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# Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan 2015

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## SUMMARY

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# STONEHENGE AND AVEBURY

## WORLD HERITAGE SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015

### SUMMARY

This document includes an overview of what World Sites are and outlines the purpose of the Management Plan. It also provides a brief summary of progress over the last Plan period. The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value sets out the significance of Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site and what we need to protect through the coordinated management strategy set out in the Plan. The key management issues facing the World Heritage Site are summarised and the Vision and priorities for management included. Lastly our aims and related policies for achieving these are set out and the approach to implementation of these and related actions. Please look at the full consultation draft of the WHS Management Plan for further background details before submitting your comments. This is available for download from the Wiltshire Council consultation portal (<http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal>) or as a hard copy in all local libraries in Wiltshire.

#### 1.0 World Heritage Sites

World Heritage Sites are natural and cultural sites of Outstanding Universal Value to all humanity. They represent the common heritage of humankind. Governments pledge to identify, present and protect them for future generations after signing the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. The prestigious label is given by UNESCO following nomination by national governments. Every year, after rigorous scrutiny of applications, new sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List. In 2014, there were 1,007 World Heritage Sites.

The Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites became a cultural World Heritage Site in 1986. The two parts of the World Heritage Site are located some 40 km apart in Wiltshire. They are focused respectively on the great stone circles of Stonehenge and Avebury.

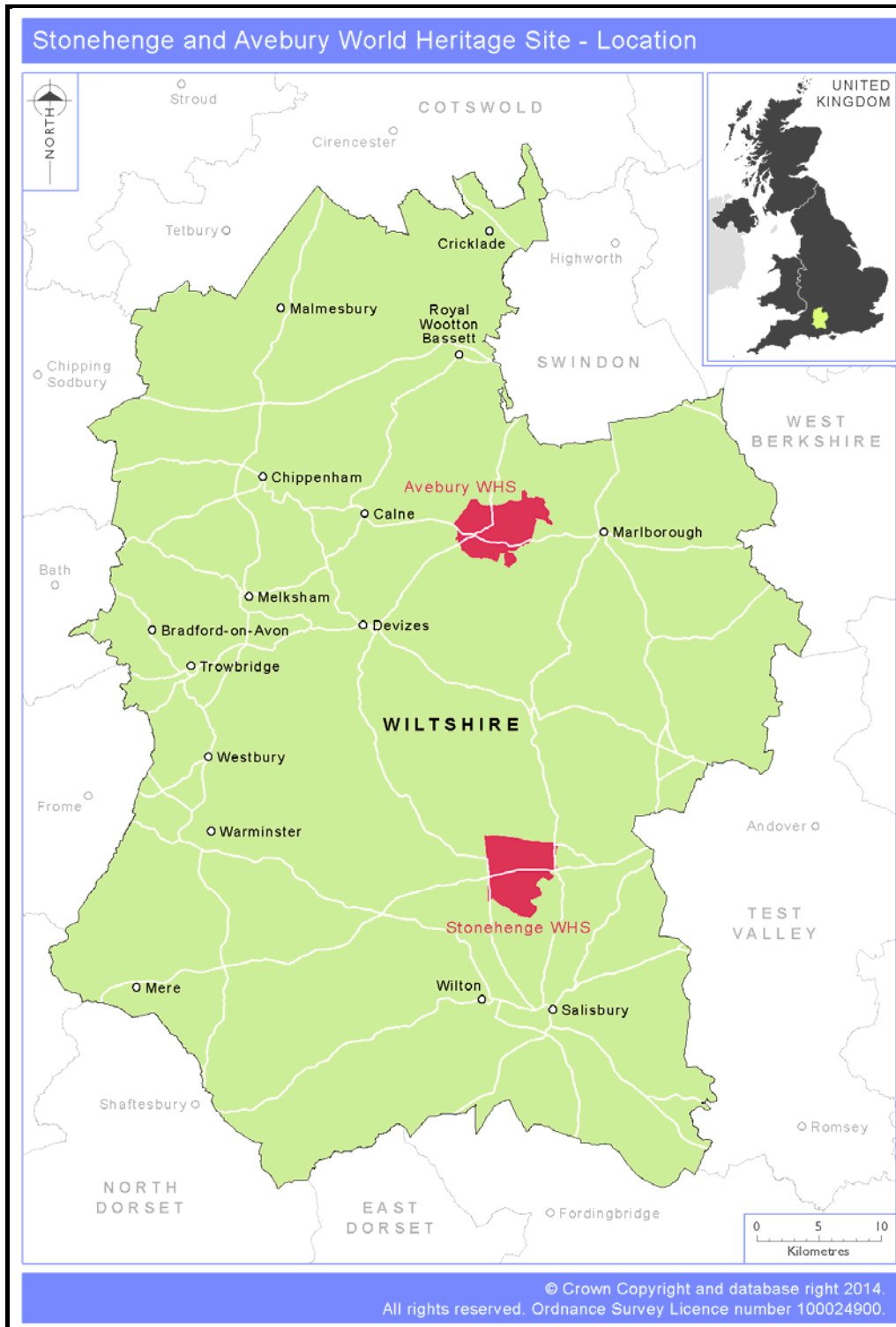
The Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites World Heritage Site is internationally important for its complexes of outstanding prehistoric monuments. Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world, while Avebury is the largest. Together, with inter-related monuments, and their associated landscapes, they demonstrate Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and mortuary practices resulting from around 2,000 years of continuous use and monument building between c.3,700 and 1,600 BC. As such they represent a unique embodiment of our collective heritage.

