers

10.6.1 Volunteering in the WHS involves mostly Wiltshire residents including people from the local communities. The main organisations that manage the attractions within and related to the WHS have a well-developed programme of volunteering. Opportunities vary from removal of scrub in the landscape with the National Trust rangers, to leading educational visits

at Stonehenge or assisting with conservation work at the Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums. Volunteering for organisations supporting the work of the WHS amounted to over 85,000 hours in 2013.

10.6.2 Recent activity supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) at Stonehenge, Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums has led to an increase in opportunities for volunteers to become involved. SLOGC has developed a programme of events designed to assist recruit more volunteers and to provide opportunities for volunteers to find out more about the activities of the WHS partners in 'Volunteers Together' social events. These have included behind the scenes visits and presentations on various aspects of the work taking place in the WHS. It is hoped that closer links will be developed with Avebury and these kinds of activities could be extended into the work taking place in the Avebury WHS with perhaps a joint annual event celebrating volunteering within both parts of the WHS. **(Policy 5c/Action 116)**

10.6.3 Volunteering is an excellent way to develop community engagement as it means that the volunteers become involved in the day to day activity taking place within the WHS and so gain familiarity with the work of the partners of the WHS, understand more fully the context in which they work and increase their sense of ownership of the attributes of the WHS.

10.6.4 All projects developed during the lifetime of this Management Plan should consider whether the community can be involved and in particular if there is a role for volunteers and members of the community to take part. **(Policy 5c/Action 116)**

Policy 5c – Promote community involvement in the WHS to increase a sense of ownership

ACTIONS

- I14** Work with the local community to understand how they would most like to be involved with the management of the WHS, the updating of the Management Plan and where appropriate research. Make available WHS minutes and reports on the WHS website.
- I15** Research options for a community event to celebrate the WHS.
- I16** Develop volunteering opportunities for participation in the management of the WHS. Integrate volunteer involvement in the delivery of the Management Plan where appropriate.
- I17** Develop oral history project for the WHS to encourage community engagement.
- I18** Explore opportunities for delivery of a WHS Residents' Pack at Stonehenge in the most appropriate format. Allow re-based community to develop in advance of this. Consider appropriate timing for update of the Avebury Pack.

Stonehenge

- I19** Maintain free entry to Stonehenge Visitor Centre and Stones for local residents.
- I20** Explore the ways in which the community can use the education room at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre as a community resource.

10.7 Using the creative arts sector to help communities engage with the WHS

Issue 41: *The need to meet the demand of the creative sector to use the WHS to continue to inspire local communities and visitors*

- 10.7.1** The use of art and the creative sector as a way of engaging communities with their heritage is well established and used by other WHS in the UK such as the Jurassic Coast as a means of reaching those people who might not normally engage with heritage. The placing of the new WHS Coordination Unit within the Heritage and Arts Team at Wiltshire Council provides an opportunity to work with that team to develop new ways for visitors and residents to engage with and learn about the WHS and also explore the way that artists have responded to the WHS over the years. Wiltshire Council's Arts Development Team has an excellent network of

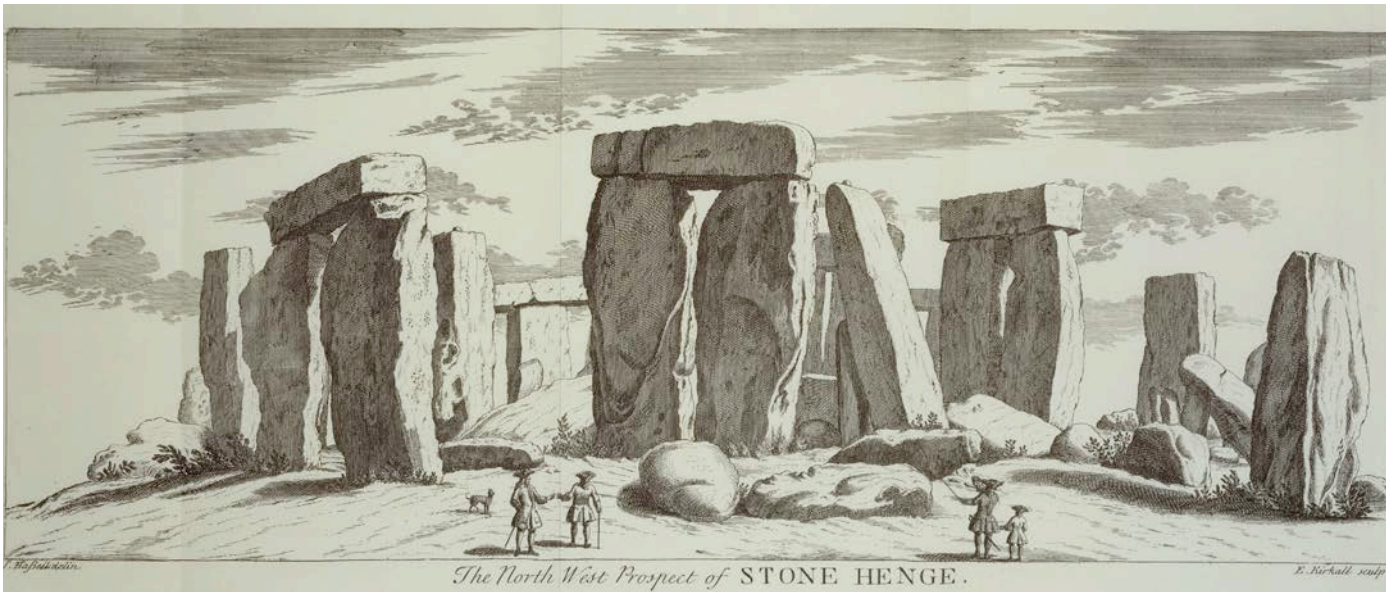
arts organisations, venues, festivals and practitioners across the county and beyond. This network can be used to deliver partnership events which both inspire and entertain but also engage people with the WHS and its attributes of OUV and allow artists a route to access the WHS as inspiration for their work.

- 10.7.2** Stonehenge and Avebury have already had an impact on the cultural life through the work of many artists including Turner, Constable and more recently Piper, Nash and Inshaw. The WHS could continue to contribute to the already rich and vibrant cultural life of Wiltshire and several local artists have expressed an interest in being able to use their talents to enrich their work and the lives of others. However, any creative arts programme must give due regard to the attributes of OUV and their protection and would need to consider any impact that traffic and infrastructure required may have on the WHS and the communities within them. In order to manage this process effectively an Arts Framework or Memorandum of Understanding for the WHS should be established by engaging with the rich variety of artists working in all creative sectors to look at opportunities to open up the potential of the WHS and ways of delivering an arts programme whilst protecting the WHS and its attributes of OUV. **(Policy 5d/Action 121)**
- 10.7.3** A symposium of artists could explore the themes related to the attributes of OUV including the shaping of the WHS landscape and a plan to implement appropriate ways to deliver this. **(Policy 5d/Action 122)**

Policy 5d – Artists and the creative sector will offer new and inspiring ways for communities and a wider range of visitors to engage with and learn about the OUV of the WHS and the wide range of artistic responses to it both past and present

ACTION

- I21** Develop an Arts Framework articulating the attributes of OUV of the WHS and the potential for their artistic expression.
- I22** Deliver an artists' symposium exploring the themes related to the attributes of OUV including the shaping of the WHS landscape.



'The North West Prospect of Stone Henge' by Inigo Jones 1725

© Mike Seaforth J050111 Historic England

10.8 The identity and message of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS

10.8.1 The appointment of an Independent Chair for the newly formed Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel and the formation of the WHS Coordination Unit within Wiltshire Council in 2014 are tangible outcomes of the work that has taken place since 2009 to bring both parts of the WHS closer together. This stronger identity as a single Stonehenge and Avebury WHS needs to be clearly presented wherever possible.

Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website

10.8.2 In August 2013 a single WHS website www.stonehengeandaveburywhs.org was launched. This website provides a single port of call for those who wish to find out more about the WHS. It provides links to the English Heritage and National Trust websites so that visitors can find out how to visit the main sites and also provides information on accommodation and other tourism facilities by linking with the VisitWiltshire website. It links to educational resources and events provided by partners such as the Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums and the other members of the SALOG partnership. More work could be done to provide more information on aspects of World Heritage which is not covered by the website of English Heritage and others. This website needs to be maintained and further developed to act as a 'one stop shop' for the WHS and in particular for the work related to the ASHRG and actions related to the Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework. **(Policy 5e/Action 128)**

Megalith

10.8.3 The annual newsletter *Megalith*, first published in 2012 for the Stonehenge WHS only and from 2013 for both Stonehenge and Avebury, showcases the work of partners in the WHS. It aims to demonstrate the breadth of activities and the number of people involved in the WHS. This newsletter is published as an online PDF document and with a small print run and distributed to local community hubs such as libraries, libraries and community centres in the immediate vicinity of the WHS. This newsletter should continue and develop. E-newsletters can be produced through the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website but requires time resources to develop this facility.

(Policy 5e/Action 126)

10.8.4 The WHS also operates a Twitter account as [@StoneAveWHS](https://twitter.com/StoneAveWHS) and this communicates events taking place within the WHS and re-tweets postings by other partners.

WHS Communications Strategy

10.8.5 Thus far, the website, *Megalith* and Twitter have, so far, been used in an ad hoc fashion without any coherent strategy or plan. A WHS Communication Strategy is required to analyse the various stakeholders of the WHS and audiences which the WHS wishes to reach. This strategy should include an analysis of stakeholders and what the key messages of the WHS are and the best way to communicate this throughout the lifetime of this Management Plan. This Strategy would look at the available means of communication and identify other methods and establish how these can be used to best advantage. **(Policy 5e/Action 123)**

10.8.6 The establishment of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel and the appointment of an independent Chair provide an opportunity for the first time for the whole WHS to have a clear, independent voice on issues which directly concern it. The members of the Partnership Panel represent individual organisations that may on occasion have conflicting viewpoints but it is hoped that in most cases a single ‘World Heritage Site’ view can be established and this view articulated to the press, public and partners of the WHS. In time it is hoped that the WHS will not only be identified with its key partners such as English Heritage and the National Trust but have its own identity separate from those institutions.

10.8.7 In addition to having a single voice the WHS needs a clearer visual identity and presence across the WHS. Marketing materials for the key attractions are inconsistent in whether they include the World Heritage logo and how they refer to the World Heritage Site. An agreed policy is required for how and where the WHS is identified and should include a reference to ‘the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS’ wherever possible in any wording.

WHS branding and signage strategy

10.8.8 There is an authorised logo provided by UNESCO to all World Heritage Sites. This is generally adequate for the purposes of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, particularly when there is already the danger of any printed or digital material being overwhelmed by the logos of the host of partners working within the WHS. Although many other WHSs in the UK have developed a logo for the purposes of branding and signage, at this time it is not thought necessary that a new Stonehenge and Avebury WHS logo be developed. The question of whether a separate logo is required should however be reviewed from time to time. **(Policy 5e/Action 124)**

 <p>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</p>	 <p>Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986</p>
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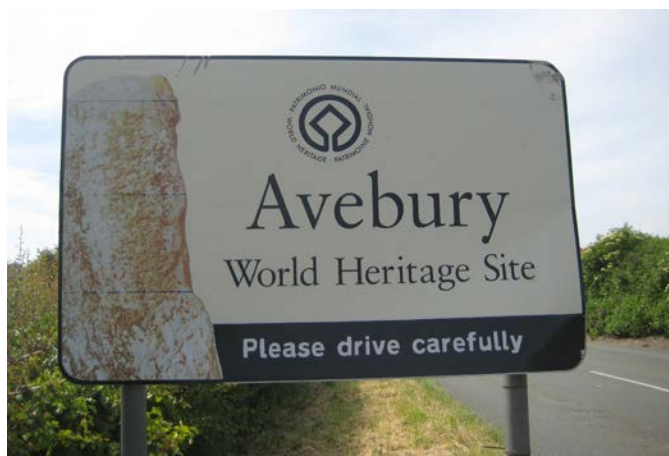
10.8.9 To strengthen the identity of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS any further signage within the WHS should link visually to existing provision. A branding and signage strategy for the whole WHS should be developed in conjunction with the SILPS and **(Policy 5a/Action 92)** and the proposed AILF. **(Policy 5e/Action 124)**

Gateway signs

10.8.10 At both Stonehenge and Avebury there are gateway signs installed welcoming visitors to the WHS. At Avebury these were installed some years ago and are now faded and in need of replacement. These are located on the A4, the A361 and the A4361 on the boundaries of the WHS. At Stonehenge, signs were installed on the A303 in 2012 by the Highways Agency. There are however, no signs on other sections of the road network managed by Wiltshire Council. (Any signs on the highway network managed by Wiltshire Council will need to comply with relevant



Gateway sign on the east bound A303



Gateway sign on the west bound A4

statutory requirements.) It is important that both residents and visitors understand the extent of the WHS as it is commonly believed that these simply encompass the main henges and their immediate environs at both sites. A unified approach to the installation of any further signs or replacements should be taken so as to provide a coherent visual identity for the WHS.

(Policy 5e/Action I25)

10.8.11 The Operational Guidelines published by UNESCO state that a commemorative plaque should be located at the site to commemorate the site's inscription onto the World Heritage List¹⁵⁴ and includes guidelines¹⁵⁵ on what this plaque should include. Currently there is no such plaque at either site although reference has been made to WHS status in the new Visitor Centre at Stonehenge. The WHS Coordination Unit should work with English Heritage and the National Trust to locate a WHS plaque at both Stonehenge and Avebury at a key entry point where most visitors will see it. Such plaques are often actively sought by international visitors who collect photographs of themselves alongside them. **(Policy 5e/Action I27)**

Policy 5e – Present a unified Stonehenge and Avebury WHS identity and message

ACTIONS

- I23** Produce a WHS Communications Strategy defining the message, audiences and means of communication.
- I24** Develop a branding and signage strategy for the whole WHS.
- I25** Review WHS gateway signage and ensure funding for their re-design, replacement and/or maintenance.
- I26** Continue to produce the WHS *Megalith* newsletter to raise the profile of the WHS and the work of its partners.
- I27** Locate a WHS plaque at both Stonehenge and Avebury in agreement with partners to mark the WHS inscription to meet UNESCO requirements.
- I28** Develop the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website.

10.9 Meeting the objectives of UNESCO and UK Government

The five 'C's

10.9.1 The Strategic objectives of the World Heritage Committee in implementing the World Heritage Convention of 1972 are:

1. Strengthen **credibility** of the World Heritage List
2. Ensure efficient **conservation** of World Heritage properties
3. Promote the development of effective measures to ensure **capacity building**
4. Develop **communication** to increase public awareness and encourage participation and support for World Heritage
5. Enhance the role of the **communities** in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.



Pupils from Sheldon School, Chippenham at the 2012 UNESCO Youth Summit held in Maritime Greenwich WHS

© Victoria Minors

10.9.2 The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Coordinators, partners and stakeholders should look for opportunities to meet these strategic objectives where possible. In this Management Plan we have looked at how efficient **conservation** of the WHS and its attributes of OUV may be achieved; we have looked at how **capacity building** can be achieved through working with communities across the county; and we have discussed strengthening **communication** and the role of

communities. Success in these areas will strengthen the **credibility** of the World Heritage List.

- 10.9.3** The Stonehenge and Avebury Coordinators, partners and stakeholders can strengthen the credibility of the World Heritage list by ensuring that key people working within the WHS understand the benefits and obligations of the WHS status and are able to provide information on the WHS status and national and international sites to visitors and residents. To facilitate this, the WHS Coordination Unit should work with partners particularly at museums and history centres to establish interpretation of WHS status and provide training to staff where appropriate. **(Policy 5f/Action 129)**

World Heritage interpretation centre

- 10.9.4** The WHS Coordination Unit should work with partners to explore the feasibility of establishing a centre to interpret WHS status and its local, national and international relevance. The United Reformed Chapel at Avebury and the proposed Amesbury History Centre should be considered for such a facility if available. In addition, the feasibility of a study centre for the WHS should be explored. **(Policy 5f/Action 130)**



United Reformed Chapel Avebury

World Heritage: UK

- 10.9.5** The WHS Coordination Unit is a member of the World Heritage UK Forum. World Heritage UK provides a professional network to share best practice across the UK. The WHS Coordination Unit should continue to work with the World Heritage UK Forum to share experiences, best practice and ideas in order to improve the way that the site is managed. Wherever possible the WHS Coordination Unit should develop reciprocal professional links with international WHS to share best practice and develop relationships with WHS that have been designated for similar attributes of OUV and management challenges to Stonehenge and Avebury. **(Policy 5f/Action 131)**

Policy 5f – Explore and deliver opportunities to meet the wider objectives of UNESCO and the UK Government

ACTIONS

- 129** Establish interpretation of WHS status in existing facilities including museums. Train staff where appropriate to provide information on the WHS status and other national and international WHSs.
- 130** Explore feasibility of establishing a centre to interpret WHS status and its local, national and international relevance. Consider possible study centre. Implement if feasible. Consider Avebury Chapel and/or Amesbury History Centre as a location if available.
- 131** Develop links with UK and international WHSs to share best practice. Develop reciprocal professional relationships with WHSs that have similar attributes of OUV and management challenges.

