

A303 Stonehenge: Amesbury to Berwick Down

Fact sheet - traffic



Traffic is made up of lots of vehicles doing different things, from businesses delivering goods, to commuters going to work, to tourists driving to the seaside. For a road project, it's essential to understand the traffic, the features of the road itself and the problems that emerge as a result.

We look at the location and length of queues; when traffic jams occur; and where accidents happen. We compare this with things like the width of the road; the number of lanes; and the speed limit. This helps us to spot the issues and design improvements. It also helps environmental experts to assess the effects of traffic on noise levels, air quality and greenhouse gases.

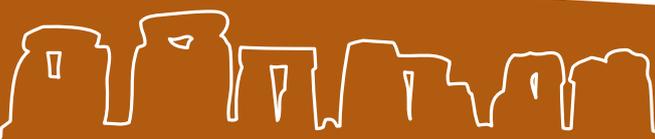
Our challenge

Traffic on the A303 past Stonehenge is varied. Drivers making long journeys and leisure trips make up more than half of the cars on the road.

However, there are also lots of vans, lorries and commuters travelling to and from work.

Unlike most roads, the busiest times are at weekends, especially during summer months. This additional traffic exceeds the capacity of the road, especially on the single carriageway sections, creating queues and increasing journey times. A journey that should take 10 minutes on this section of A303 can take an hour on a Saturday during the summer!

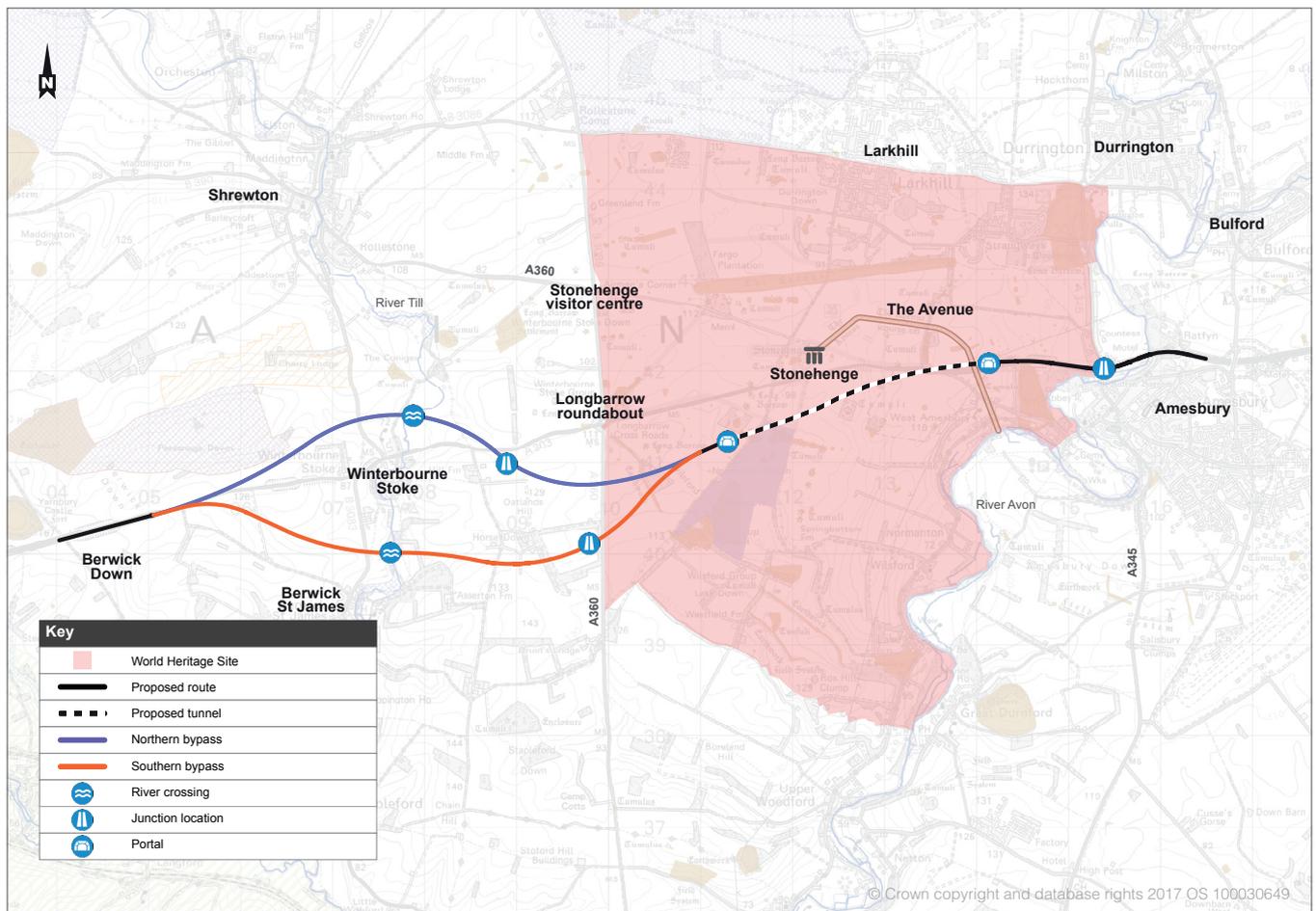
As well as frustrating drivers, unpredictable journey times cause lots of scheduling problems for businesses. Congestion leads to rat-running, where drivers divert to unsuitable side roads, increasing noise, pollution and accidents in local villages like Shrewton, Larkhill, Durrington and Bulford. The A303 also has a high accident rate, with the single carriageway section past Stonehenge more than double the average for this type of road.



Our approach

Taking data from lots of different sources, we've created a 'traffic model'. It's a computerised representation of the road network, capturing the features of the roads and junctions and estimating the traffic making different journeys. Using this model, we can see how different changes to the road will affect the traffic, both locally and more widely. We can also make predictions for the future, taking into account the expected growth in jobs and housing and seeing how the road holds up.

Our traffic experts work closely with our design team, using the model to assess and compare the effects of different options and understand their impact. For example, we can already see that upgrading the A303 Stonehenge to dual carriageway would create a safer, faster, more reliable road, reducing congestion, accidents and rat-running in the local area. Our traffic model will continue to help us as we refine our designs, allowing us to compare different approaches and find the most effective solutions.



Contact us

Visit our webpages for information about the schemes and to find out when you can have your say, or call or email us to find out more.

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Please quote the Highways England publications code PR172/16.

Highways England creative job number M160393

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Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ
Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales
number 09346363