The Stonehenge part of the World Heritage Site (WHS) covers c.2,600 hectares and comprises one of the richest concentrations of early prehistoric monuments in the world. Avebury covers a similar area focused on the great henge and stone circles and includes Silbury Hill, the largest prehistoric man made mound in Europe. Other key monuments include Windmill Hill and the West Kennet Long Barrow.

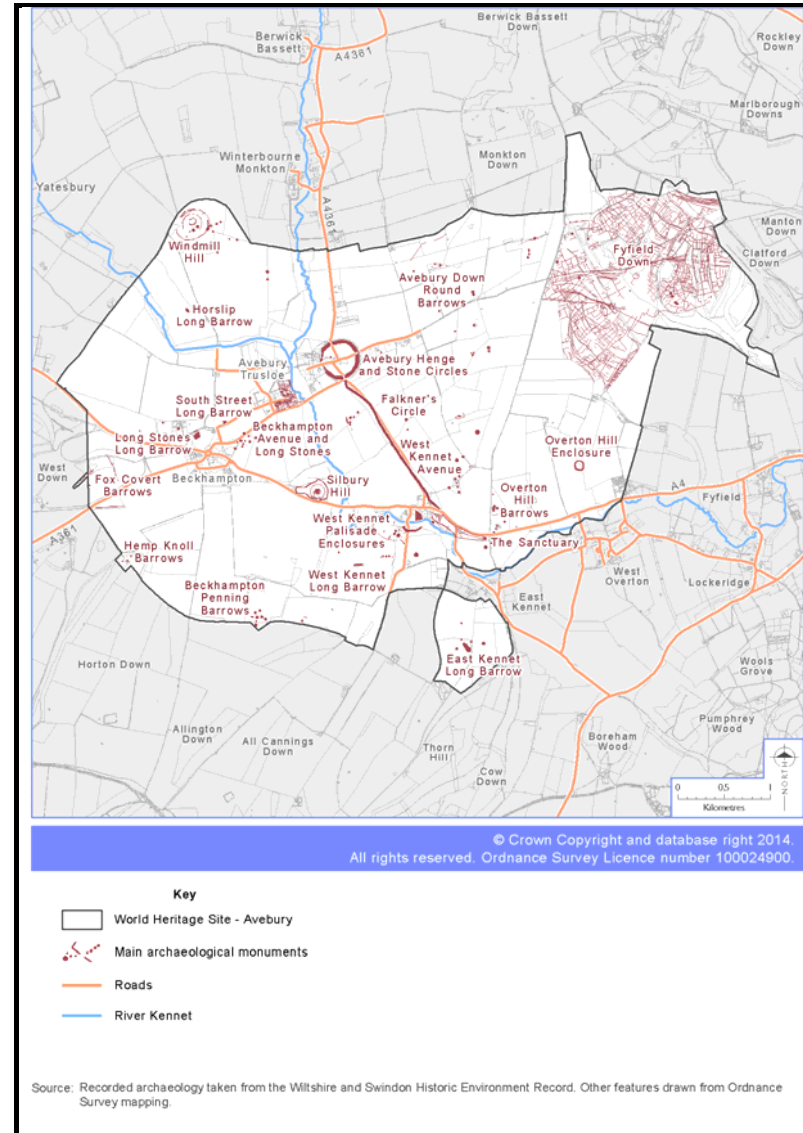
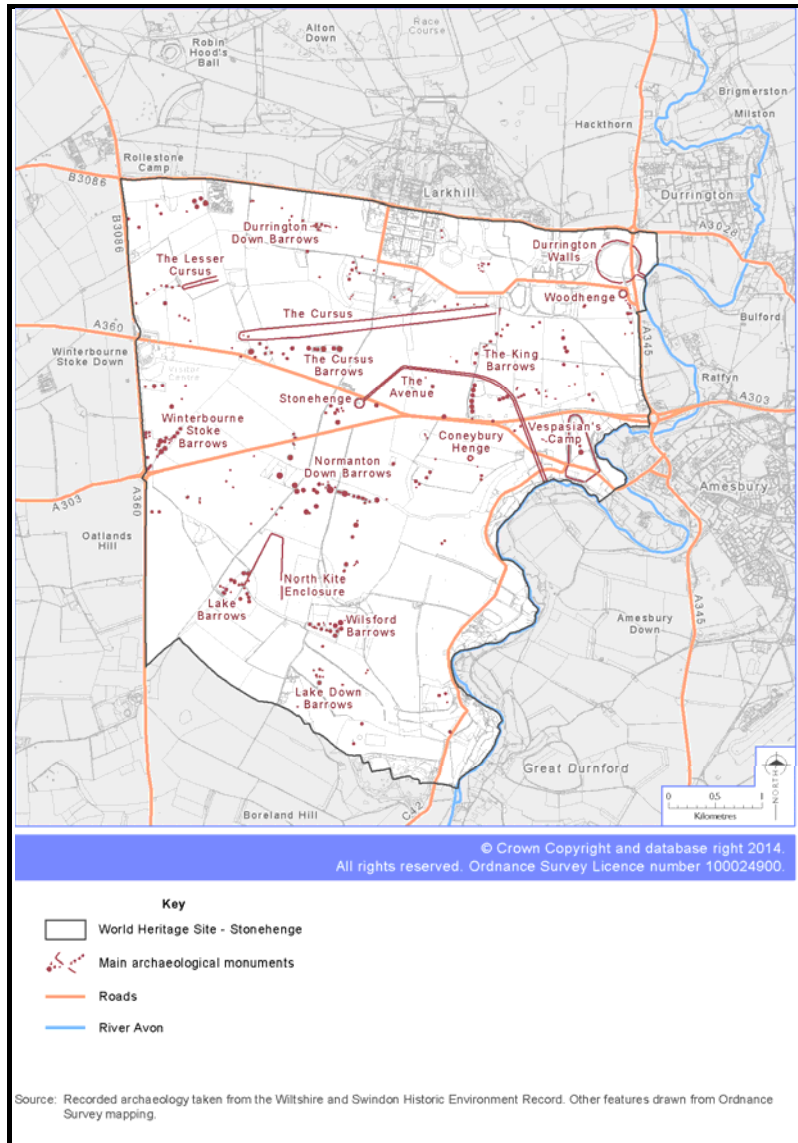
Stonehenge and Avebury are both popular tourist destinations with around 1,250,000 visitors a year at Stonehenge and approximately 300,000 at Avebury but the WHS is also a place where people live and work and much of it is farmed. Managing the various activities and interests to protect and enhance the World Heritage Site and maintain its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is a complex and challenging task.