11.0 ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Aim 6: Reduce significantly the negative impacts of roads and traffic on the WHS and its attributes of OUV and increase sustainable access to the WHS

11.0 Introduction

11.0.1 This section sets out the current issues related to roads and traffic and their impact on the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS and its attributes of OUV. It includes a brief discussion of the approaches and actions for addressing them as agreed by WHS partners. It looks at the impact of roads and traffic on the integrity of the WHS, the setting of the monuments and the physical damage caused to both buried and upstanding archaeology.

11.0.2 This section of the Plan also outlines how roads and traffic affect the ability of visitors and the local community to gain greater enjoyment and understanding of the WHS. It considers the ease and confidence with which they can both access and explore the WHS and its wider landscape in light of the physical and psychological barriers that roads and traffic present. Car parking and sustainable travel are closely related considerations which are also discussed. Impacts on the amenity of the local community are considered where relevant in line with the principles of sustainable tourism referred to in Section 9.0 (Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism).

11.0.3 There has been considerable change in the road network and car parking provision at Stonehenge since 2009. This is outlined together with the situation at present, and related emerging challenges and opportunities are set out. The major development at Avebury has been the production of the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* which provides a holistic set of design principles and schemes to address identified road and traffic related issues. A brief outline of recommendations and schemes is included under the relevant issues.

11.1 Highways network and usage

Issue 42: *Roads and traffic have an adverse effect on areas of the WHS, its attributes of OUV and its integrity. They dominate the landscape in some areas and sever key relationships between monuments. They have a negative impact on the setting of monuments and the character of the wider landscape through loss of tranquillity, signage, related clutter, inappropriate design, and in some places light pollution*



Traffic on the A303 from Stonehenge

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11.1.1 Roads and traffic have long had a major influence on the WHS which is both traversed and surrounded by roads and byways, many of some antiquity. The presence of these roads and byways has played a fundamental role in the development and character of the wider area throughout history. They have also allowed access to the WHS for both residents and visitors and these important roles need to be maintained. The A303 (trunk) road is managed and maintained by the Highways Agency for the Department for Transport and crosses the WHS at Stonehenge. It is a strategic national road, part of the A303 corridor and recognised by the Government in terms of its role in providing access to the South West and facilitating the economic performance of locations along this corridor. There are also a number of principal A roads and minor B roads within the WHS close to Stonehenge and Avebury. These principal and minor roads are operated and maintained by Wiltshire Council as highway authority and are part of the Council's highway network. A number of public rights of way (for pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and motorists) are located within the WHS and again these are operated and maintained by the Council as highway authority. The presence of routes introduced since prehistory may have long bisected or otherwise overlain the Neolithic and Bronze Age landscape but their impacts have greatly increased over recent generations for a number of reasons including the advent of motorised vehicles, increased car ownership and mobility, and fast expanding domestic and international tourism.

Impact of roads and traffic on integrity and setting

11.1.2 The Statement of Significance for the WHS adopted by UNESCO in 2008 clarified the importance of the interrelationship of monuments and sites, their siting



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Roads cutting through Avebury Henge

in relation to the landscape and the importance of the WHS as a 'landscape without parallel'. The harmful impacts of roads and traffic on the WHS are clearly articulated in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (Statement of OUV 2013) prepared by the Stonehenge and Avebury Steering Committees and submitted to UNESCO by the UK Government. The Statement of OUV builds on the Statement of Significance adding in statements of integrity, authenticity and outlining the protection and management requirements. It describes the negative impact of busy main roads on the integrity of the WHS, highlighting how they sever key relationships between monuments in the landscape. It also refers to the negative impact on the setting of monuments from traffic noise and visual intrusion as well as the incremental impact of highway-related clutter.

11.1.3 As far back as the original nomination in 1986 the ICOMOS (UNESCO's adviser on cultural WHSs) evaluation document ¹⁵⁶ raised concerns about the negative impact of the A344. At the time of nomination the WHS Committee requested that possible solutions to the problem of the A344 were studied. ¹⁵⁷ On inscription they 'noted with satisfaction the assurances

provided by the authorities of the United Kingdom that the closure of the road which crosses the avenue at Stonehenge was receiving serious consideration as part of the overall plans for the future management of the site.'¹⁵⁸ This action was the focus of a number of State of Conservation reports required by UNESCO from the UK Government until its eventual resolution with the partial stopping up of one section of the A344 and the closure of the remainder of the A344 to vehicular traffic by way of a permanent traffic regulation order.



© Rachel Foster

Re-seeding the bed of part of the A344 following its closure in 2013



© National Trust/John Miller

Traffic on the A303 within the setting of Stonehenge

Despite this very substantial progress, the Periodic Report to UNESCO on the condition of the UK's WHSs continues to highlight transport infrastructure and its use as a significant and increasingly negative factor affecting the WHS. There remain a number of significant challenges related to negative impacts on integrity and setting in both parts of the WHS as set out in this section.

11.1.4 At a national level planning policy and guidance has evolved since the production of both the Avebury 2005 and the Stonehenge 2009 Plans, as discussed in Sections 4.0 (Current Policy Context) and 7.0 (Planning and Policy). This has thrown the impact of roads and traffic on the setting of sites and monuments and the wider WHS landscape into higher relief. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that WHSs are designated assets of the highest significance to which harm or loss should be wholly exceptional and articulates the important contribution of setting to this significance. Guidance produced by English Heritage, *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011), further emphasises this relationship and defines setting to include all aspects of the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced beyond the normal visual considerations. This includes aspects relating to roads and traffic such as noise and pollution.

11.1.5 The Management Plan continues to reflect Government transport policy which aims to encourage people to make sustainable transport choices and the Government's vision for integrated transport journeys. Sustainable travel issues and opportunities are discussed below at 11.5.

11.1.6 Locally, the Wiltshire Core Strategy underlines the need to address issues related to roads and traffic in Core Policy 59. It states that development should be supported that reduces the negative impact of roads, traffic and visitor pressure in the WHS. The policy includes requirements that light pollution and skyglow which could adversely affect the WHS and its attributes of OUV should carefully be managed.¹⁵⁹ This is also an issue for highways-related lighting.

Network: Stonehenge

11.1.7 At Stonehenge the A303 trunk road is a highly visible route that cuts through the WHS landscape. The western boundary of the WHS is the A360 and part of the eastern boundary is formed by the A345 which also cuts through the henge at Durrington Walls. The northern boundary of the site is the Packway which is the main access route to the army base at Larkhill. There is a minor road running south from Amesbury through the settlements in the Avon Valley and also Ministry of Defence roads in the Larkhill area. In addition, there are historic byways running primarily north–south through the World Heritage Site as well as a number of public footpaths.

Traffic volume: Stonehenge

11.1.8 Significant volumes of traffic pass through the WHS on the A303 trunk road and also along the other main roads bounding the Site to east and west. 2013 figures from the Department for Transport show daily traffic flows of over 26,700 vehicles. The settlements around the Site and down the Avon Valley generate traffic

as does the very large distribution centre at Solstice Park to the east. Stonehenge itself generates traffic with over 1.25 million visitors to the Stones annually most of whom come by car or coach. In the future the Department for Transport predicts that the volume of both commuter and leisure-related traffic is likely to continue to grow in line with national trends, driven by changing social, demographic and economic factors such as the growth agenda in place in LEP Strategic Economic Plans, City Deals and Local Authority Plans. Developments locally which are likely to increase traffic include Solstice Park and the Salisbury Plain Army Basing Programme.

Closure of the A344 to vehicular traffic at Stonehenge

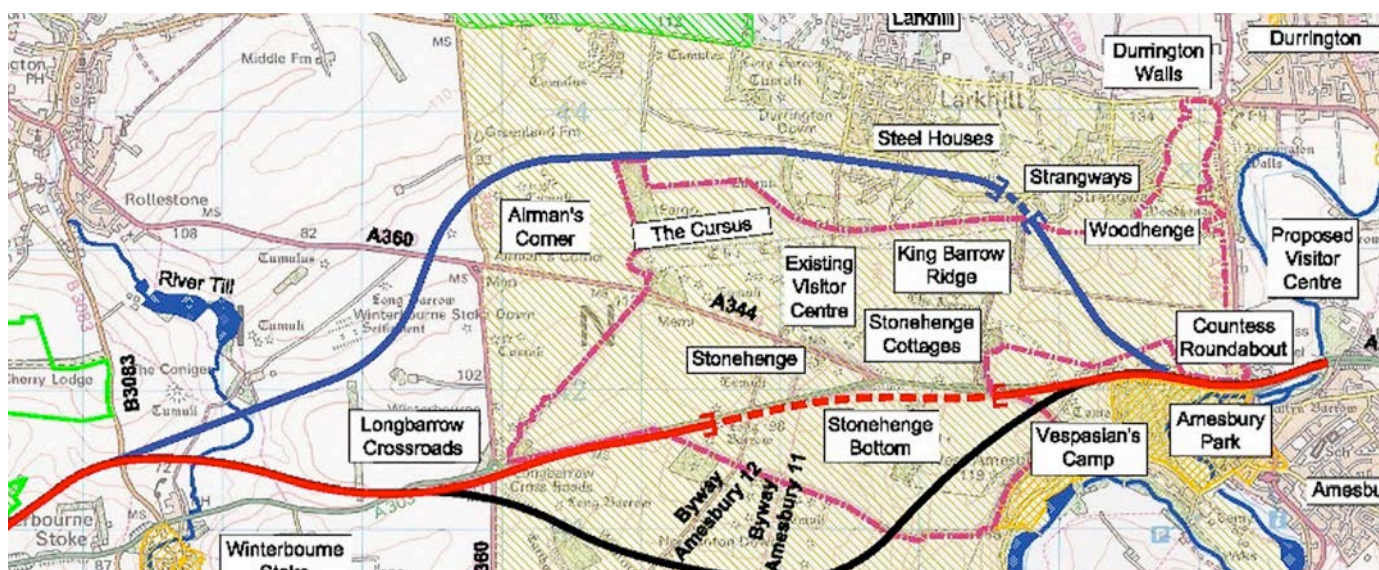
- 11.1.9 At Stonehenge major changes to the road network have now been made as part of the Stonehenge Environmental Improvement Project. These changes have included the stopping up of the A344 between its junction with the A303 (Stonehenge Bottom) and its junction with Byway 12 and alterations to the road layout at Airman's Corner Junction and Longbarrow Roundabout to accommodate redirected traffic. Vehicular traffic is now prevented from using the remainder of the A344 from Byway 12 to Airman's Corner through a permanent traffic regulation order. This has finally fulfilled the UK Government's undertaking to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee at the time of inscription in 1986.
- 11.1.10 The A344 Stopping Up Order Inquiry formally closed in June 2011. The Inspector's Report recommended in favour of the stopping up of a section of the A344 and on 1 November 2011 it was agreed by the Department for Transport that an 879m length of the A344 from its junction with the A303 and a 263m stretch of the B3086 from its junction with the A344 should be closed. Following the September 2011 Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) Inquiry the Inspector recommended to Wiltshire Council that a TRO should be applied to the remaining section of the A344 but not the byways open to all traffic within the Stonehenge WHS.¹⁶⁰ The reasons for exclusion of the byways are discussed further below at 11.4. Wiltshire Council published the decision to put the TRO in place on the A344 on 20 December 2011.¹⁶¹ The permanent TRO was made by the Council on 17 January 2012.¹⁶² This has delivered enormous benefits in terms of the integrity of the WHS by reuniting Stonehenge with its Avenue. It has vastly improved the setting of the monuments allowing visitors to experience it without the visual and noise intrusion presented by the traffic.
- 11.1.11 The Stonehenge Management Plan 2009 recognised that the closure would have considerable implications for traffic movement in and around the WHS including increased traffic loading on surrounding roads, particularly the A360 via Longbarrow Crossroads. It also pointed to the risk that traffic seeking to avoid delay would use the minor roads through settlements such as Larkhill and Durrington. The Management Plan and plans for the Stonehenge Visitor Centre underwent a three-month public consultation that began in July 2008. The stopping up order and proposed traffic regulation orders also underwent a period of statutory consultation. A consultation booklet was mailed to 14,500 local residents and exhibitions were held at both Salisbury and Amesbury. Aim 5 (to reduce the impacts of roads and traffic on the OUV of the WHS and to improve sustainable access) was seen as one of the clear priorities. Although there was local support for the closure of the dangerous A303/A344 junction some local parishes objected to the stopping up of the A344 (part) at the Public Inquiry in June 2011. The A303/A344 was a site with a known history of collisions.
- 11.1.12 As a result of the changes to the road network some local residents believe that there has been a marked increase in traffic in their villages and a consequent reduction in amenity. Members of the Stonehenge Traffic Action Group (STAG) are concerned about an increase in traffic through Shrewton and the surrounding villages including Bulford and Larkhill since the stopping up of part of the A344 and the TRO made on 17 January 2012. The group support the dualling of the A303 believing that congestion on the A303 has worsened since the closure of the A344 causing drivers to detour via back roads including their villages.
- 11.1.13 Wiltshire Council as highway and traffic authority has undertaken traffic counts to ascertain the level of traffic using certain roads in the area to assist in determining the potential effects of levels of increased traffic on local communities in the area and to monitor the impact of the new Visitor Centre, parking provision and associated changes in the road network. **(Policy 6a/Action 135)**
- A303 ongoing impacts**
- 11.1.14 Although the closure of the A344 marks very substantial progress at Stonehenge, the A303 continues to have a major impact on the integrity of the wider WHS, the setting of its monuments and the ability of visitors to explore the southern part of the

Site. The A303 divides the Stonehenge part of the WHS landscape into northern and southern sections diminishing its integrity and severing links between monuments in the two parts. It has significant impacts on the setting of Stonehenge and its Avenue as well as many other monuments that are attributes of OUV including a number of barrow cemeteries. The road and traffic represent visual and aural intrusion and have a major impact on the tranquillity of the WHS. Access to the southern part of the WHS is made both difficult and potentially dangerous by the road. In addition to its impacts on the WHS, reports indicate that the heavy congestion at certain times¹⁶³ has a negative impact on the economy in the South West and locally and on the amenity of local residents.

11.1.15 The A303 is part of the Strategic Road Network, and is deemed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a nationally significant road. Finding workable solutions is a challenging issue. There have been a number of studies over the years into options for improving the A303 and the setting of Stonehenge but none have yet reached the implementation stage. Proposals to improve the stretch of the A303 through the WHS date back to the early 1990s when the process of identifying alternative routes was started. In 1998 the Highways Agency began developing a scheme for putting the A303 in a tunnel under the central part of the WHS. In 2002 a partially bored tunnel scheme of 2.1 km in length (the Published Scheme) was proposed past Stonehenge with the remainder of the A303 in the WHS also dualled and a proposed bypass for Winterbourne Stoke. The scheme was the subject of a Public Inquiry held in 2004.

