

## Public Interest Test

**EIR2024/01702**

I would therefore like to request that you publish the unredacted draft Full Business Case for the A303 Stonehenge scheme on your website.

### **Environmental Information Regulations 2004 exception**

Regulation 12(4)(d) - Material in the course of completion, unfinished documents, and incomplete data

#### ***Factors supporting disclosure***

There is a clear public interest in:

Providing accurate information about the scheme in order to inform international public debate.

The strategic, economic, financial, commercial, and management dimensions of the scheme.

The impact the scheme would have had on the UK economy, sustainability and the environment, the local landscape, cultural heritage and the community.

The public seeing the projected cost and benefits of the scheme.

National Highways evidencing and being accountable for the way in which public money has been used to progress the scheme, the decisions made at each stage of the scheme, and the reasons for those decisions.

National Highways evidencing the criteria and processes used to assess the options considered during the scheme.

#### ***Factors supporting non-disclosure***

It is not in the public interest for National Highways to disclose the requested information because:

The draft Full Business Case (FBC) referenced in the National Highways Annual report and accounts 2024 (for the financial year ended 31 March 2024) is at this time material in the course of completion and therefore an unfinished document.

Although the scheme was cancelled on 29 July 2024, the outcome of the legal challenge against the Secretary of State's decision to grant the Development Consent Order is not yet known.

When the legal process is complete and a decision has been made, the financial, commercial and management dimensions of the draft FBC could change.

The draft FBC was approved in principle by the Department for Transport on 2nd October 2023 subject to completing the entire governance process.

As the next step in the governance process, the draft FBC was approved with conditions, one of which was the conclusion of all legal challenges, by the Major Project

	<p>Review Group (MPRG) on 11th December 2023. MPRG is managed for HM Treasury (HMT) by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA).</p> <p>The draft FBC was not submitted to HM Treasury. HM Treasury approval will not now be sought because the scheme has been cancelled.</p> <p>On completion of the legal proceedings the draft FBC will be updated by National Highways and submitted to DfT for final approval.</p> <p>The completed draft FBC will then be available on request. We expect this to be approximately one month after we receive the legal decision.</p> <p>If the draft FBC was to be released at this stage it would present a misleading and incomplete picture of the scheme, and the commercial and DCO positions. This would result in uninformed public discussion and debate.</p> <p>Responding to public reaction would represent a significant and unnecessary diversion of public resources and hinder National Highways from completing the FBC.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion:</b> It is not in the public interest to release this information. There are compelling arguments for withholding the information which outweigh the arguments supporting its release.</p> <p><b>Date of PIT:</b> 20 December 2024.</p>	