Ownership and the management of the site is shared between English Heritage, the National Trust, the Ministry of Defence, the RSPB, private landowners and householders. Managing the various interests affecting the site is challenging and complex. The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS

Management Plan sets the overall strategy for achieving the correct balance between conservation, access, the interests of the local community and the sustainable use of the Site, whether for recreation and tourism, or agriculture. The overarching aim of the strategy is to protect the Site to maintain its OUV as agreed by UNESCO, provide access and interpretation for visitors and local people, and allow its continued use for sustainable agriculture.



Map 1 Stonehenge



Map 2 Avebury

## 2.0 The purpose of the Management Plan

The purpose of the Management Plan is to protect and sustain the OUV of the WHS for this and future generations. The Plan also takes into account other interests such as access, interpretation, nature conservation, farming, education, research and the needs of the local community.

Within the UK, WHS Management Plans provide the overarching strategy for the WHS. They are a material consideration in planning decisions and provide an advisory framework for guiding management initiatives. Management Plans are endorsed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and referred to UNESCO.

It was agreed in 2013 that a joint Stonehenge and Avebury Management Plan would be prepared. Previously Stonehenge and Avebury had separate plans. The current Plan has been developed following wide consultation with WHS partners and stakeholders and a period of formal public consultation. This meets the aspiration of both UNESCO and the UK Government that WHS management plans should be developed through a participative process.

The Plan establishes an overall vision for the long-term future of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS and sets out aims, policies and actions for the positive management of the WHS in partnership with landowners, farmers, relevant agencies and organisations and the local community. Implementation of these aims, policies and actions will protect and enhance the character of the WHS “landscape without parallel” whilst respecting economic interests and encouraging wider community participation in the stewardship of the WHS.