11.1.16 The Inspector's Report, published in July 2005, recommended in favour of the scheme promoted at the Inquiry. However, as a result of a substantial increase in the estimated cost of the tunnelling, the Government at the time decided to review whether the scheme still represented value for money and the best option for delivering improvements to the A303 and to the setting of Stonehenge. Following the review, the Government stated that 'due to significant environmental constraints across the whole of the World Heritage Site, there are no acceptable alternatives to the 2.1 km bored tunnel scheme',¹⁶⁴ but that its cost could not at that time, December 2007, be justified when set against wider objectives and priorities. The need to find a solution to the negative impacts of the A303 remains a key challenge for the WHS and its partners. The Stonehenge Management Plan 2009 retained the long-term objective of reducing the impacts of the A303 within the WHS. The Wiltshire Core Strategy¹⁶⁵ recognises the need to work collaboratively with agencies to achieve 'an acceptable solution to the dualling of the A303 that does not adversely affect the Stonehenge World Heritage Site and its setting'.¹⁶⁶

11.1.17 A solution for the A303 is once again under consideration at the time of writing. Following the 2013 Spending Review, the Government announced that it would identify and fund solutions to tackle some of the notorious and long-standing highways-related issues on the Strategic Road Network. Following feasibility studies by the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2014, opportunities were identified in six areas across the UK for future investment solutions that are deliverable, affordable and offer value for money. The A303/A30/A358 corridor is one of those six areas.



Map from 2006 consultation on alternative routes to the A303 tunnel recommended by the 2004 public inquiry (red dashes). The consultation favoured the red route

11.1.18 A feasibility study was undertaken on the A303/A30/A358 corridor route conditions in terms of congestion, journey times, safety and environmental considerations. A study Reference Group was established to capture stakeholder views. A number of locations were proposed for improvements, including the Amesbury to Berwick Down section that passes through the WHS.

11.1.19 The stakeholder reference group set up to inform the A303/A30/A358 corridor feasibility study included, among others, representatives from English Heritage, the National Trust, Wiltshire Council and the Chairman of the WHS Partnership Panel. A Technical Working Group was formed specifically to consider options for A303 improvements between Amesbury and Berwick Down. The Technical Working Group agreed three key outcomes against which options should be tested: the OUV of the WHS is conserved and enhanced; current and predicted traffic problems are comprehensively resolved; and social and economic growth is delivered for local communities and the wider South West. Improvements to the WHS landscape have the potential to contribute to the last through greater access to the landscape and enhanced sustainable tourism opportunities. **(Policy 6a/Action I33)**

11.1.20 An intention to dual the A303 from Amesbury to Berwick Down, with a twin-bored tunnel of at least 1.8 miles (2.9km) within the WHS was announced by the Government on 1 December 2014.¹⁶⁷ Detailed work is required to assess, agree and finalise a scheme. DCMS has informed UNESCO'S World Heritage Committee of the Government's intention and they have passed this on to ICOMOS their advisers on cultural WHSs who will decide on the appropriate timing and extent of advice. ICOMOS-UK has been approached for comment and/or advice and will be invited to consider options as they emerge. The WHS is recognised by the DfT as a key environmental consideration. The scheme identified would need to be assessed for its likely impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV including the interrelationships of monuments, their settings and relationship to the landscape and the integrity of the wider WHS landscape. Significant developments within the WHS should be assessed using the Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties produced by the International Commission for Monuments and Sites¹⁶⁸ ICOMOS is the advisory body to UNESCO on proposals for change affecting cultural WHSs which are referred to in NPPF Planning Practice Guidance.¹⁶⁹ It provides a framework for assessing impacts on the attributes of OUV and the OUV of the WHS itself. In addition, such

a significant scheme would need to be assessed against the full range of economic, social and environmental impact criteria as required by the planning system; and would be likely to undergo the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project planning process.

11.1.21 The future of the A303 is clearly the major road and traffic issue facing the Stonehenge half of the WHS.

Network: Avebury

11.1.22 At Avebury two strategic A roads have a major impact on the integrity of the WHS, the setting of its monuments and visitors' ability to enjoy and explore the landscape. The A4 crosses the area east to west from Marlborough to Bath and the West Country. The road has a significant impact on the setting of Silbury Hill and separates monuments in the north of the WHS from both the West and East Kennet Long Barrows and the West Kennet Palisade Enclosures in the south. At Overton Hill it severs a key link between the Sanctuary and the associated Overton Hill Barrow Cemetery to the north. Crossing the A4, particularly at Overton Hill, feels precarious making exploration of the landscape less attractive. The A4 joins the A361 which runs south-west towards Devizes from the roundabout in Beckhampton.

11.1.23 The A4361 links Swindon to the A4 and A361 at Beckhampton. It passes through the village of Avebury and has a direct impact on the integrity and setting of the Avebury Henge and Stone Circle which it bisects. In addition Green Street also known as the Herepath, a byway open to all traffic, runs east from the Henge while Avebury High Street runs to the west. This effectively divides the Henge into four sectors, a major impact on its integrity and the ability of visitors to understand the monument. The B4003, a single carriageway road, leaves the A4361 within the Avebury Henge and runs southward beside and at some points across the West Kennet Avenue to reach the A4 at West Kennett. In addition to the Herepath another key historic byway, the Ridgeway National Trail, starts in the Avebury WHS and runs eastward for 139km towards Ivinghoe Beacon in Buckinghamshire. The area is well served by public footpaths.

Traffic volume

11.1.24 Visitor numbers are around a quarter of those at Stonehenge, but at around 350,000 visitors per annum arriving mostly by private car this still generates significant traffic flow. Traffic counts however indicate

that as stated in the 2005 Management Plan, the major percentage of traffic is related to commuter movements. Two-way traffic flow data put daily traffic at West Kennett on the A4 at 8,324 and at 6,447 on the A4361. Directional peak flow data shows that the A4 has a commuter flow pattern with high peaks in the morning and the evening. The A4361 data from Avebury also shows a peak flow in the morning towards Swindon. The fact that traffic volume is not predominantly influenced by visitor traffic to the WHS indicates that sustainable transport solutions for visitors to the WHS alone are unlikely to entirely reduce impacts on the integrity and setting of monuments.

11.1.25 Despite a prediction that traffic volume would continue to rise in the Avebury Management Plan 2005, annual traffic count data over the period 1998 to 2010 show that numbers have remained relatively stable on the A4361, A4 and A361. This is unlikely to remain the case in the future due to increasing development pressures as a result of current economic policies for growth.

Avebury WHS Transport Strategy

11.1.26 As noted in the Introduction one of the key developments related to roads and traffic over the last Plan period has been the production of the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy*.

11.1.27 Many of the objectives and strategies set out in the initial 1998 Avebury Management Plan were carried forward to the updated version in 2005 and continued to be difficult to deliver. Although measurable progress has been made against objectives, more fundamental improvements have not been completely achieved.

11.1.28 The Traffic and Visitor Management group (TVM) identified the lack of a holistic framework or strategy addressing road and traffic issues across the WHS landscape as a key barrier to implementation. Other barriers to implementation included: in some cases no single preferred option identified; no developed guidance on how to approach the design of solutions within the WHS; and insufficient ownership or buy-in to the strategies proposed. In addition a number of isolated *ad hoc* interventions were recognised as having had an intrusive urbanising impact on the setting of monuments and the wider landscape.

11.1.29 The TVM recommended the production of a comprehensive Transport Strategy to include a set of design principles and interrelated schemes to deliver solutions. This was approved by the Steering Committee in May 2010. Wiltshire Council and the North Wessex Downs AONB agreed to fund the project. A senior officer from the highways department of Wiltshire Council managed the project undertaken by Wiltshire Council's consultant Atkins with a team of transport planners as well as heritage and landscape advisers and engineers. A task and finish group was set up by the Avebury WHS Steering Committee in April 2013 with representatives of the relevant partners including English Heritage, the National Trust, Avebury Parish Council, Wiltshire Council transport planners, highways engineers, conservation officers and the Archaeology Service, North Wessex Downs AONB and Wiltshire Police to ensure agreement and buy-in.



Avebury WHS Transport Strategy 2015

11.1.30 The *Avebury Parish Traffic Plan* was also under preparation alongside the *WHS Transport Strategy*. The final draft of this plan was produced in June 2013. It identifies the main concerns of the local community related to roads and traffic in the Parish. The plan is subtitled *Traffic Management in a World Heritage Site* and one of its stated aims is to promote interventions that help to reduce the dominance of roads, traffic and related clutter to enhance the attributes of OUV. It calls for specially designed, sensitive solutions to achieve this and offers an unusual and commendable global/local perspective in a Parish Traffic Plan. The *Avebury Parish Traffic Plan* was a key document in informing the *WHS Transport Strategy*. The Strategy includes schemes to meet the community's aspirations where at all possible.

11.1.31 Up to date information from vehicle and speed counts as well as vehicle collision data and visitor transport surveys informed the development of a new set of issues, objectives and strategies for the WHS Management Plan update. They were signed off by the Avebury Steering Committee in April 2013 and used to shape the objectives of the Transport Strategy. The retrospective Statement of OUV adopted by UNESCO in 2013 and current transport planning best practice also helped to shape these objectives. The Transport Strategy has established an approach to new interventions and replacement works within the WHS agreed by delivery partners, curators, managers and representatives of the local community to balance the concerns of all parties and safeguard the WHS while retaining a viable transport network. Alongside a set of WHS Design Principles a series of outline schemes under eight themes are proposed. These themes include:

- Prevent damage to the attributes of OUV
- Develop a well-connected pedestrian/cycle network
- Reduce severance of the A4
- Manage visitor impact on Avebury village
- Improve sustainable travel infrastructure
- Promote sustainable travel
- Increase stakeholder buy-in.

A number of the outline schemes will need to go through the process of public consultation before final decisions can be made on their implementation. They may also in some cases require Scheduled Monument Consent and/or the relevant licences if on National Trust land. In addition the designs will need to be worked up, consulted on and funding identified for delivery.

11.1.32 The schemes are described in outline where they provide solutions to the issues discussed below. The schemes were designed for the Avebury part of the WHS. The Design Principles could be applied across the WHS although this will need to be carefully assessed for appropriateness, developed further and agreed with the Stonehenge Steering Committee (**Policy 6a/Action 136**). Opportunities should be sought to deliver those schemes that appear in the Strategy but which are not mentioned below. (**Policy 6a/Action 142**)

A4 and A4361: mitigating the impact

11.1.33 The impact of the road network on the integrity of the WHS and the setting of its sites and monuments and the wider WHS landscape is summarised above at 11.1.22–3. The major negative impacts are caused by

the A4 and the A4361 which run either close to or, in the case of the latter, through major monuments. The A4361 bisects the Henge and Stone Circles and has a serious impact on its integrity and the ability of visitors to understand and explore the monument. The A4 severs key interrelationships between monuments and has a significant impact on their setting. The volume, speed and noise of traffic travelling on the A4 have a detrimental impact on the context in which Silbury Hill is experienced. This is also the case in the Henge where visitors are in close proximity to the road. Although the A361 has an impact on the wider WHS landscape, its position in relation to the attributes of OUV makes it a less urgent management issue.

11.1.34 The impact of the road network and associated traffic is no less significant than that of the A303 at Stonehenge discussed above despite the far lower number of vehicles. It is extremely unlikely however that major engineering solutions such as tunnelling or the construction of a bypass would be appropriate in the Avebury part of the WHS due to the presence of historic villages, the position of the roads in relation to the monuments and the sensitivity of the North Wessex Downs AONB landscape. The idea of a bypass was first discussed in the 1960s. It was however dropped from 1981 Wiltshire Structure Plan and from the Avebury Local Plan in 1992 as unlikely to offer a feasible solution.



The A4 separates the Sanctuary from Overton Hill barrow cemetery at the 'gateway' to Avebury WHS

© Sarah Simmonds

11.1.35 The Avebury WHS Transport Strategy¹⁷⁰, a report prepared for the Avebury WHS Steering Committee by Atkins, includes a number of more easily deliverable schemes which propose ways to mitigate the impacts of roads and associated traffic on the WHS, its attributes of OUV and its integrity. Those directly related to the A4 are outlined below as well as those designed to reduce impact on the setting of monuments across the

WHS. Schemes 3.1–3.5 of the WHS Transport Strategy are designed to reduce the negative impact of the A4 at the most sensitive points along its route most notably at key monuments and gateways to the WHS. These include the East Gateway/Sanctuary, West Kennett, Silbury Hill/West Kennet Long Barrow, Beckhampton and the West Gateway/Knoll Down. These involve narrowing the carriageway by extending the grass verges. The narrower carriageway will reduce speed and associated loss of tranquillity. It will also make crossing the road easier.

11.1.36 Another measure for reducing the impact of the road includes low noise surfacing recommended throughout the WHS when surfaces are due for replacement. The *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* outlines the advantages and disadvantages of any proposed road schemes. Related schemes include signage and soft measures to affect long-distance routing which aims to reduce the volume of traffic passing through the WHS, particularly HGVs. The proposed renewal of gateway signage should alert drivers that they are entering a special environment and encourage them to drive more responsibly. The recurring narrowing at key points on the route should maintain a lower speed along the length of the A4 throughout the WHS. At West Kennett the scheme also includes measures to encourage sustainable transport and exploration of the wider WHS. Measures at the Beckhampton roundabout and on its approaches aim to minimise its dominance and contribution to light pollution through a design providing a more rural appearance to encourage reduced speeds. Further details of these schemes can be found in the *WHS Transport Strategy*. The holistic and interrelated schemes by their nature address a number of issues and opportunities. This is best communicated by reading the Strategy document itself. **(Policy 6a/Action 139)**

11.1.37 Schemes related to the A4361 include WHS-wide ones such as low noise surfacing and long-distance routing as well as more geographically specific ones such as encouraging slower speeds between the National Trust car park and the wooded area east of Beckhampton roundabout and between the Henge and Rutlands Farm. Improved crossing points are proposed on the A4361 including the one between the National Trust car park and New Bridge. It is proposed that the Red Lion Public Realm scheme will extend the village character to this area including the carriageway to create a pedestrian friendly environment and safer crossing point within the Henge. **(Policy 6a/Action 140, 142)**

11.1.38 The B4003 is considered to have a significant impact on both the integrity and setting of the Henge and the West Kennet Avenue as well as making it difficult for visitors to move between the two interrelated monuments. This and the issue of significant damage as well as the proposed scheme to address it are discussed below at 11.1.46–47.

Signage, clutter, environmentally insensitive design and light pollution

11.1.39 The Statement of OUV recognises that at both Stonehenge and Avebury a major impact on the setting of monuments and on the wider WHS landscape is created by the clutter and often insensitive design associated with roads and traffic. It highlights the need to carefully manage the incremental impact of highway-related clutter. This can include excessive, inappropriate and unnecessary signage as well as the application of standard designs for highways interventions that might be more appropriate in an urban environment. It can also include the impacts of lighting related to streets, roads and roundabouts and the associated light pollution and damage to dark night skies. This is detrimental to the tranquil, rural character of the WHS, the setting of the monuments and the ability to perceive the relationship of the monuments to the landscape and the sky; important attributes of OUV. **Policy 1e/Action 11** of this Plan is to develop guidelines building on existing evidence and guidance to avoid light pollution and negative impacts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. This should include advice relevant to highways interventions.

11.1.40 The *Avebury Parish Traffic Plan* sets out a number of key concerns of the local community. One of these is the perceived need for road signs, road treatments, or other alterations that are sensitively designed to enhance the attributes of OUV of the World Heritage Site and require some exceptions and variations from conventional highway signing and measures. It should be borne in mind however that some highways signing is mandatory.

11.1.41 Wiltshire Council as a highway and traffic authority has a number of duties concerning the safety of users of the highways (vehicular, equestrian and pedestrian) and maintenance of the highways including rights of way. A sensitive approach to assessment of need, design and location can ensure that this can be balanced with the protection and enhancement the WHS. The *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* provides a solution to this issue in its Design Principles that

should be considered for application across both parts of the WHS. It sets out Design Principles against which any future proposal for transport-related change or maintenance can be developed. They include principles on the general approach to design in the WHS and more specific guidance for different areas or types of intervention including: village realm, roads, signage, parking, crossing roads and sustainable infrastructure. The Principles are set out in the Transport Strategy document.



Signage on the A4 for Silbury Hill car park

© Beth Thomas

11.1.42 During the development of the Design Principles it was noted that further detailed information on the character of conservation areas within the Avebury part of the WHS would be helpful in further fine-tuning design of any interventions in these areas. Due to the limited public resources this could be undertaken in the form of a community audit with the advice of conservation professionals.
(Policy 6a/Action 137)

11.1.43 Further Transport Strategy schemes to address the issue of clutter at Avebury include a Signing Audit to remove redundant or move intrusively located signage. Scheme 7.1 is the production of branded WHS visitor signing which aims to reduce visual clutter through providing consistency. This could be considered for application across the WHS although further work would be required as set out above.