## 3.0 Assessment of the Avebury and Stonehenge Management Plans

The previous management plans for both Avebury (2005) and Stonehenge (2009) have played a central role in the way the two parts of the WHS has been managed. They have been used to inform planning decisions, education and interpretation projects, funding applications and work programmes. A great deal has been achieved in both parts of the WHS under the overarching framework set out by the management plans. This has been achieved in many cases due to the excellent partnership working in and around the WHS. The majority of the objectives and actions from the Avebury and Stonehenge plans are either complete or ongoing. Many of the outstanding actions have been brought forward into the new joint Management Plan.

A major achievement has been the development of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the WHS which was approved by UNESCO in 2013. Other joint projects have included; the WHS Condition Survey, WHS Climate Change Risk Assessment, a joint website, Megalith the WHS Newsletter, a walkers’ map of the WHS, the establishment of the Avebury and Stonehenge Archaeological and Historical Research Group, the Stonehenge and Avebury Research Framework, and local schools’ participation in UK WHS Youth Summits in 2009 and 2012.

Notable achievements at Avebury include; the production of the Avebury WHS Residents’ Pack in 2008, the stabilisation of Silbury Hill, an extension of the WHS boundary in 2008 and improvements to the setting of Overton Hill and the Sanctuary at the gateway to the WHS following an undergrounding of overhead cables by Scottish and Southern Electric in partnership with local farmers, the National Trust and English Heritage in 2010. Important research has been undertaken at Avebury during this period extending our understanding of the WHS. The Avebury WHS Transport Strategy was completed in 2014.

At Stonehenge, the closure of the A344 (promised by the UK government at the time of inscription on the WHS List in 1986), the opening of the Visitor Centre at Airman’s Corner and related programmes such as the new landscape interpretation scheme and education programme are perhaps the major achievements since 2009. Alongside this there have been numerous research

programmes which have helped us to deepen our understanding of the landscape around Stonehenge and an increase in land reverted to grassland which protects the sites and monuments in the WHS and provides a better setting for them.

#### 4.0 The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

In order to manage the WHS, it is essential to understand why it is important. The following Statement of Outstanding Universal Value explains why the WHS is important to all humanity. It also sets out the protection and management requirements for the WHS highlighting some of the major challenges to the WHS and its OUV. It was prepared by the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Steering Committees and was approved in 2013 by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

##### STATEMENT OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE 2013

*The World Heritage property Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites is internationally important for its complexes of outstanding prehistoric monuments. Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world, while Avebury is the largest. Together with inter-related monuments, and their associated landscapes, they demonstrate Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and mortuary practices resulting from around 2,000 years of continuous use and monument building between circa 3,700 and 1,600 BC. As such they represent a unique embodiment of our collective heritage. The World Heritage property comprises two areas of Chalkland in southern Britain within which complexes of Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and funerary monuments and associated sites were built. Each area contains a focal stone circle and henge and many other major monuments. At Stonehenge these include the Avenue, the Cursuses, Durrington Walls, Woodhenge, and the densest concentration of burial mounds in Britain. At Avebury they include Windmill Hill, the West Kennet Long Barrow, the Sanctuary, Silbury Hill, the West Kennet and Beckhampton Avenues, the West Kennet Palisaded Enclosures, and important barrows.*

Stonehenge is one of the most impressive prehistoric megalithic monuments in the world on account of the sheer size of its megaliths, the sophistication of its concentric plan and architectural design, the shaping of the stones - uniquely using both Wiltshire Sarsen sandstone and Pembroke Bluestone - and the precision with which it was built.

At Avebury, the massive Henge, containing the largest prehistoric stone circle in the world, and Silbury Hill, the largest prehistoric mound in Europe, demonstrate the outstanding engineering skills which were used to create masterpieces of earthen and megalithic architecture.

There is an exceptional survival of prehistoric monuments and sites within the World Heritage property including settlements, burial grounds, and large constructions of earth and stone. Today, together with their settings, they form landscapes without parallel. These complexes would have been of major significance to those who created them, as is apparent by the huge investment of time and effort they represent. They provide an insight into the mortuary and ceremonial practices of the period, and are evidence of prehistoric technology, architecture and astronomy. The careful siting of monuments in relation to the landscape helps us to further understand the Neolithic and Bronze Age.

**Criterion (i):** The monuments of the Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites demonstrate outstanding creative and technological achievements in prehistoric times.