Issue 43: Possible future development and changes in farming practice could result in an increase in traffic and HGV movements

Impact of development on traffic

11.1.44 New development in the region or locally has the potential to have a significant impact on the volume and type of traffic arriving in or passing through the WHS. This applies to both Stonehenge and Avebury. Large transport depots or waste recycling units outside the WHS for example may greatly

increase traffic volume and probably involve an increase in HGV traffic. Locally, within the WHS and its setting, housing or agricultural development such as large grain drying facilities may result in a similar increase. In some cases this can lead to consequential development such as the need for additional tracks if the increase in traffic is unsustainable for the local community. It is important that when a development proposal is submitted the traffic implications are carefully considered for possible impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Specific WHS related criteria need to be identified that would trigger development-related transport assessments for proposals within the WHS and its wider setting to ensure negative impacts are identified and are considered during the decision-making process. These triggers should be included in the Council's WHS SPD or relevant planning guidance discussed in Section 7.0 (Planning and Policy). **(Policy 6a/Action 132)**

Issue 44: Vehicle damage is occurring to upstanding and buried archaeology on roads in some parts of the WHS

Damage to archaeology: West Kennet Avenue and the B4003

11.1.45 The Statement of OUV refers to the issue of direct damage to the fabric of some monuments under the section on protection and management requirements. This section deals with damage related to roads rather than byways open to all traffic such as Byway 12 at Stonehenge and the Ridgeway National Trail at Avebury. These are discussed in Section 11.4 below.

11.1.46 No incidence of damage from roads was reported at Stonehenge. The main incident reported in 2010 during the life of the last Plan was damage to the West Kennet Avenue in Avebury from vehicles using the B4003. This single carriageway link leaves the A4361 and joins the A4 at West Kennet running alongside and in some places over the West Kennet Avenue, a Guardianship Monument and an important attribute of OUV. Its impact on the setting of the Henge and West Kennet Avenue and disruption of the relationship between the two monuments has been noted above at 11.1.23.

11.1.47 In some places the B4003 is very narrow and two cars can barely pass. The 2005 Avebury Plan raised concern over the erosion caused by vehicles along the narrow parts of the B4003 and the development of unofficial lay-bys affecting archaeological deposits. The Plan mentioned that double yellow lines had been provided on parts of the road to address this. It also

suggested exploring a range of options for dealing with damage caused by vehicles travelling along the road.

11.1.48 The English Heritage Field Warden submitted a damage report on the West Kennet Avenue in 2010. The report highlighted damage to the verges on both sides of the B4003 between Avebury Stone Circle and the A4 at West Kennett. The report suggested that the problem appeared to have been caused by vehicles pulling onto the roadside verge when meeting wide vehicles (tractors, buses and HGVs) coming in the opposite direction. Although the damage was limited it predicted that if the situation continued it would become more serious and spread into the upper layers of the monument. The double yellow lines were not deterring parking in the unofficial lay-bys which are both within the scheduled area, one of which is within the Avenue itself. Standard highway maintenance approaches were exacerbating the damage. Scheduled Monument consent should be sought before maintenance is carried out and

methodologies agreed with English Heritage and the National Trust. The report suggested that in the long term, the closure of the B4003 to all but essential users such as emergency vehicles, farmers and disabled badge users would be desirable.

11.1.49 Wiltshire Council conducted an initial options appraisal on solutions to the damage on West Kennet Avenue in 2010. Early recommendations included exploring a one-way or partial one-way system. The issue has been re-evaluated as part of the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* produced by Atkins in 2015. A solution was identified that would both protect the internationally significant archaeology and provide a range of other benefits meeting the objectives of the holistic strategy and the aims and policies of the WHS. The study recommends the closure of the B4003 except for access for local landowners and farmers. This would protect the archaeology, enhance the setting of the West Kennet Avenue and the Henge, restore their interrelationship and provide a good quality walking environment and cycling route



© Steve Marshall

The B4003 runs alongside and in some places over the West Kennet Avenue resulting in vehicle damage to the monument

while avoiding the need for additional signage and clutter. It could also help improve road safety by the junctions with the A4361 and the A4 at the village of West Kennett where right turns have resulted in some collisions. The removal of the junction and turning would also facilitate the delivery of the scheme at West Kennett related to diminishing the impact of the A4 mentioned above at 11.1.36. Any proposed road closure would be subject to the statutory consultation process set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The Council, as highway and traffic authority, would also be required to have regard to its duty set out in s.122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable parking facilities on and off the highway, before deciding whether or not it is expedient to make a traffic regulation order to prohibit vehicular traffic.

- 11.1.50** The closure of the B4003 would deliver numerous benefits as set out above but it is likely to cause concern amongst some residents who regularly use the road to avoid the extra distance and inconvenience of travelling on the A4 via Beckhampton. Some may also enjoy driving along the route. Having said this some residents will benefit from reduced commuter traffic following any road closure. Prior to any implementation further feasibility studies would need to be undertaken and detailed designs drawn up. Any proposed road closure would be subject to the statutory consultation process and requirements in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and as set out above in 11.1.49.
(Policy 6a/Action 138)

11.2 Road safety and ease of movement

Issue 45: *Conflict between the movement of pedestrians and cyclists with motorised traffic creates road safety issues in some areas and in others the perception of danger which discourages access, exploration, understanding and enjoyment of the WHS*

- 11.2.1** The Statement of OUV highlights the need to identify actions to address negative impacts on the ease and confidence with which visitors and the local community are able to explore the wider property. It identifies the A303 as continuing to have a negative impact on visitor access to some parts of the wider landscape. Safety and the perception of danger are likely to influence people's ability and willingness to explore the WHS landscape.

Safety

- 11.2.2** Road safety has been a significant issue particularly in the Stonehenge part of the WHS. Recent changes may have helped to address this to some extent through closure of the A344/A303 junction which had a history of collisions.
- 11.2.3** At Stonehenge, prior to the closure of the A344 there were regular collisions in this area, in particular at the junction with the A303, at Airman's Corner junction, and on the A344 near the entrance to the Stonehenge car park. From 2005 to 2008, there were 72 casualties in the WHS, including two fatalities and nine serious injuries. At this stage it is too early to understand the impacts of the overall changes to the road network. A number of new risks have arisen as a result of the changes including an increase in use of the A303/Byway 12 junction and conflicts between motorised vehicles and pedestrians on the now closed A344. This will require ongoing monitoring and any negative impacts will need to be addressed. **(Policy 6a/Action 135)**
- 11.2.4** The Avebury part of the WHS has not suffered from the same level of collisions. In the period from June 2009 to May 2014, 29 collisions were recorded, of which 19 took place on the A4 east of Beckhampton and 9 on the A4361. There was one collision at the junction of the B4003 with the A4 and another with the A4361. There was one collision at the A4361/NT car park and another at the A4/Silbury Hill car park junctions. Two collisions occurred on the Beckhampton roundabout. There were 39 casualties: 8 serious and 31 slight.¹⁷¹ Although no fatalities were reported for Avebury, a fatal road accident that occurred at Silbury Hill in the summer of 2014 is currently under investigation. Safety remains a key issue despite the low level of recorded collisions. The high number of pedestrian movements particularly in the Avebury Henge area means that large numbers of visitors are regularly in close contact with traffic. In addition to this risk there is the issue of lost opportunities for exploring the WHS. Perceived danger is likely to have discouraged many from exploring the WHS especially in areas where crossing points are particularly precarious such as between Overton Hill Barrow Cemetery and the Sanctuary.

Safe crossing points

- 11.2.5** Improving facilities for pedestrians namely the provision of safe crossing points will reduce the risk of collisions and facilitate exploration of the WHS landscape. Improved crossing arrangements for roads traversed

by the rights of way network should be provided as a priority. All crossing points should adhere to the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy Design Principles* to ensure they do not have a negative impact on monuments, their setting and the wider landscape.

11.2.6 At Stonehenge a solution needs to be identified to help visitors reach the southern part of the WHS, currently severed from the northern part by the A303, with its well-preserved monuments and impressive landscape views to Stonehenge and other attributes of OUV. This issue should be considered as part of any project designed to solve its wider impact on the WHS as well its economic and social impacts. If no major scheme is forthcoming, other options need to be explored to provide a safe crossing point for the A303 such as approaching the landowner regarding the use of an existing underpass that is currently on private land and therefore inaccessible. In addition, a safe route for walkers and cyclists to the Stones for those not wishing to take the shuttle bus from the Stonehenge Visitor Centre should be investigated. A route along the A344 is discussed at Section 9.0 (Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism) and included as an action under Policy 4c. English Heritage should work with partners to identify management strategies to minimise conflict between users of the section of the A344 subject to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) including vehicles, equestrians, walkers and cyclists.

(Policy 6c/Action 147)

11.2.7 At Avebury the *WHS Transport Strategy* schemes that include the provision of safer crossing points need to be implemented. A crossing away from the brow of the hill is recommended at Overton Hill and in the



© Beth Thomas

Walking along the busy A4 near Silbury Hill

longer term consideration of the more ambitious option of providing a tunnel for pedestrians to reach the Sanctuary. **(Policy 6a/Action 139, 140, 142)**

11.2.8 A further approach to improving safety by reducing conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorised vehicles is to provide an adequate network of WHS way-marked public rights of way and permissive paths in both parts of the WHS to suit different visitor needs. The network should where possible link key monuments and visitor facilities such as parking areas and bus stops and thereby minimise exposure to roads and traffic. The need for safe crossing points should be investigated and if appropriate provided where the network encounters roads. The planned WHS Landscape Access Strategy aims to improve access to the wider landscape and is discussed further in Section 9.0. The Strategy should take into account safety objectives in its identification of gaps in the rights of way and cycle path network and consequent recommendations. The *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* includes initial suggestions for filling gaps identified at Avebury in its Connected Path Network Scheme. For further details refer to the Transport Strategy.

Speed

11.2.9 National speed limits do not take into account the unusual number of visitor movements within the WHS. Although current speed limits may be considered appropriate based on national guidelines and there are few recorded incidents of illegal speeding, they are still too high to allow visitors and residents to feel safe enough to explore the landscape where they need to pass in close proximity to fast roads.

11.2.10 All roads within the Stonehenge part of the WHS are currently subject to the national speed limit (60 miles per hour) except roads within built-up areas. As such, many vehicles pass through the WHS at high speed. The volume and speed of traffic on the A303 makes it very difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to cross it, for instance, when travelling on Byway 12 from Stonehenge to the Normanton Down Barrows or from Bridleway 10 on King Barrow Ridge to the southern side of the WHS. However, it is recognised that it would not be practical or effective simply to reduce the speed limit on the A303 and other WHS roads. Other measures would have to be sought as set out above to allow pedestrians and cyclists to feel safe near these roads.

11.2.11 At Avebury all roads are subject to the national speed limits of 60 miles an hour other than the 30 mph zone

which exists on the A4361 through the Avebury village. This runs from just north of the Manor drive to New Bridge around 200m to the south of the Henge. A speed limit of 30 mph was also instigated along Green Street. Wiltshire Council undertook and completed a countywide speed limit review in 2011 based on the Department for Transport Circular 01/06 Setting Local Speed Limits. No changes were recommended to the national speed limit on the A roads across the Avebury area. A further review of speed data undertaken in 2012 by Wiltshire Council in preparation for the *WHS Transport Strategy* indicated that speeding was not an issue in the WHS.

11.2.12 As discussed above national speed limits do not take into account the WHS context and the high level of visitor movements. The *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* recommends a number of schemes that include elements to reduce speed. This is not only to reduce impact on the setting of monuments as set out above but also to encourage visitors to feel safe to explore the WHS and use the planned safe crossing points. The schemes related to reducing the severance of the A4 aim to reduce speed by narrowing of the carriageway rather than the imposition of speed limits with associated signage. The Red Lion Public Realm scheme should also result in slower speeds by narrowing the carriageway and extending the village character to this area. A road safety audit would need to be carried out before any work to narrow the carriageway is implemented to ensure any potential risks are minimised. In addition the Strategy proposes an extension of the 30 mph limit through the Henge northwards to Rutlands Farm on the A4361 and southwards between the National Trust Car Park and the wooded areas east of Beckhampton Roundabout. **(Policy 6a/Action 142)**

11.2.13 The schemes above go some way to meeting one of the solutions proposed by *Avebury Parish Traffic Plan* which seeks to reduce speeds on the A and B roads through the Parish.

11.3 Car parking facilities and usage

Issue 46: *Current car parking provision does not meet demand at peak visitor times. Its location does not facilitate exploration of the wider landscape*

11.3.1 Car parking is a challenging issue in both parts of the WHS. Although it is very important to provide facilities to allow access for the many visitors who travel by car and coach, this needs to be balanced against the impact of car parks, parked vehicles and visitor numbers on the attributes of OUV including the monuments, their settings and the wider WHS landscape. There is also a commitment to encourage sustainable transport to the WHS as discussed at 11.5 below. Other considerations include how location of car parking affects the ability of visitors to access the wider landscape and the impacts of insufficient or inconveniently located parking on the amenity of local communities if visitors compete with residents for spaces and create congestion in villages.

Capacity and location: Stonehenge

11.3.2 Since the opening of the Stonehenge Visitor Centre, visitors can no longer park at Stonehenge itself. The previous car park and visitor facilities have now been decommissioned and car parking is provided at the Visitor Centre. Visitors need to take the shuttle from the Visitor Centre or walk around 2km from the Airman's Corner site through the WHS landscape to reach the monument. There is parking for 500 cars (360 hard standing and 140



Visitor transport at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre

© Beth Thomas

grass) and 30 coaches. Coaches are also able to drop off visitors and find parking elsewhere outside the WHS. Parking is included in the cost of entry to Stonehenge by pre-booked ticket. If visitors do not wish to go to exhibitions or visit the monument they can pay a parking fee of £5. Members of English Heritage or the National Trust may park for free. If the car park is nearing capacity, parking spaces will be retained for those with pre-booked tickets. In this case those wishing to explore the wider WHS cannot do so unless they have pre-booked and paid for entry or have pre-booked and are members of EH or the NT.

11.3.3 Previously there were only 123 formal and 150 overflow parking spaces available. Although there is now almost double the number of spaces, capacity is regularly exceeded particularly during the school holidays. This appears to be due to the popularity of the new Visitor Centre and the extended dwell time as visitors explore the exhibitions and visit Stonehenge. When capacity is reached visitors are encouraged to return at a less busy time or visit other nearby attractions. At the time of writing the Visitor Centre has been open for just over one year so it is difficult to assess accurately whether the present provision is adequate. This will need to be carefully monitored over the life of the Plan. If, following a review based on evidence gathered, the need for additional capacity is indicated, very careful consideration would need to be given to the impacts of any additional facilities on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Improved sustainable transport options and the feasibility of parking provision outside the WHS and its setting should be considered as a priority as part of any review. Implications related to the consequent increase in visitor numbers would need to be carefully considered.

(Policy 6a/Action 135)

11.3.4 There is little alternative formal car parking provision within the Stonehenge part of the WHS. This creates an issue for visitors who do not wish to go the Visitor Centre but would like to explore the wider WHS landscape or take advantage of the recreational opportunities for activities such as walking or picnicking. It is also problematic for WHS partners, including the National Trust, who organise activities such as guided walks, tours and events in the Stonehenge landscape. Amesbury town centre can provide car parking and facilities but this is some distance from the main areas of interest and will only appeal to keen walkers who would need to cross the A303 or use the Countess Road underpass to reach the monuments in the northern part of the WHS. The existing car park at Woodhenge is limited to a small number of cars. There are no facilities such as public toilets or information to assist visitors in exploring

the landscape. If not properly managed, increased use of Larkhill for parking runs the risk of causing problems to the local community. As discussed at 11.5 below, public transport is limited. The Salisbury Plain Army Basing Programme due for completion by 2020 includes development at Larkhill which may provide opportunities for a suitable parking facility. This should be raised with the MoD and Defence Infrastructure Organisation, English Heritage and the Planning Department of Wiltshire Council. There is an action to explore options for alternative parking under Policy 4c that seeks to encourage access and circulation to the WHS landscape.