Stonehenge is the most architecturally sophisticated prehistoric stone circle in the world. It is unrivalled in its design and unique engineering, featuring huge horizontal stone lintels capping the outer circle and the trilithons, locked together by carefully shaped joints. It is distinguished by the unique use of two different kinds of stones (Bluestones and Sarsens), their size (the largest weighing over 40 t) and the distance they were transported (up to 240 km). The sheer scale of

some of the surrounding monuments is also remarkable: the Stonehenge Cursus and the Avenue are both about 3 km long, while Durrington Walls is the largest known henge in Britain, around 500 m in diameter, demonstrating the ability of prehistoric peoples to conceive, design and construct features of great size and complexity.

Avebury prehistoric stone circle is the largest in the world. The encircling henge consists of a huge bank and ditch 1.3 km in circumference, within which 180 local, unshaped standing stones formed the large outer and two smaller inner circles. Leading from two of its four entrances, the West Kennet and Beckhampton Avenues of parallel standing stones still connect it with other monuments in the landscape. Another outstanding monument, Silbury Hill, is the largest prehistoric mound in Europe. Built around 2,400 BC, it stands 39.5 m high and comprises half a million tonnes of chalk. The purpose of this imposing, skilfully engineered monument remains obscure.

**Criterion (ii):** The World Heritage property provides an outstanding illustration of the evolution of monument construction and of the continual use and shaping of the landscape over more than 2,000 years, from the early Neolithic to the Bronze Age. The monuments and landscape have had an unwavering influence on architects, artists, historians and archaeologists, and still retain a huge potential for future research.

The megalithic and earthen monuments of the World Heritage property demonstrate the shaping of the landscape through monument building for around 2,000 years from *circa* 3,700 BC, reflecting the importance and wide influence of both areas.

Since the 12th century when Stonehenge was considered one of the wonders of the world by the chroniclers Henry de Huntington and Geoffrey de Monmouth, the Stonehenge and Avebury Sites have excited curiosity and been the subject of study and speculation. Since early investigations by John Aubrey (1626-1697), Inigo Jones (1573-1652), and William Stukeley (1687-1765), they have had an unwavering influence on architects, archaeologists, artists and historians. The two parts of the World Heritage property provide an excellent opportunity for further research.

Today, the property has spiritual associations for some.

**Criterion (iii):** The complexes of monuments at Stonehenge and Avebury provide an exceptional insight into the funerary and ceremonial practices in Britain in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Together with their settings and associated sites, they form landscapes without parallel.

The design, position and interrelationship of the monuments and sites are evidence of a wealthy and highly organised prehistoric society able to impose its concepts on the environment. An outstanding example is the alignment of the Stonehenge Avenue (probably a processional route) and Stonehenge stone circle on the axis of the midsummer sunrise and midwinter sunset, indicating their ceremonial and astronomical character. At Avebury the length and size of some of the features such as the West Kennet Avenue, which connects the Henge to the Sanctuary over 2 km away, are further evidence of this. A profound insight into the changing mortuary culture of the periods is provided by the use of Stonehenge as a cremation cemetery, by the West Kennet Long Barrow, the largest known Neolithic stone-chambered collective tomb in southern England, and by the hundreds of other burial sites illustrating evolving funerary rites.

### **Integrity**

The boundaries of the property capture the attributes that together convey Outstanding Universal Value at Stonehenge and Avebury. They contain the major Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments that exemplify the creative genius and technological skills for which the property is inscribed. The Avebury and Stonehenge landscapes are extensive, both being around 25 square kilometres, and capture the relationship between the monuments as well as their landscape setting.

At Avebury the boundary was extended in 2008 to include East Kennet Long Barrow and Fyfield Down with its extensive Bronze Age field system and naturally occurring Sarsen Stones. At Stonehenge the boundary will be reviewed to consider the possible inclusion of related, significant monuments nearby such as Robin Hood's Ball, a Neolithic causewayed enclosure.

The setting of some key monuments extends beyond the boundary. Provision of buffer zones or planning guidance based on a comprehensive setting study should be considered to protect the setting of both individual monuments and the overall setting of the property.

The survival of the Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments at both Stonehenge and Avebury is exceptional and remarkable given their age – they were built and used between around 3,700 and 1,600 BC. Stone and earth monuments retain their original design and materials. The timber structures have disappeared but postholes indicate their location. Monuments have been regularly maintained and repaired as necessary. The presence of busy main roads going through the World Heritage property impacts adversely on its integrity.

The roads sever the relationship between Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments, notably the A344 which separates the Stone Circle from the Avenue. At Avebury, roads cut through some key monuments including the Henge and the West Kennet Avenue. The A4 separates the Sanctuary from its barrow group at Overton Hill. Roads and vehicles also cause damage to the fabric of some monuments while traffic noise and visual intrusion have a negative impact on their settings. The incremental impact of highway-related clutter needs to be carefully managed. Development pressures are present and require careful management. Impacts from existing intrusive development should be mitigated where possible.