11.3.5 Plans for the provision of further parking in Amesbury should take into consideration both the needs of local residents as well as those of visitors wishing to access the WHS on foot or via other sustainable transport.

11.3.6 The car park at Woodhenge and Durrington Walls has a negative impact on the setting of the monument as it is in too close proximity. Partners need to review its position as part of a project aimed at enhancing the setting and integrity of monuments in the area. This project will also need to consider the removal of the old road and related scrub. This is discussed further in Section 8.0 (Conservation).

Capacity and location: Avebury

11.3.7 At Avebury there are similar issues with capacity in the main National Trust car park. During peak visitor periods, including pagan observances, visitors are asked to return at a less busy time or advised to visit nearby National Trust properties. This may increase the likelihood of visitors trying to park in the High Street or in other informal areas such the unofficial lay-bys on the B4003. More effective signage at the National Trust car park should be considered as part of a signage audit to discourage visitors from looking for parking elsewhere in the village area and in addition to improve safety at the junction with the A4361. The National Trust has a system of timed tickets in place for the Manor to assist in managing demand for parking at busy periods. The southern car park has approximately 290 spaces. Current car parking fees are £7 (£4 after 3pm) but free to National Trust and English Heritage members. Other car parks in the WHS are free. The Silbury Hill car park has approximately 28 spaces. The West Kennet Long Barrow lay-by has space for approximately eight cars. A further lay-by some 150–200m to the west provides around six spaces. The Sanctuary lay-by has space for approximately 14 cars, although an unofficial parking area is located opposite the lay-by. The National Trust owned car park in the High Street is currently used for disabled

and residents' only parking. There is an additional Natural England car park at Manton which provides access to Fyfield Down NNR, but this is at some distance from the main Avebury monuments and only suitable for those wishing to visit Fyfield or for keen walkers. This is reached by turning left off the A4 before reaching Marlborough.



© National Trust/Eleanor Eaton

Entrance to main National Trust car park at Avebury

11.3.8 Increasing parking provision would not be appropriate in the Avebury part of the WHS. A tourism policy on car parking saved from the Kennet Local Plan (TR9) and now included in the current Wiltshire Core Strategy states that there should be no significant net increase in the number of formal car parking spaces within the Avebury part of the WHS. (The policy is included at Appendix H.) This policy aims to control visitor numbers, footfall and consequent impacts on the WHS. Consideration of off-site parking would, in line with this policy, also entail a reduction in the number of on-site parking places. The implications of such a scheme would require careful assessment. The current policy of redirecting visitors at peak times and avoiding promotion and events in these periods appears to be effective. The Transport Strategy advises that all relevant partners should agree a consistent promotional policy to assist in managing demand and consequent impacts on the WHS, its attributes of OUV and the amenity of the local community.

11.3.9 The location of the main visitor car park south of Avebury Henge tends to concentrate visitor pressure at the Stone Circles and on Avebury village. This can create issues such as congestion in the village and marked pinch points and desire lines which would in fact be the case wherever parking is limited to a single main area. It is however not only the position of the car park that centres visitors on Avebury but visitor motivation. The museums, Manor, shops, cafés and pub are focal points for visitor interest in addition of course to Avebury Henge and Stone Circles. According to a recent parking survey undertaken by Wiltshire Council in 2013, the average stay in the car park was between 1

and 2 hours. The National Trust reports a similar dwell time indicating that visitors are not exploring far beyond Avebury. Those who do, often drive between the monuments using the available car parking and lay-bys.

11.3.10 For those wishing to explore the wider WHS, Policy TR9 provides for visitor dispersal by permitting the creation of small car parks elsewhere within the WHS where they would have no negative impact on the setting of monuments or the wider WHS landscape. The challenge of identifying possible locations that would meet these requirements would be fairly considerable although opportunities should be considered when they arise. Proposed schemes from the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* aimed at reducing the intrusion of the A4 through the narrowing of the carriageway and other interventions may present opportunities for small areas of additional parking for those who wish to explore the wider landscape. It seems that at present the appropriate and deliverable solution would be for partners to provide information on the existing parking facilities within the WHS discussed at 11.3.7 above. Partners need to agree an approach to raising awareness of and providing information on the location of these car parks and opportunities for exploration of the WHS that they offer. Improving facilities for pedestrians through the provision of safe crossing points and improvements to the footpath network as recommended in the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* and the forthcoming *Landscape Access Strategy* should be provided to ensure visitors are able to explore with confidence and in safety.



© Steven Tabbitt

Unofficial parking at the start of the Ridgeway National Trail

11.3.11 A survey was conducted in 2003 by Parkman to look at a possible alternative to the main southern car park in Avebury. A site north of Avebury on the eastern side of the A4361 was surveyed. The constraints

identified in addition to cost included pedestrian safety and the need for the extension of footways within sensitive archaeological areas and concerns over landscape impact. In 2007 the National Trust considered a site to the north but on the western side. This proved equally problematical at the feasibility stage and was abandoned.

- 11.3.12** Local residents' concerns regarding visitor parking in Avebury High Street have been temporarily addressed by the placement of a number of large community

planters which effectively prevent parking. The *WHS Transport Strategy* suggests that these are replaced with a formal residents' only parking scheme both in the High Street and on Green Street. This could be augmented by narrowing the effective carriageway at the entrance to the High Street by introducing a sarsen sett margin and other measures proposed in the *Transport Strategy (Policy 6a/Action 141)*. A road safety audit would need to be carried out before any work to narrow the carriageway is implemented to ensure any potential risks are minimised.

Policy 6a – Identify and implement measures to reduce the negative impacts of roads, traffic and parking on the WHS and to improve road safety and the ease and confidence with which residents and visitors can explore the WHS

ACTIONS

- 132** Review trigger criteria for when development-related transport assessments within the WHS and its wider setting should be produced.

Stonehenge

- 133** Seek a solution to the negative impact of the A303 on the WHS, its attributes of OUV and its setting in order to sustain its OUV and enhance the Site's integrity. Work with partners to identify such a solution that also addresses current and predicted traffic problems and assists in delivery of social and economic growth.
- 134** Review the current access to and within the WHS and associated A303 crossing points for non-motorised users with the aim of improving accessibility.
- 135** Monitor how the new Visitor Centre parking provision and closure of A344 impacts on traffic, the local community and visitors. Address any identified negative impacts.

Avebury

- 136** Adhere to the Design Principles included in the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* for all Highways interventions within the Avebury WHS and its setting including road signage. Review possible application in Stonehenge WHS.

- 137** Undertake a community conservation areas audit to help inform *Transport Strategy* interventions.

- 138** Review, develop and consult on measures for the B4003 identified in the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* to prevent damage from traffic to the West Kennet Avenue and facilitate movement of visitors within the WHS. Implement agreed outcomes.

- 139** Review, develop and consult on measures identified to reduce the negative impact of the A4 on the WHS, its attributes of OUV and visitor movement. Implement agreed outcomes.

- 140** Where possible provide safe crossing points in accordance with the WHS Design Principles for visitors both in the Henge and between key monuments in the WHS.

- 141** Reduce parking congestion in the Henge/village area on peak days. Disperse pressure away from the centre of the WHS. Enforce existing parking restrictions in the High Street. Implement new restrictions as outlined in the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* (adhere to saved policy TR9 in Wiltshire Core Strategy on car parking in Avebury).

- 142** Identify opportunities for implementing remaining recommendations of the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy*.

11.4 Byways

Issue 47: *Damage to archaeology is occurring on byways open to all traffic in the WHS. There are also problems with parking and road safety at junctions*

- 11.4.1** The current rights of motorised vehicular access on existing byways within the WHS are a key concern. The impact of vehicles on byways open to all traffic (BOATs) was raised as an issue in both the Avebury

2005 and Stonehenge 2009 Management Plans. Ongoing issues related to vehicle use include direct physical damage to archaeology, negative impacts on the setting of monuments and the wider landscape through illegal parking, impacts on other users and safety at junctions of BOATs with main roads.

- 11.4.2** Damage by motorised vehicles to upstanding and buried archaeology can be severe. The *WHS Condition Survey*¹⁷² noted that instances of vehicle damage in the WHS

had increased from previous surveys and is resulting in the rapid deterioration of certain monuments that contribute to OUV. A particular area of concern is damage to monuments on BOATS within the WHS which accounts for nearly 20% of all vehicle impacts within the Stonehenge area but makes up 50% of the most severe level of vehicles damage. 50% of these were recorded on Byway 12. The greatest areas of concern at Avebury are the Ridgeway and the Herepath. The *WHS Condition Survey* (2012) recommended that where damage is due to vehicles on BOATS a TRO be sought to remove motorised vehicles. Any proposed closure of the BOATS in the WHS would be subject to the statutory consultation process set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The Council as highway and traffic authority would also be required to have regard to its duty set out in s.122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) before deciding whether or not it is expedient to make a TRO to prohibit vehicular traffic.

11.4.3 At Stonehenge a TRO was sought for the A344 and a number of byways as part of the Environmental Improvement Project. A Public Inquiry was held in September 2011. The Inspector's report to Wiltshire Council published in November 2011¹⁷³ recommended that a TRO be placed on the A344 but not on the byways in the WHS. The Inspector's reason for this included uncertainty over the origin of vehicular damage on Byway 12 which he considered might have stemmed from agricultural access and in addition to motorised recreational use. He suggested that alternative management approaches could be employed to deter parking and the consequent damage to setting. The Inspector recognised the safety issues with the junction A303/Byway 12 junction and recommended no right turn should be permitted. An experimental TRO prohibiting right turns from Byway 12 onto the A303 was put in place in October 2013 and the Council is preparing a report on whether or not to make this permanent following public consultation. Ongoing damage and safety issues should be carefully monitored. Visual impacts on the setting of monuments and wider WHS landscape should also be monitored.

11.4.4 At Avebury a TRO is in place on the Ridgeway during the winter months from 1 October to 30 April. This helps to protect to some extent the delicate archaeology beneath the National Trail during the worst weather when it is most likely to be damaged by vehicular access. Work undertaken by volunteers from AAHRG confirmed through extensive survey that the 7.2km-long section of the route running through the WHS is a more or less

continuous archaeological site with features ranging in date from at least the Middle Bronze Age onwards. The presence of so much fragile archaeology underpins the need to treat the area with great sensitivity. The Ridgeway Surface Protection Group led by Wiltshire Council has been looking at management options that will provide an acceptable surface for a National Trail yet protect the delicate archaeology. Possible approaches to explore this range from the development of a sensitive maintenance scheme with an appropriate methodology for each of the sensitive features within the WHS to an extension of TRO. The latter may be appropriate if the United Kingdom continues to experience wet summers. An appropriate approach to choice of surfaces, repair and maintenance regime should be agreed for public rights of way throughout the WHS. **(Policy 6b/Action 144)**

11.4.5 Impacts of motorised access on byways open to all traffic in the WHS should be monitored and the most appropriate management response identified and implemented. **(Policy 6b/Action 143)**



Damage on the Ridgeway National Trail caused by motorised vehicle use, 2014

Policy 6b – Manage vehicular access to byways within the World Heritage Site to avoid damage to archaeology, improve safety and encourage exploration of the landscape on foot whilst maintaining access for emergency, operational and farm vehicles and landowners

ACTIONS

- 143** Monitor the use of byways open to all traffic (BOATS) and seek appropriate traffic management interventions where vehicular access damages archaeology, diminishes safety, impedes or discourages movement and/or impacts adversely on settings including Byway 12 at Stonehenge and the Ridgeway National Trail at Avebury.
- 144** Agree appropriate protocols for surface maintenance and repair on public rights of way within the WHS.

11.5 Public transport provision and sustainable travel to the WHS

Issue 48: Access by sustainable transport to the WHS and between Stonehenge and Avebury is limited

11.5.1 To reduce the impact of traffic and parking on the WHS and its residents as well as for the general environmental benefit visitors should be encouraged to arrive by more sustainable means of transport than by private car. This section outlines the current provision of public transport and ease of access through sustainable transport options to the WHS and between its two parts: Stonehenge and Avebury. The issue of limited provision is discussed and opportunities and agreed actions set out for improving sustainable travel which includes the production of a Sustainable Transport Strategy aimed at reducing reliance on the private car to access the WHS. Sustainable access for visitors within the wider WHS is discussed in Section 9.0 (Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism). This includes a planned extended Landscape Access Strategy which will need to be developed in conjunction with the Sustainable Transport Strategy.

Current provision and opportunities

11.5.2 At Stonehenge the majority of visitors arrive by private transport: approximately 50% by car and 50% by private coach. Few arrive by public transport. Bus service provision to the Visitor Centre and the wider WHS is relatively limited. The successful commercially run Stonehenge Tour Bus travelling from Salisbury railway station to Stonehenge via Old Sarum operates on every day throughout the year. However, this is a relatively expensive option for users. Improving opportunities for visitors to access the WHS by affordable public transport from Salisbury, Amesbury and Devizes, and the railway station at Salisbury,



Stonehenge Tour Bus

© Diana Jarvis



© Laura Gosling

The bus stop at the Red Lion in the Henge. The 49 bus runs hourly from Swindon railway station to Trowbridge via Avebury

should be considered. Public transport links from local villages are particularly poor which is problematic both for visitors staying locally, staff working on site and for the community. These should be improved as part of the Sustainable Access Strategy. **(Policy 6c/ Action 148)**

11.5.3 Most rail users arrive at Salisbury but other links could be established for visitors arriving by promoting Grateley Station on the Waterloo to Exeter line or Pewsey railway station with its direct link to London Paddington, due to their proximity to the WHS. These stations could also provide important 'hubs' for connecting the two parts of the WHS and other WHS destinations further afield, such as Bath. At the time of writing, there is a proposal to provide a Wilton Parkway station as part of the TransWilts Railway initiative. This could provide a useful additional rail connection and transport hub for both residents and visitors.

11.5.4 At Avebury a recent snapshot study conducted in 2013 indicated that c 85% of visitors had arrived by car. This has remained fairly stable since the ASH Consulting survey in 1997 when 84% of visitors arrived by private car. The Stagecoach 49 service



© Historic England

Walkers in the WHS

provides a good hourly service to and from Avebury to the towns of Swindon, Trowbridge and Devizes. However, local services to Marlborough are not as regular; the Connect 2 Service has to be pre-booked, and timetabled services offer just one morning and afternoon service on weekdays. On Sundays the 49 bus service only runs between Swindon and Devizes. Bus connections linking Avebury with Great Bedwyn, Pewsey and Chippenham are poor, which means that there is limited opportunity to promote sustainable transport options to Avebury via rail. The only exception is Swindon which is served well in terms of links to Avebury by the 49 Stagecoach service.

11.5.5 Currently there is no direct public transport link between Avebury and Stonehenge. Travelling between the two parts of the WHS would involve a number of changes on existing bus routes. A search made on the Connecting Wiltshire travel planner suggested a route taking approximately 3 hours on a weekday between 10am and 4pm to reach Stonehenge from Avebury. There is clearly a need to investigate options for providing a bus linking the two parts of the WHS. There are a number of examples of successful and commercially viable services linking elements of other UK WHSs including one at the Jurassic Coast which was originally partially grant funded by the local authority but now operates on a purely commercial basis. The visitor survey carried out in 2013 in Avebury indicated that approximately 40% of those asked would have been interested in using this link to explore the WHS. Further market research needs to be undertaken to review the feasibility of a commercial bus service linking

Stonehenge and Avebury (**Policy 6c/Action 146**). Although in the current economic climate local authority funding is unlikely, the possible sustainable tourism benefits might justify investment. Possible benefits should be assessed during the development of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy. Another possible driver for extending bus services in the Stonehenge area is the planned Salisbury Plain Army Basing Programme which is likely to increase demand locally.

11.5.6 One way of increasing access to and within the Site might be an 'explore bus' service which could drop off and pick up tourists at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre or Avebury village centre, in local settlements and at various other monuments or points of interest within the WHS. This could further be extended with a shuttle service between Stonehenge and Avebury for the WHS to be explored to its full extent. The 'Henge Hopper' pilot project led by Wiltshire Museum took place in 2011/12. It was supported by the North Wessex Downs AONB Sustainable Development Fund and Wiltshire Community Area Board. It ran between Stonehenge and Avebury via Devizes with an opportunity to stop at Wiltshire Museum. Its popularity demonstrated that there is a demand for such a service and highlighted the significant resources required for promotion and integration with other transport. Unfortunately funding was limited to a single season. (**Policy 6c/Action 146**)

11.5.7 Wiltshire is well served by its public rights of way and cycle path network which supports truly sustainable transport options. Existing routes provide links to both parts of the WHS and between Stonehenge

and Avebury. Gaps in networks within the WHS and from surrounding villages should be reviewed and addressed as part of the Landscape Access Strategy. The Sustainable Transport Strategy should review links between Stonehenge and Avebury and seek to develop routes in line with the Wiltshire Council Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP 2014) and Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011–2026 Cycling Strategy. In addition to the challenge of crossing the A303 a known gap in existing cycle ways exists between Bulford and Amesbury. At Avebury, Sustrans are currently reviewing route issues on NCN 4 and 45 at Calne and Compton Bassett. NCN 403 also passes through Avebury. Identifying a recommended walking or cycling route between Stonehenge and Avebury will require careful consideration of environmental sensitivities and appropriate monitoring and management regimes will need to be put in place prior to any promotion. This might be best achieved as a partnership project (**Policy 6c/Action 146**). Links between other WHSs were explored as part of the South West WHS Sustainable Transport Initiative and a map and website were produced in 2008. Opportunities for further joint working should be explored.

11.5.8 Schemes included in the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy* could be applied across the WHS to promote the use of sustainable transport. In addition to commercial services and ‘explore bus’ options discussed above, it suggests improvements in sustainable travel infrastructure and promotion of sustainable travel schemes. Improvements to cycle parking at monuments and visitor facilities are recommended and improved bus stops that are named to reflect the WHS monuments they serve. It is important to apply the Avebury WHS Design Principles in relation to any proposed changes in infrastructure within the WHS. The Strategy recommends the promotion of existing bus routes through advertising links to the WHS and possible combined bus/rail tickets. In addition it suggests ensuring the Connect2 semi-demand response service runs past the main monuments and that its booking system is integrated with WHS visit information. The Strategy highlights the need for all partners to provide consistent travel information including a link to the Connecting Wiltshire website. In addition clear onward travel information should be provided at all relevant railway stations.

(Policy 6c/Action 145, 149)

Policy 6c – Take measures through sustainable transport planning to encourage access to the WHS other than by car

ACTIONS

- 145** Promote current sustainable transport options for travel to the WHS and information available prior to visit. Agree and coordinate messages with WHS partners. Include links to the Connecting Wiltshire website.
- 146** Develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy for the WHS to reduce parking pressure and deliver environmental benefits: (a) Include measures to improve links between Stonehenge and Avebury as part of the Sustainable Transport Strategy; (b) Undertake market research to review feasibility of a commercial bus service linking Stonehenge and Avebury and explore feasibility with bus companies; (c) explore affordable options for local community.

Stonehenge

- 147** Identify management strategies to minimise conflict between users of the section of the A344 which is subject to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) including vehicles, horses, walkers, cyclists and horse drawn carriages.
- 148** Improve bus links from surrounding towns and villages to Stonehenge.

Avebury

- 149** Implement sustainable transport actions from *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy*: improved cycle and bus infrastructure; promotion through improved journey planning and bus routes.

11.5.9 An increased uptake of improved sustainable transport options for accessing the WHS or the provision of off-site parking such as a park and ride facility could result in increased visitor numbers if car parking spaces are maintained at their current level. A review should be undertaken of the possible impacts of any proposed off-site parking arrangements or increased commercial bus services on the WHS and its OUV and the amenity of local residents in line with the Limits of Acceptable Change model (LAC) discussed in Section 9.0 (Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism).

11.5.10 WHS partners have agreed to develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy to apply to both parts of Site. It should aim to reduce parking pressure and deliver environmental benefits. It should expand on the already existing Green Travel Plan produced as part of

planning conditions for the Stonehenge Visitor Centre and reflect the aims recommendations of the *Avebury WHS Transport Strategy*. As a minimum the Sustainable Transport Strategy should address the following areas (**Policy 6c/Action 146**):

- Review of good practice across WHSs
- Produce comprehensive assessment of the public transport network to each half of the WHS and between Stonehenge and Avebury
- Review footpath and cycle way links to the WHS and between Stonehenge and Avebury
- Undertake market research to review feasibility of a commercial bus service linking Stonehenge and Avebury
- Provide consistent information on journey planning across WHS partners
- Agree targeted promotion of sustainable transport opportunities including possibility of reduced tickets across WHS partners' network and other combined ticketing opportunities
- Explore affordable transport options for the local community
- Review opportunities for bus links from surrounding towns and villages to Stonehenge
- Review options for bicycle hire at bus and railway stations
- Review the possibility of a sustainable parking solution outside the WHS.

12.0 RESEARCH

Aim 7: Encourage and promote sustainable research to improve understanding of the archaeological, historic and environmental value of the WHS necessary for its appropriate management. Maximise the public benefit of this research

12.0 Introduction

12.0.1 This section considers the importance of research in developing our understanding of the WHS and informing exemplary management. It discusses the need to ensure that a careful balance is achieved between research and conservation of the archaeological resource in the WHS. Principles for sustainable research are set out. In addition the role of the Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework and the Avebury and Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group in encouraging targeted and sustainable research is explained.

12.0.2 To realise the sustainability and public benefit of archaeological research, it is essential that adequate long-term and accessible storage facilities are available for the fieldwork records, site archives, finds and samples it produces. Efficient approaches to information management are also key. Actions to support this are set out here. Access to this data for researchers and the wider public is another key issue and this is explored, as well as approaches to maximising dissemination of results and the public benefits of research through interpretation, education and community engagement. Finally the importance of research into other values associated with the WHS is highlighted with particular emphasis on the natural environment and the opportunities that joint prioritisation projects offer for the improved management of the attributes of OUV.

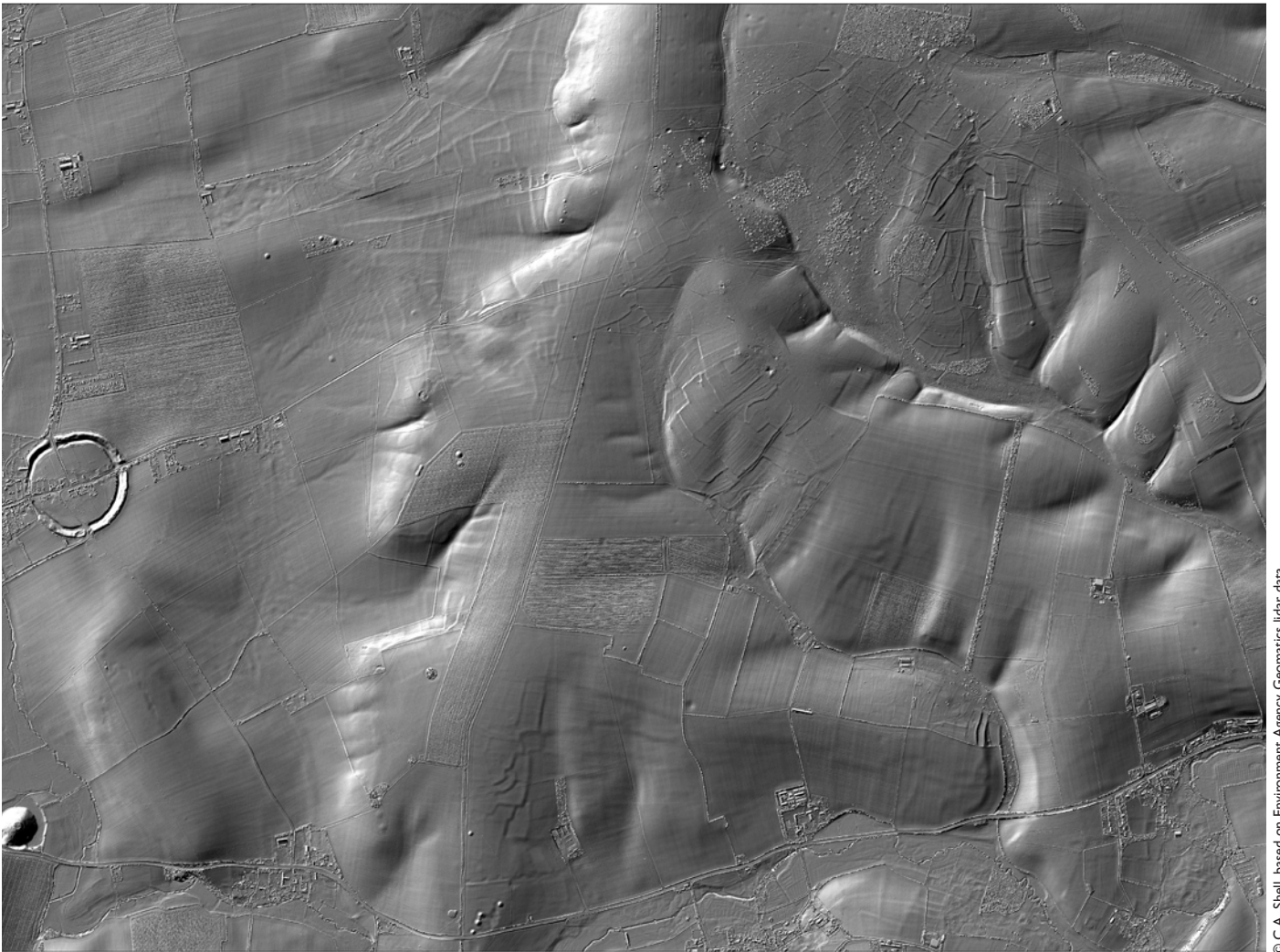
12.1 The importance of research in the WHS

Issue 49: Research is central to expanding our understanding of the WHS and its OUV and informing its management

Importance of research

12.1.1 Research plays a vital role in understanding and managing the WHS. It is only because of past research into the monuments of the WHS, from that of the early antiquarians to the present day, that we have any informed understanding of these WHS landscapes. Moreover, the centuries of research around Stonehenge and Avebury have been highly influential in the formation of the discipline of archaeology and in developing its techniques of investigation, from excavation through to the wide range of survey methods and forms of scientific analysis.

12.1.2 It is widely accepted that places are better managed when they are understood well (English Heritage's (now Historic England's) Conservation Principles – Principle 3). The Historic England 'Heritage Cycle'¹⁷⁴ demonstrates how greater understanding leads to valuing, caring and enjoyment of the historic environment. Continued archaeological research in and around the WHS is therefore essential. However it must be recognised that unnecessarily intrusive/ destructive research within the WHS could have a negative impact on its attributes of OUV which include the physical remains of the Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and funerary monuments and associated sites. Sustainable research is discussed below at 12.2.



© C.A. Shell, based on Environment Agency Geomatics lidar data

The South East part of the Avebury WHS: a digital image derived from airborne lidar survey, shaded from the North West

12.1.3 A number of fieldwork projects have been undertaken within the WHS since the publication of the last Stonehenge and Avebury Management Plans. These include excavations by universities from both the UK and abroad as well as English Heritage, and commercial units undertaking development-led work. A number of significant new discoveries have been made (see Part One, Section 3.5: Changes in Knowledge). Programmes of non-intrusive investigation have taken place aimed at advancing knowledge of the archaeological landscape as well as the improvement of both strategic decisions and day to day management. The number of new discoveries in this relatively limited period underlines the need to manage not only the known archaeology but the very rich potential that the WHS represents.

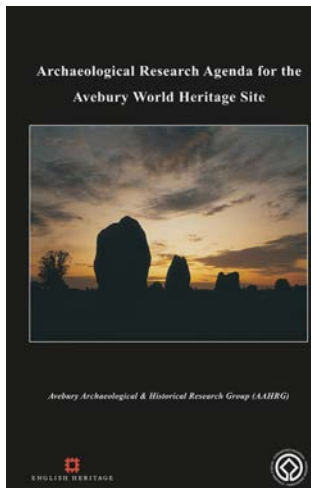
12.1.4 Research should be understood in its widest sense. In addition to research aimed at increasing our understanding related to the attributes of OUV we should continue to undertake research aimed at directly informing management. An example of this is the archaeological survey of the Ridgeway National Trail



© Historic England

Archaeological Investigation Team at Stonehenge

within the Avebury WHS. This was undertaken by members of the Avebury Archaeological and Historical Research Group (AAHRG) in 2008 for the Ridgeway Surface Protection Group to inform a management and maintenance strategy for the National Trail that would avoid damage to archaeology. Primarily aimed at informing management, the outcomes have increased



Avebury WHS Research Agenda AAHRG 2000

our understanding of the WHS revealing a more or less continuous archaeological palimpsest with features ranging in date from at least the Middle Bronze Age.

12.2 Sustainable archaeological research

Issue 50: *Research within the WHS should be of the highest quality and sustainable*

Sustainable research

12.2.1 Archaeological excavation could be described as an essentially intrusive process as it removes and in many cases destroys the deposits under investigation. 'The physical remains of the Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary and ceremonial monuments and associated sites' are an attribute of OUV and it is therefore essential that gains in our understanding of the WHS are made in a sustainable way. Sustainable research can be defined as: 'meeting today's need for improved knowledge and understanding of the WHS without jeopardising the ability of future generations to do the same' (*Avebury WHS Management Plan 2005*).

12.2.2 *Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework* (SARF) (2015) emphasises the need to consider the potential value of research and carefully balance this against its impacts on the resource. Any use of methods that will have a direct, intrusive impact on the undisturbed resource needs to be fully justified as the most appropriate for the task. In addition it must represent a valuable enhancement of our understanding of the WHS and its attributes of OUV. As stated in the *Stonehenge Research Framework*: 'The guiding principle here relates to the balance between the perceived value and importance of the issue, and the rarity and value of the material available to address it'.¹⁷⁵

12.2.3 When research projects proposing to use intrusive or destructive methods could be carried out elsewhere, they should be undertaken outside the WHS. In addition re-opening of previous trenches should be considered in order to address research questions with limited impact on the resource (SARF 2015). Non-destructive research such as reviewing past projects and archives should also be undertaken particularly where new technological or scientific methods may be able to add value to previous studies or contribute new knowledge. ASAHRG and its members should look at opportunities for promoting creative PhD partnerships that might be able to undertake research in this area. In addition it is important to encourage the publication and dissemination of previously unpublished research which cannot be considered sustainable until its results are made available to contribute to the understanding of the WHS. **(Policy 7a/Action 154, 155)**

12.2.4 SARF sets out four principles that should underpin all research: in addition to sustainability, best practice and communication and engagement, it advocates innovation. This latter principle, in addition to retaining the important role of the WHS as an area for innovative ways of investigating the archaeological resource, encourages the use of the continually advancing technology available for less intrusive research. Communication and engagement is discussed below at 12.8.

12.2.5 In assessing applications to undertake fieldwork on its Estates within the WHS the National Trust encourages and supports sustainable research, as outlined in SARF (2015).

12.2.6 Additional guidance on sustainable research, the 'Statement of Principles Governing Archaeological Work' in January 2002 (Appendix L), was produced by English Heritage, the National Trust and Wiltshire Council. It sets out the need for undertaking full and detailed non-destructive archaeological investigations before undertaking excavation. These principles were agreed by the Stonehenge WHS Committee. A review and update of these principles would be timely to reflect progress in the techniques available. English Heritage has also set out guidelines for undertaking excavation within the 'Stonehenge Triangle' (English Heritage Advisory Committee (EHAC) paper 2007).

WHS guidance

12.2.7 Guidance should be provided for the whole WHS on sustainable excavation emphasising the use of non-invasive survey where possible and appropriate. In line with the

requirement to sustain OUV, excavation should only be undertaken where it is the most appropriate method to achieve the required advances in understanding outlined in SARF. **(Policy 7a/Action 152)**

12.2.8 The principle set out in SARF requiring all research in the WHS to adhere to best practice, which will often exceed minimum standards, also contributes to sustainability. This is crucial as outside scheduled areas and National Trust land there is no minimum standard in place apart from the documents mentioned in the above paragraphs. The Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct¹⁷⁶ and English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MORPHE) guidelines¹⁷⁷ should be adhered to within the WHS and its setting as a minimum.



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Stonehenge magnetometer survey: Hidden Landscapes project

12.2.9 Following the process set out in SARF prior to undertaking research will also help to encourage sustainable research. First contact should be with the Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service. For both academic research and development-led fieldwork, a detailed project design should be submitted to the County Archaeology Service for approval. Project design should demonstrate appropriate use of non-invasive techniques before any planned excavations. A project design should be submitted to the National Trust for research on their land and to Historic England if it involves a scheduled monument. ASAHRG should be involved early in the process in an advisory role.