### **Authenticity**

Interventions have been limited mainly to excavations and the re-erection of some fallen or buried stones to their known positions in the early and mid-twentieth century in order to improve understanding. Ploughing, burrowing animals and early excavation have resulted in some losses but what remains is remarkable in its completeness and concentration. The materials and substance of the archaeology supported by the archaeological archives continue to provide an authentic testimony to prehistoric technological and creative achievement.

This survival and the huge potential of buried archaeology make the property an extremely important resource for archaeological research, which continues to uncover new evidence and expand our understanding of prehistory.

Present day research has enormously improved our understanding of the property.

The known principal monuments largely remain *in situ* and many are still dominant features in the rural landscape.

Their form and design are well-preserved and visitors are easily able to appreciate their location, setting and interrelationships which in combination represent landscapes without parallel.

At Stonehenge several monuments have retained their alignment on the Solstice sunrise and sunset, including the Stone Circle, the Avenue, Woodhenge, and the Durrington Walls Southern Circle and its Avenue.

Although the original ceremonial use of the monuments is not known, they retain spiritual significance for some people, and many still gather at both stone circles to celebrate the Solstice and other observations. Stonehenge is known and valued by many more as the most famous prehistoric monument in the world. There is a need to strengthen understanding of the overall relationship between remains, both buried and standing, at Stonehenge and at Avebury.

### **Protection and management requirements**



The UK Government protects World Heritage properties in England in two ways: firstly, individual buildings, monuments and landscapes are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, and secondly through the UK Spatial Planning system under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Acts. The individual sites within the property are protected through the Government's designation of individual buildings, monuments, gardens and landscapes. Government guidance on protecting the Historic Environment and World Heritage is set out in National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 07/09. Policies to protect, promote, conserve and enhance World Heritage properties, their settings and buffer zones are also found in statutory planning documents. The protection of the property and its setting from inappropriate development could be further strengthened through the adoption of a specific Supplementary Planning Document.

At a local level, the property is protected by the legal designation of all its principal monuments. There is a specific policy in the Local Development Framework to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property from inappropriate development, along with adequate references in relevant strategies and plans at all levels. The Wiltshire Core Strategy includes a specific World Heritage Property policy. This policy states that additional planning guidance will be produced to ensure its effective implementation and thereby the protection of the World Heritage property from inappropriate development. The policy also recognises the need to produce a setting study to enable this. Once the review of the Stonehenge boundary is completed, work on the setting study shall begin.

The Local Planning Authority is responsible for continued protection through policy development and its effective implementation in deciding planning applications with the management plans for Stonehenge and Avebury as a key material consideration. These plans also take into account the range of other values relevant to the site in addition to Outstanding Universal Value. Avebury lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a national statutory designation to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape.

About a third of the property at both Stonehenge and Avebury is owned and managed by conservation bodies: English Heritage, a non-departmental government body, and the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds which are both charities. Agri-environment schemes, an example of partnership working between private landowners and Natural England (a non-departmental government body), are very important for protecting and enhancing the setting of prehistoric monuments through measures such as grass restoration and scrub control. Much of the property can be accessed through public rights of way as well as permissive paths and open access provided by some agri-environment schemes. Managed open access is provided at Solstice. There are a significant number of private households within the property and local residents therefore have an important role in its stewardship.

The property has effective management plans, coordinators and steering groups at both Stonehenge and Avebury. There is a need for an overall integrated management system for the property which will be addressed by the establishment of a coordinating Stonehenge and Avebury Partnership Panel whilst retaining the Stonehenge and Avebury steering groups to enable specific local issues to be addressed and to maintain the meaningful engagement of the community. A single property management plan will replace the two separate management plans.

An overall visitor management and interpretation strategy, together with a landscape strategy needs to be put in place to optimise access to and understanding of the property. This should include improved interpretation for visitors and the local community both on site and in local museums, holding collections excavated from the property as well as through publications and the web. These objectives are being addressed at Stonehenge through the development of a visitor centre and the Interpretation, Learning and Participation Strategy. The updated Management Plan will include a similar strategy for Avebury. Visitor management and sustainable tourism challenges

and opportunities are addressed by specific objectives in both the Stonehenge and Avebury Management Plans.

An understanding of the overall relationship between buried and standing remains continues to be developed through research projects such as the “Between the Monuments” project and extensive geophysical surveys.

Research Frameworks have been published for the Site and are regularly reviewed. These encourage further relevant research. The Woodland Strategy, an example of a landscape level management project, once complete, can be built on to include other elements of landscape scale planning.

It is important to maintain and enhance the improvements to monuments achieved through grass restoration and to avoid erosion of earthen monuments and buried archaeology through visitor pressure and burrowing animals.

At the time of inscription the State Party agreed to remove the A344 road to reunite Stonehenge and its Avenue and improve the setting of the Stone Circle. Work to deliver the closure of the A344 will be complete in 2013. The project also includes a new Stonehenge visitor centre. This will provide world class visitor facilities including interpretation of the wider World Heritage property landscape and the removal of modern clutter from the setting of the Stone Circle. Although substantial progress is being made, the 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 property and visitor access to some parts of the wider landscape. A long-term solution remains to be found. At Avebury, a World Heritage Site Traffic Strategy will be developed to establish guidance and identify a holistic set of actions to address the negative impacts that the dominance of roads, traffic and related clutter has on integrity, the condition and setting of monuments and the ease and confidence with which visitors and the local community are able to explore the wider property.

***Adopted 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the World Heritage Committee June 2013 (Decision 37 COM 8E)***

### ***The Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site***

- 1. Stonehenge itself as a globally famous and iconic monument.*
- 2. The physical remains of the Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary and ceremonial monuments and associated sites.*
- 3. The siting of Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary and ceremonial sites and monuments in relation to the landscape.*
- 4. The design of Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary and ceremonial sites and monuments in relation to the skies and astronomy.*
- 5. The siting of Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary and ceremonial sites and monuments in relation to each other.*
- 6. The disposition, physical remains and settings of the key Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary, ceremonial and other monuments and sites of the period, which together form a landscape without parallel.*
- 7. The influence of the remains of Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary and ceremonial monuments and their landscape settings on architects, artists, historians, archaeologists and others.*

## **5.0 Key Management Issues**

The Plan identifies 61 management issues agreed by WHS partner and stakeholders and discusses them in detail. These form the basis for the development of the vision, aims and policies for the management of the WHS as well as the 178 related actions set out in the complete Plan.

The issues fall into eight main 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.

The most significant issues affecting the WHS are:

- Sustaining the OUV of the WHS for present and future generations
- Providing adequate protection of the WHS and its setting through the planning system
- Continuing reversion to grassland and ensuring renewal of existing agreements
- Improving the condition monuments under threat from burrowing animals, scrub and tree cover
- Enhancing the ecological value of the area
- Reducing the adverse impact of roads on the WHS, its attributes of OUV and ability to explore the landscape
- Monitoring the impacts of tourism and managing this sustainably
- Improved interpretation of the WHS particularly the outlying monuments and the landscape as whole
- Encouraging sustainable research and education
- Funding and resourcing the coordination of the WHS an implementation of the Management Plan

This joint Plan addresses in more depth than previously the issues of realising the economic benefits of sustainable tourism, engaging more fully with local community and also working more closely with the creative sector.

## 6.0 The Vision and Priorities for the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site

### Vision

The Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site is universally important for its unique and dense concentration of outstanding prehistoric monuments and sites which together form a landscape without parallel. We will work together to care for and safeguard this special area and provide a tranquil, rural and ecologically diverse setting for it and its archaeology. This will allow present and future generations to explore and enjoy the monuments and their landscape setting more fully. We will also ensure that the special qualities of the World Heritage Site are presented, interpreted and enhanced where appropriate, so that visitors, the local community and the whole world can better understand and value the extraordinary achievements of the prehistoric people who left us this rich legacy. We will realise the cultural, scientific and educational potential of the World Heritage Site as well as its social and economic benefits for the community.

### Priorities for 2015 -2021

The on-going and overarching priority of the Management Plan is to encourage the sustainable management of the WHS in order to sustain its Outstanding Universal Value, balancing this need with those of the farming community, nature conservation, access, landowners and the local community.

#### The priorities of the 2015-2021 Management Plan are to:

1. Protect buried archaeology from ploughing and enhance the setting of sites and monuments by maintaining and extending permanent wildlife-rich grassland and managing woodland and scrub
2. Protect monuments from damage from burrowing animals
3. Reduce the dominance and negative impact of roads and traffic including ensuring any A303 improvements support this
4. Improve the interpretation and enhance the visitor experience of the wider landscape:
5. Ensure any development is consistent with the protection and where appropriate enhancement of the monuments and their settings and the wider WHS landscape and its setting
6. Spread the economic benefits related to the WHS to the community and wider county
7. Encourage local community engagement with the WHS
8. Encourage sustainable archaeological research and education to improve and communicate our understanding of the WHS.