12.3 Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework

Issue 51: The role of the Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework

- 12.3.1** A research framework encourages researchers to focus on the most pertinent questions and those that will best help to expand our understanding of the WHS. This focus helps to ensure that interventions provide valuable results so balancing the need for sometimes invasive techniques where they are the most appropriate route to achieving the answers sought.
- 12.3.2** The need for continuing research and the concept of a research agenda were a key issue for the Stonehenge 2000 Management Plan. Avebury already had a research agenda that was produced from contributions by members of AAHRG in 2000. An archaeological research framework for Stonehenge was published in 2005. ¹⁷⁸ SARF (2015) is a combined research framework for the whole WHS. This has involved an extensive update of the resource assessment for Avebury by individual academics and an update for Stonehenge by the original author. The agenda and strategy for both parts of the WHS have been developed by Wessex Archaeology in consultation with a wide range of academics. The SARF will be an evolving document that will be modified as the results of research emerge and new questions arise which test our understanding of the monuments, sites and the landscape.
- 12.3.3** The overarching aim of SARF is to recognise the importance of research in the WHS and actively to encourage, within a conservation ethic, well-planned, focused research to the highest standards
- 12.3.4** The research framework, comprises three main elements: a resource assessment which includes a statement of our current knowledge and a description of the resource; a research agenda representing a statement of the main gaps, issues and priorities for new research; and finally a research strategy which is a statement of how the questions set out in the agenda should be taken forward.
- 12.3.5** The key aims of the Research Strategy are to:
- to promote and facilitate innovative research of the highest quality in the WHS which will both protect and enhance its characteristics of OUV, and contribute to its management;
 - to set out the core principles (incorporating best practice, innovation, sustainability, and communication and engagement), which will guide the conduct of

research projects;

- to promote collaboration and coordination within the research community of the WHS, by agreeing a process that will guide the planning, funding, conduct and dissemination of research projects;
- to establish a process by which the Research Framework, and its component parts, can be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. (SARF 2015)

12.3.6 SARF will be published in 2015 and widely distributed in digital format.

12.3.7 Success in implementing SARF will depend in part on continuing commitment to the monitoring and updating of the Framework to ensure it remains current. ASAHRG would be the most appropriate body to promote SARF and oversee its update. Data generated by related research should be lodged with the Historic Environment Record (HER) and Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS).
(Policy 7a /Action 151)

12.3.8 In addition to SARF, there is a more detailed research plan specifically for the guardianship monument of Stonehenge currently under preparation by English Heritage. This supports a new conservation statement for the monument due in 2015, setting out research priorities so that the organisation can be more proactive with regard to excavation requests and management of the monument. It is intended to be fully cross-referenced with SARF and for the two documents to complement one another in this area.

12.4 Archaeological research themes and questions

Issue 52: *Research should aim to expand our understanding of the WHS and its OUV*

Research themes: OUV

12.4.1 In its Research Agenda SARF sets out six research themes which are of direct relevance to OUV alongside its period-based themes. These six themes relate to the seven attributes of OUV set out in Part One, Section 2.3 of this Plan. The six main OUV-related themes and their overarching objectives are listed below. The relevant attributes are indicated in brackets:

- **Connected landscapes:** to gain a better understanding of the complex monumental and mortuary landscapes of the two areas of the WHS – how and why they developed and changed; which

elements of the landscapes were connected and how they were connected; how far those connections extended, and for how long they persisted.

(Attributes 5, 6)

- **Ceremonial monuments:** to gain a better understanding of the social, symbolic and (in some cases) technological contexts of the communal ritual and ceremonial monuments, individually and in groups – why they were built and altered; why they took the forms they did, and what they meant; what they were for, and what activities took place at them; why they were abandoned. (Attributes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- **Burials and barrows:** to gain a better understanding of how the Early Bronze Age mortuary landscape, dominated by round barrows, developed from the Neolithic monumental landscape – the factors that determined the locations of barrows, and how cemeteries developed; their chronology and dating the significance of their variations in form, scale, elaboration, contents and burial practices; their secondary burials. (Attributes 2, 3, 5, 6)
- **Landscape history and memory:** to gain a better understanding of the changing, long-term histories of the two areas of the WHS, and particular locations within them – how places came to be seen as significant; how their meanings changed over time, and how they came to be viewed and treated after their periods of primary use had ended. (Attributes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
- **Human generations:** to gain a better understanding, from the analysis of human remains, of the generations of people who have populated the WHS – their origins, diversity, movements, demography, health, diet and conflicts. (Attributes 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- **Secular life:** to gain a better understanding of the changing, day to day domestic, social, working and economic lives of those living within, or passing through, the WHS landscapes, both as they related to the construction and use of its prehistoric ritual monuments and separate from any involvement with them. (Attributes 3, 6)

12.4.2 Questions are set out under each of these themes and under period-based themes. These may be pursued in a variety of ways, through national heritage agencies, local authorities, archaeological contractors and consultants, universities, amateur societies and groups. As mentioned at 12.2.3 above creative PhD partnerships could also be encouraged to address these questions. There has been no attempt to prioritise them, as researchers will wish or need to choose their focus in response to a range of interests, opportunities and/or constraints.

(Policy 7a/Action 150)



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Between the Monuments excavation beside West Kennet Avenue, 2014

International research links

12.4.3 SARF emphasises that the research questions are ‘an indication of the wide range of possibility which the rich archaeological resource of the WHS has to answer important questions about the past (and hence the present)’. It also emphasises that the questions apply not only to the WHS and its environs but to its wider national and international context. This aligns with the international role of UNESCO. International research links should be encouraged particularly with WHSs with similar interests. **(Policy 7a/Action I53)**

12.5 Avebury and Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group

Issue 53: *There is a new joint research group for Stonehenge and Avebury*

AAHRG becomes ASHRG

12.5.1 The Stonehenge Management Plan in both 2000 (4.7.3) and 2009 (11.6.1) underlined the aspiration of establishing a research group for Stonehenge. At that time it had no dedicated research group although expert academics had been brought together from time to time to advise on specific projects. At Avebury there was a well-established research group, the Avebury Archaeological and Historical Research Group (AAHRG). AAHRG produced the Research Agenda for the Avebury part of the WHS,¹⁷⁹ the first research framework for a WHS in the UK, and possibly in the world. The 2000 WHS Management Plan advised that a new group should be set up, working in conjunction with AAHRG, or as an independent group with formal links.

12.5.2 The joint Avebury and Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group (ASHRG) held its first meeting in February 2014. The new joint research group was established following recommendations set out in the governance review report for the World Heritage Site completed in 2012. The report recommended the formation of a joint self-regulating Stonehenge and Avebury Standing Conference to promote and disseminate historical and archaeological research on the WHS as whole. This accorded with the move to greater coordination between Avebury and Stonehenge reflected in the new governance structure agreed by both Steering Committees in April 2013 and the establishment of the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Partnership Panel.

12.5.3 A small working group consisting of AAHRG members had been formed to examine the governance review recommendations to establish a joint research group. It was agreed that a joint group would be both beneficial and workable. It was proposed that AAHRG should be extended to include researchers working in the Stonehenge part of the WHS and that the existing AAHRG terms of reference should be retained with a limited number of appropriate amendments. Their recommendations were accepted by AAHRG in July 2013.

Policy 7a – Encourage sustainable archaeological research of the highest quality in the WHS, informed by the WHS Research Framework

ACTIONS

- I50** Encourage research in line with the WHS Research Framework.
- I51** Monitor, review and update the WHS Research Framework on a regular basis with a periodic review after ten years.
- I52** Reinforce guidance on sustainable research provided by the Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework (SARF). Encourage adherence to the IfA Code of Conduct and MORPHE guidelines within the WHS and its setting.
- I53** Develop links with national and international WHSs, universities and researchers with similar research interests.
- I54** Encourage completion and dissemination of unpublished past research.
- I55** Promote creative PhD partnerships.

Role of ASAHRG

12.5.4 The role of ASAHRG is to support the delivery of the WHS Management Plan aims and policies through regular revision of SARF and provision of guidance on archaeological and historical research, its facilitation and dissemination. It reports to the Steering Committees and Partnership Panel on matters relating to archaeology and history to support them in making informed management decisions. The group provides a forum for debate of research topics related to the WHS and the refinement and development of research proposals and as an arena for information exchange. It also exists to encourage best practice including timely reporting and dissemination of research and the identification of opportunities for outreach and education. The terms of reference can be found at Appendix C.



Members of the Avebury Archaeological and Historical Research Group and colleagues on a site visit to the Between the Monuments excavation beside West Kennet Avenue, 2013

12.6 Archiving of archaeological finds, paper archives and data

Issue 54: The storage of archaeological finds, paper archives and data from the WHS

Archive storage

12.6.1 A crucial factor that could constrain the rate at which research is carried out is the existence of accredited institutions capable of receiving and curating the often extensive archives generated.

12.6.2 Sustainable archaeological research requires that the resulting archaeological archives – both physical and digital – need to be properly curated for the long-term future. Archaeological archives from past excavations in the WHS are held by the Alexander Keiller, Wiltshire and Salisbury and British Museums. The Stonehenge half of the WHS is within the agreed collecting area of the Salisbury Museum while Avebury falls into both the Alexander Keiller and Wiltshire Museum collecting areas. (The Alexander Keiller Museum and Wiltshire Museum Collections Development Policies

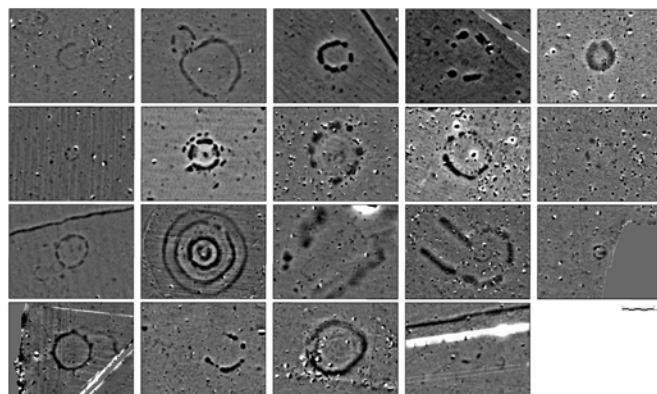
are complementary.) Avebury parish is recognised as the collecting area for the Alexander Keiller Museum for archaeological finds; archaeological finds from the WHS other than Avebury parish may be collected by either institution. An agreed policy for reaching agreement regarding deposition, features in the Collections Development Policies of both museums. However, Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums currently have little or no room for further extensive archives. Indeed, there are some archaeological archives which are temporarily held by other organisations – notably Sheffield University which holds the bulk of the Stonehenge Riverside Project archives – for which there is currently no room at the museums which cover the WHS collecting area. At present the Alexander Keiller Museum still has some archive space available. Salisbury Museum is considering refurbishing its storage facilities as part of their broader redevelopment programme.

12.6.3 Both Wiltshire and Salisbury are independent museums. They have limited resources which do not fully cover the costs of storing and curating existing or future archives. Museums as charities need to raise funds from income generated, donations or grants. WHS partners should require research project designs to include arrangements for managing and funding storage of finds and data as a condition of SMC/licence and grants.

(Policy 7b/Action 158)

12.6.4 Work is currently being undertaken by Wiltshire Council on exploring the feasibility of setting up a county-wide facility for museum storage and archiving. This will include museums with WHS-related collections. It requires an assessment of what data/archive there is and what future requirements there may be for storage and curation and how it will be funded. A separate review needs to be undertaken into options for the long-term storage of the Alexander Keiller Museum collection.

(Policy 7b/Action 156, 157)



Possible new monuments found during the Stonehenge Hidden Landscapes project

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12.6.5 Although moveable objects such as archives cannot be considered attributes of OUV under UNESCO guidelines, they are direct artefactual evidence from the prehistoric peoples of the WHS and as such essential to its understanding. In the longer term to ensure the future security of these archives, consideration could be given to the feasibility of developing a WHS resource centre, storage facility and research centre.

12.7 Improving access to results and data

Issue 55: Access to information including research findings and data sets needs to be improved

Historic Environment Record

12.7.1 One of the key challenges is improving the management of the data we have in a way that allows ease of access to researchers, managers and the wider public. This will require easily accessible data available on the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (HER). The GIS for the WHS was previously maintained separately for Stonehenge and Avebury, by English Heritage and the Council respectively with a third version held by Wessex Archaeology. There was little or no access for researchers and the wider public or other WHS partners. This should be managed as an integrated geospatial resource with the full range of relevant datasets available to inform revisions of the WHS Management Plan. It needs to be brought together in one place in the HER. The data should be held and maintained in a format that is accessible to all present and future WHS partners. Where any outstanding historic mapping and record inaccuracies still exist in data sets such as the National Monuments Record, these should be updated and corrected as they become apparent. It should be noted that the data held is not only digital but paper records, including important 'grey' or unpublished/unindexed reports.

(Policy 7b/Action 160, 161)

12.7.2 Innovative information management systems and approaches such as multivariate tracking data will help to provide the most advantageous research and management outcomes. Best practice should encourage exploration of these for effective information management. This will require funding which might be sought in kind from major companies and other sources in the absence of adequate public sector resources.

Data sharing

12.7.3 New data sets are often produced by government

agencies or others who retain the licences. It can be difficult to access these data sets and this can minimise the possible research and management gains or at least delay them. It can also involve additional cost and time to produce reports. An example of this was the production of the *WHS Woodland Strategy* which required extra work in the modelling of impacts as the necessary Lidar data for Avebury was unavailable from the Environment Agency without a considerable fee. It would be helpful to explore possible arrangements for licences to be shared via a memorandum of understanding for WHS projects. In addition researchers should be required to share data with WHS partners by making this a condition of SMC and/or relevant licences and grants.

(Policy 7b/Action 162)

Reporting and review of past data and collections

12.7.4 Another barrier to access is the fact that not all researchers deposit the results with the HER. Independent and unreported research does occur. Research cannot be considered sustainable without accessible records of its findings. Lack of reporting can hamper both future research and effective

Policy 7b – Improve information management and public access to data sets and provide adequate facilities for archives and storage of finds

ACTIONS

- 156** Deliver the outcomes of the county-wide project aimed at securing long-term storage facilities for the archive, records and collections to ensure those related to the WHS held by Salisbury and Wiltshire Museums are adequately provided for.
- 157** Explore options for long-term storage of Alexander Keiller Museum collections.
- 158** Require research project designs to include arrangements for managing and funding storage of finds and data as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC)/licence.
- 159** Carry out a review of past excavations, research and collections. Facilitate future access to all finds and data. Exploit digital opportunities.
- 160** Identify historic mapping and record inaccuracies on National Monuments Record.
- 161** Develop WHS GIS within the HER. Make available to all WHS partners.
- 162** Encourage data sharing between government agencies and all WHS partners including researchers and require as part of SMC/licence.

management. Researchers should be encouraged to deposit findings first with the HER. All project design should set out arrangements for reporting and publication which should also be a condition of consents, licences and funding to help address this issue. In addition a review of past excavations, research and collections should be carried out to facilitate access to all past finds and data. Digital opportunities for expanding this access should be exploited and funding sought to facilitate this where necessary.

(Policy 7b/Action 159)

12.7.5 University research assessment exercises are increasingly requiring (presumed digital) free 'open access' publication of submitted work. Already exemplary in this regard is the online availability of Historic England's Research Department Reports of its recent extensive research in the WHS.¹⁸⁰ Where complex GIS data is provided by researchers from projects within the WHS it should be possible to provide this for open access. Appropriate technological support will be necessary to make this accessible.

12.8 Increasing public benefit of research

Issue 56: *The public benefit of research needs to be enhanced*

Monitoring benefits and conditions for public engagement

12.8.1 Opportunities for dissemination of research, education, public engagement and improved interpretation should be maximised. This should be monitored, recorded and reported to ASAHRG who can assist researchers in highlighting the public benefit of research and reporting to funders and decision makers. Wherever possible when licences and consents are granted they should include conditions for public engagement and dissemination of research.

(Policy 7c/Action 163, 168)



Team Keiller 2008: the re-erection of a stone at Avebury to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Alexander Keiller Museum

© Brian Edwards

Public seminars, fascicules and the WHS website

12.8.2 There are many channels for dissemination and engagement. These include a WHS research conference and biennial public seminar in partnership with the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society (WANHS) and other WHS partners. In addition the idea, originally proposed at AAHRG, of producing WHS fascicules should be reviewed. The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS website is also an important asset for dissemination. It should be developed to include a research section with information on ASAHRG, and links to research publications and relevant research websites. In time an interactive map could be used to show what information is available for each monument within the landscape. Resources would be required to create and update this. **(Policy 7c/Action 164, 165)**

Education

12.8.3 An extremely effective method for engagement is through education projects. One example of this that took place in the Avebury half of the WHS was the 'Avenue to Learning' Project. This was designed and delivered by researchers and heritage professionals and based on the results of geophysical research on the



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Avenue to Learning schools project using research results and survey techniques to study science and maths at Avebury, 2013

West Kennet Avenue. It involved a primary school from Swindon that used surveying techniques and the results of geophysics to identify the position of buried Avenue stones. This delivered public benefit through education and encouraged return visits with parents who had never visited Avebury. Such projects would benefit from building in provision for funding to create materials to allow schools to repeat the exercise independently. This would help ensure the public benefits are sustainable.

Exhibitions and galleries

12.8.4 Where research results can be used to improve interpretation of the WHS and its attributes of OUV this provides tangible and easily accessible benefits to the public. Temporary exhibitions at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre should reflect new research findings and updated and improved displays should be created for museums holding WHS collections in response to research. The possibility of redisplaying the two public galleries of the Alexander Keiller Museum should be explored for implementation during the life of the Management Plan. This is discussed further in Section 10.0 (Interpretation, Learning and Community Engagement) which includes related actions. **(Policy 7c/Action 167)**

Community research

12.8.5 The opportunity for the local community to assist in projects or undertake their own sustainable research where appropriate is another way to deliver engagement and public benefit offered by the WHS. Guidance produced by the Heritage Lottery Fund in liaison with the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers has produced a best practice guide on archaeology aimed at community groups. The guidance recommends that the first step is talking to the local authority historic environment service. ASAHRG should be encouraging and advising on community projects where they are appropriate. **(Policy 7c Action 166)**

Policy 7c – Maximise dissemination, interpretation, education and public engagement related to research

ACTIONS

- 163** Licences and consents should include conditions for public engagement where appropriate, dissemination of research and sharing of data with the HER, archiving of data and collections.
- 164** Develop an ASAHRG section on the WHS website linking to research publications and relevant research websites.
- 165** Establish a biennial public seminar in partnership with Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society (WANHS) or other WHS partners.
- 166** Provide opportunities for the community to be engaged in research projects where appropriate.
- 167** Encourage providers to present a programme of special exhibitions and permanent displays to reflect recent research.
- 168** Monitor and record public benefit of research within the WHS.

12.9 Other areas of research

12.9.1 As mentioned in 12.1.4 above research should be understood in its widest sense. In addition to academic research aimed at increasing our understanding of the attributes of OUV of the WHS and informing its management ASAHRG should also continue to encourage research into other historic periods from the Palaeolithic to more recent periods. It is equally important to undertake research into the other values related to the WHS such as the natural environment. This can achieve positive benefits for the holistic management of the WHS. Targeted research into priority habitat and species, for example, will enable researchers to highlight where synergies exist between ecological and historic environment priorities. Limited resources can thereby be channelled into achieving maximum benefits. This is discussed further in Section 8.0 (Conservation).

12.9.2 The WHS should act as a catalyst for novel and innovative research in all areas including historiography, social history, public engagement and the natural and historic environment. This will help to stimulate outreach and enhance public understanding and engagement with the WHS. Oral history has been a particularly successful methodology in this area. Opportunities exist for disseminating the results of such projects as part of temporary exhibitions at the Stonehenge Visitor Centre and in the local museums. Research in all fields will need to adhere to best practice and principles of sustainability. **(Policy 7d/Action 169)**



Steve Marshall investigating natural springs at Avebury

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Policy 7d – Undertake other types of research, such as the assessment of biodiversity, as appropriate

ACTION

- 169** Encourage novel and innovative research in all areas including historiography, social history, public engagement, the natural and historic environment and history of art.

13.0 MANAGEMENT, LIAISON AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

Aim 8 – Provide adequate management systems and resources for the conservation and monitoring of the WHS

13.1 Management and liaison within the WHS

Issue 57: *The role of stakeholders in implementing the Management Plan*

- 13.1.1** No single agency is responsible for managing the whole WHS, and therefore improvements must be made by multiple organisations and individuals working together. It is important that stakeholders agree the contents of and endorse the final Management Plan. It is also important that stakeholders use their best endeavours to undertake the actions they have agreed to lead on and contribute to.
- 13.1.2** Communication, information sharing and the development of partnerships are central to cost-effective working practices. It is also essential that key stakeholders commit to supporting the aims of the WHS Management Plan through their own plan-making and actions as well as through participation in the relevant WHS groups.
- 13.1.3** The implementation of the Management Plan policies and actions requires the support and participation of many organisations and individuals. The Plan itself provides the focus for coordinating this effort, but it requires a significant level of commitment and resources if it is to succeed in protecting and enhancing the WHS for this and future generations. To ensure the best use of these resources, the mechanisms for implementing the actions of the Management Plan should be subject to regular review.

- 13.1.4** Local communities, especially landowners and residents, are obviously of the highest importance as key stakeholders and stewards of the World Heritage Site. Those who live within the WHS or on its boundary, in particular, have a right to expect their interests are taken into account. Other groups with a strong interest in the WHS include national agencies, local authorities, archaeologists, academics, conservationists, those concerned with its spiritual aspects, and all visitors to the Site. A high level of commitment to the WHS is evidenced by the participation of many groups and individuals in both of the local WHS Steering Committees, the Stonehenge Advisory Forum, ASHRG and in the level of response to the public consultation when reviewing both Management Plans.

Local community

- 13.1.5** The question of how the WHS should engage and communicate with local communities is considered in Section 10.0 above. If local ownership of the Plan is to be built and sustained it is important that local communities see it as taking into account their interests alongside the protection and enhancement of the WHS. More information should be provided about the significance of the WHS, the challenges involved in its management and the relevance of the WHS designation to their aspirations and needs. The town and parish councils are well placed to represent communities and provide a mechanism for encouraging stewardship of the WHS and local involvement in its day to day management. Initiatives such as the Joint Strategic Assessments, Neighbourhood Plans and Parish Traffic Plans could have a significant role to play in implementing some of the Plan's objectives. This is discussed further at 7.3 in Section 7.0.

Charitable organisations

- 13.1.6** National and local charities, voluntary organisations and interest groups also have an important role to play. One national charity, the National Trust, is a major landowner within the WHS and of fundamental importance to the successful implementation of many of the Plan's objectives. Many can help undertake practical conservation actions on the ground. They can also provide significant input on local and wider issues of relevance to the WHS, such as the spiritual or astronomical aspects of WHS or its local history. These groups can assist in enhancing the visitor experience through guided tours and person to person interpretation. Volunteers have an important role in assisting museums associated with the WHS both in the conservation and presentation of their

nationally significant collections and with the education programmes they offer.

Government departments

13.1.7 A number of government departments have an important role to play in the WHS, either directly or through their agencies. (These are set out in Appendix E.) These responsibilities can be statutory, involve funding various activities or, as in the case of MoD, derive from owning land in the WHS and its setting. In general, government departments should:

- Ensure that the need to protect the WHS and sustain its OUV is recognised in the development and implementation of national policy
- Provide support, assistance and funding for relevant management work within the WHS as recommended in the Plan.

National agencies

13.1.8 In general, national agencies should:

- Ensure that the need to protect the WHS and sustain its OUV is recognised in the development and implementation of national policy
- Continue to support the Steering Committees as active members
- Contribute specialist services or staff to specific programmes or initiatives as required
- Provide support, assistance and funding for relevant management work within the WHS as recommended in the Plan.

Local authority

13.1.9 The local authority, Wiltshire Council, should ensure that the Management Plan is given the highest possible status in its policies. The development plans and development management decisions should reflect the need to protect the WHS and sustain its OUV. The local authority should also seek to:

- Continue to participate actively in the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Steering Committees and Partnership Panel
- Allocate resources to the management of the WHS where possible and appropriate
- Incorporate the key objectives and recommendations for action in all relevant departmental work programmes
- Ensure the key objectives and recommendations for action are reflected in the Core Strategy, Joint Strategic Assessments and Neighbourhood Plans
- Contribute to the maintenance of environmental and other data for monitoring purposes.

13.1.10 The Management Plan should be reviewed every six years and an annual action plan prepared by the WHS Coordination Unit for approval by the local Steering Committees and the Partnership Panel.

(Policy 8a/Action 170, 171)

Policy 8a – *Implement the Management Plan and liaise with partners to maintain and enhance the present partnership approach*

ACTIONS

- 170** Review and update the Management Plan every six years
- 171** Produce an annual action plan for the Coordination Unit to be reviewed and signed off by Steering Committees and Partnership Panel.

13.2 Funding and resources

Issue 58: *Funding and resources for the implementation of the Management Plan and ongoing support for the WHS Coordination Unit*

13.2.1 The need for effective coordination and appropriate funding for the WHS as a whole has been highlighted throughout the Plan. To implement the Plan, it is important that key partners find the resources for programmes of work, projects and core staff; that progress in meeting Plan targets is regularly monitored; and appropriate action taken to ensure targets are met. **(Policy 8b/Action 172)**

13.2.2 A large proportion of funding is provided indirectly to the WHS by Natural England in supporting farmers to protect the archaeology of the WHS through various



Joint meeting and site visit of Stonehenge and Avebury Steering Committees 2010

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agri-environment schemes. This topic is covered in detail in Section 5.21 but it is relevant in this section to note the importance of the work and activities of individual farmers and landowners in protecting the WHS landscape and the financial contribution it represents.

13.2.3 In common with other World Heritage Sites, funding has been a continuing issue. During the lifetime of this Management Plan it is essential to ensure that partners provide adequate and sustainable funding for the management and coordination of the WHS. This might include exploring the opportunities for volunteer assistance with the administrative tasks related to the management of the WHS. The National Trust contribution of archaeological advice to the Unit should be continued. **(Policy 8b/Action 175)** The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel and its Chair should play a key role in establishing a sustainable funding framework for the WHS Coordination Unit and project funds to implement actions in the Management Plan.

13.2.4 The WHS Partnership Panel should produce an innovative fundraising strategy which might include ideas such as: developing a WHS biodiversity off-setting scheme, exploring the opportunities for Community Infrastructure Levy funding with Wiltshire Council, encouraging a visitor payback scheme for charity events and establishing a WHS fund to encourage gifts and loans to fund projects and programmes included in the Management Plan action plan. The North Wessex Downs LEADER Programme may offer a potential funding stream. Past LEADER programmes contributed to the new Wiltshire Museum galleries.
(Policy 8b/Action 173, 174)

13.3 Relationship between Stonehenge and Avebury parts of the WHS

Issue 59: *The relationship between the Avebury and Stonehenge parts of the WHS*

13.3.1 There has been a great deal of work to coordinate the management of the parts of the WHS. In addition to work on the governance review from 2011 to 2014, the two Stonehenge and Avebury Coordinators have worked increasingly closely together on a number of joint projects.

13.3.2 The implementation of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Management Plan and the WHS Coordination Unit will see an increase in projects working across both parts of the WHS. However, both communities feel

their independent identity strongly and joint projects should not be at the expense of local initiatives, particularly those aimed at community engagement.

13.3.3 The distance between the two halves of the WHS is some 40km by road. This does mean that it can be challenging to arrange joint events.

Policy 8b – Seek adequate funding for the coordination of the WHS and the implementation of the Management Plan

ACTIONS

- 172** Establish long-term funding arrangements for the Coordination Unit and put in place adequate resources.
- 173** Seek to increase private and philanthropic funding. Undertake feasibility study on establishing a WHS fund to support the delivery of the WHS Management Plan.
- 174** Maximise project funding to achieve Management Plan actions from all sources.
- 175** Increase capacity of the Coordination Unit. Consider appropriate volunteer support.

13.4 Monitoring and reviewing the Plan

Issue 60: *Monitoring arrangements for the WHS*

13.4.1 Management planning is a dynamic process and does not stop with the production of the Management Plan. New information, or changed perceptions of priorities can have impacts on the implementation of the Plan. Changes in knowledge and the practical experience of those responsible for the management of the WHS can also affect this as can the availability of resources. Regular monitoring is essential to provide this information. It is important to collect data on the effectiveness of the Plan as well as on the physical condition of the WHS.

13.4.2 The policies and suggested actions set out in the Management Plan should retain their relevance for five to ten years as progress is made. A formal review of the Management Plan should be undertaken every six years, and it should be revised if necessary to reflect changed circumstances. The preparation and review of annual action plans should be an important part of this process.

13.4.3 The following mechanisms are recommended for a regular review of progress:

- Progress report by key delivery partners at each

meeting of the local WHS Steering Committees (two to three times a year)

- Annual progress report, including priorities for the following year, produced in writing by key delivery partners for the local committees and Partnership Panel and incorporated into WHS annual action plan
- Production by Coordination Unit of an annual report of performance against the monitoring indicators based on data provided by WHS partners
- Production by the Coordination Unit of regular updates highlighting achievements and forthcoming projects, with input from all partners
- Coordinators to produce an annual action plan for agreement by the local committees and the Partnership Panel
- Overall review of progress with the implementation of the Management Plan to be produced by the Coordination Unit every three years
- Production of the UNESCO periodic report every six years. **(Policy 8c/Action 177)**

13.4.4 The new governance structure established in 2014 should be monitored and reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose and is working as intended. Terms of reference set out periods of review and the WHS Coordination Unit and the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel should ensure that these are completed and any necessary actions taken.

13.5 WHS governance structure

Issue 61: The governance of the WHS

13.5.1 The new governance structure which was established in 2014 should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is fit for purpose and the arrangements are effective. **(Policy 8c/Action 178)**

Policy 8c – *Ensure regular monitoring of the WHS*

ACTIONS

- 176** Revise the WHS monitoring indicators to ensure they encompass all relevant impacts on the WHS and its attributes of OUV. Ensure the WHS partners put them in place
- 177** Produce the UNESCO periodic report every six years
- 178** Regular monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the WHS governance arrangements including the WHS Coordination Unit.

13.6 Monitoring indicators

13.6.1 The purpose of monitoring is to assess how the attributes of OUV of the WHS are being maintained over time and to measure whether the objectives of the WHS Management Plan are being achieved. Measuring progress is essential to be able to adapt and improve the management of the site. Identifying key threats early on is necessary to put in place remedial measures before damage occurs. Regular monitoring is necessary to re-assess priorities in view of new issues that arise and progress made. Monitoring indicators need to be firmly linked to the attributes of OUV and the aims and policies identified in the WHS Management Plan.

13.6.2 A set of 19 monitoring indicators for the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS was produced jointly by the two Coordinators, with input from a number of partners, and endorsed by both the Avebury and Stonehenge WHS Committees in 2003. These can be found in the Avebury 2005 and Stonehenge 2009 Management Plans. Their aim is to measure both progress in and threats to the protection, interpretation and management of the site. Although most indicators are common to Avebury and Stonehenge, there are some minor differences reflecting the particular circumstances of each part of the Site. **(Policy 8c/Action 176)**

13.6.3 However, the application of these monitoring indicators has not been consistent in either Stonehenge or Avebury. A review of the monitoring indicators should be undertaken in line with the attributes of OUV to simplify and streamline their use to enable WHS partners to report on them more easily. A tool kit for developing monitoring indicators was developed by UK WHSs in association with ICOMOS UK in 2006.¹⁸¹ This document together with the UNESCO Paper *Monitoring World Heritage*,¹⁸² should form the basis of a review of monitoring indicators for the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS.

13.6.4 Monitoring is something that should be an integral part of management. Performance against the indicators should be reviewed annually in order to inform annual action plans and keep track of the conditions of the WHS. The Coordination Unit should use this information as the basis for the Periodic Report produced every six years to inform UNESCO of challenges affecting the WHS. Both annual and periodic reports should be circulated to all interested parties.