## 7.0 Aims and Policies

The aims set out the broad areas in which we will work to achieve the Vision while the policies set out the course of action and appropriate approach. The aims and to a large extent, the policies, will have a long term relevance for achieving the Vision. We do not expect to achieve them completely within this Plan period. The actions set out in the complete Management Plan are specific areas of work within the control of the partners they aim to achieve in the short to medium term.

### 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.**

*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.*

*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 additional WHS planning guidance produced*

*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*

*Policy 1d – Development which would impact adversely on the WHS, its setting and its attributes of OUV should not be permitted*

*Policy 1e – Minimise light pollution to avoid adverse impacts on the WHS, its setting 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*

### BOUNDARIES 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**

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

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

## CONSERVATION

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

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

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

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

***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***

***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***

***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***

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

***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: to 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. Provide habitat for birds, invertebrates, bats and other wildlife. Seek opportunities for the expansion of chalk grassland where consistent with the aims of sustaining OUV and relevant biodiversity targets. Extend and seek new links with relevant conservations bodies, programmes and initiatives.***

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

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

## **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**

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

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

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

*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*

## **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.**

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

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

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

*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*

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

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

## **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**

*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*

*Policy 6b – Manage vehicular access to byways within the WHS 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*

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

## **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 research.**

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

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

***Policy 7c – Maximise dissemination, interpretation, education and public engagement related to research***

***Policy 7d – Undertake other types research, such as the assessment of biodiversity, as appropriate***

## **MANAGEMENT, LIAISON AND MONITORING**

**Aim 8 – Provide adequate management systems and resources for the conservation and monitoring of the WHS.**

***Policy 8a – Implement the Management Plan and liaise with partners to maintain and enhance the present partnership approach***

***Policy 8b - Seek adequate funding for the coordination of the WHS and the implementation of the Management Plan***

***Policy 8c - Ensure regular monitoring of the WHS***

### **8.0 Implementation of the Management Plan**

The Management Plan includes the wide range of actions that need to be undertaken in order to deliver the aims and policies. The Management Plan is a dynamic document and these actions may be adapted in response to changes in the management context over the lifetime of the Plan. Each year an action plan will be developed which will outline the actions to be delivered over the coming year by the relevant partners.

Delivery of the Plan is not the responsibility of one single organisation but a joint responsibility and commitment shared by all the partners involved in the management of the WHS from individual landowners to national agencies. The range and numbers of partners involved in the management of the WHS means that coordinated partnership working is essential for achieving successful outcomes for the WHS and the communities living and working in and around it. There has been an excellent track record of organisations and community groups working well together in both parts of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS and it is anticipated that this will continue.

The Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Partnership Panel and the Stonehenge and Avebury Steering Committees play an essential role in encouraging, guiding, overseeing and monitoring progress as



well as reviewing and updating the Management Plan. The WHS Coordination Unit plays a pivotal role in facilitating, coordinating and enabling implementation of the WHS Management Plan.

## Management Principles

The management principles set out the approach to managing the WHS that all partners should consider in decisions affecting the WHS. These management principles reflect the obligations of the World Heritage Convention and set out the partnership approach and in particular the importance of those living and working within the WHS in managing and caring for it. This set of principles will help to guide the successful management of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS which depends on achieving the appropriate balance between the long term conservation of the Site with the promotion of the amenity of the local community.

### Management Principles

**Principle 1:** The World Heritage Site Management Plan will address issues directly related to or arising from **World Heritage Site status**, in the context of the Site and its setting

**Principle 2:** Actions undertaken as part of the management of the Site will respect the **obligations to the World Heritage Convention**, particularly to ensure that the historic environment is protected, conserved and presented, and given a function in the life of the community

**Principle 3:** Actions undertaken as part of the management of the Site will consider **impact on the values and integrity of the Site** at all times

**Principle 4:** World Heritage Site management will be delivered through a **partnership approach** and wherever possible through established existing initiatives and mechanisms

**Principle 5:** Management of the World Heritage Site will **be locally driven where possible**, in a national and international context, and aim to achieve effective community involvement where relevant

**Principle 6:** The Management Plan will support **sustainable development**; seeking to integrate conservation with responsible use within acceptable limits, to allow economic development and improved quality of life where it does not have a negative impact on the WHS and its attributes of OUV

**Principle 7:** World Heritage Site Management will endeavour to **respond to the needs and the aspirations of the community** where there is a relevance to the World Heritage Convention and the vision, aims and policies of the Plan

### Contact us

The Management Plan is evolving all the time.

If you have suggestions regarding the Plan and its implementation or would like to be involved please contact the WHS Coordination Unit.

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



• **Stonehenge, Avebury  
and Associated Sites**  
• inscribed on the World  
• Heritage List in 1986  
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