

Individual Cabinet member Delegated Decision

COUNCILLOR **Stuart Wheeler**
CABINET MEMBER FOR **Hubs, Heritage and Arts, Governance and Support**
Services

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REFERENCE: HHA_01_16

Adoption of the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan

Purpose of Report

To formally adopt the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan on behalf of Wiltshire Council.

Wiltshire Council is one of three organisations which make up the World Heritage Site Partnership Panel. Each of these three agencies, plus the separate local committees for Stonehenge and Avebury has undertaken processes to engage the relevant stakeholders and consult widely with partners and the public in the production of the Management Plan. The Management Plan, developed over two years, was produced in April 2015 and formally launched on the 17th May 2015.

This report outlines the procedure which produced the plan and states the intention for Wiltshire Council to formally adopt that plan under the delegated decision making authority of the Cabinet Member for Arts and Culture.

Consultation

The Management Plan was widely consulted upon during the period 8th December to 3rd of March 2014. An outline of this consultation process is attached as a supporting document, Appendix A. Wiltshire Council Officers as well as members were engaged in the consultation process and the agreement of the objections and actions. The formal public consultation followed the same process as the Wiltshire Council Core Strategy. A report upon the Management Plan was circulated to the CLT checklist during May 2015.

Options Considered

Adopt the Management Plan
Reject the Management Plan

Reason for Decision

Wiltshire Council has a key leadership role in delivering the strategic direction of the management of the World Heritage Site and direct responsibility for the delivery of some 35 actions. Wiltshire Council is a part of the WHS Partnership Panel which monitors the progress of the Management Plan and many services within the Council are integral to the successful delivery of key actions within the following chapters:

- Planning and Policy
- Conservation
- Sustainable Tourism
- Interpretation, Learning and Community Engagement
- Roads and Traffic
- Management and Monitoring Arrangements

Wiltshire Council endorsed the first draft of the Management Plan and the outline for consultation on the 10th of October 2014 at the Partnership Panel. The period of internal consultation then ran until the 25th of September before the 12 weeks of public consultation which commenced on the 8th of December 2014.

The two Steering Committee's responsible for the oversight of amendments to the management of the World Heritage Site agreed the Management Plan as follows:

- Stonehenge Steering Committee on the 9th of April 2015
- Avebury Steering Committee on the 10th of April 2015.

DECISION MADE

I approve adoption of the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan as advertised.

This decision was published on 10 March 2016 and will come into force on 18 March 2016.

The following supporting documents are attached:

HHA_01_16 Report
HHA_01_16 Appendix A

Date:29/02/16.....



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Cllr Stuart Wheeler
Cabinet Member for Hubs, Governance, Support
Services, Heritage & Arts and Customer Care

Subject: Adoption of the Management Plan for Avebury and Stonehenge Management Plan

Cabinet member: Cllr Stuart Wheeler
Cabinet Member for Hubs, Heritage and Arts, Governance and Support Services

Key Decision: No

Purpose of Report

1. To formally adopt the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan on behalf of Wiltshire Council.

Background

2. Separate World Heritage Site (WHS) Management Plans have been written for Avebury in 1998 and 2005 and for Stonehenge in 2000 and 2009. All have been formally adopted by the district councils preceding the existence of Wiltshire Council. The first joint WHS Management Plan was developed in 2014 and launched in May of 2015.
3. The WHS Management Plan sets out the overarching strategy for achieving the correct balance between conservation, access, the interests of the local community and the sustainable use of the Site. The primary aim of the plan is to protect the outstanding universal values as agreed by UNESCO, provide access and interpretation for local people and visitors and allow its continued use for sustainable agriculture. The WHS Management Plan contains a detailed action plan which sets out how key partners will work together to achieve this aim.
4. Aim 1 of the Plan, and Action 2 requires all partners and stakeholders to endorse the plan and to encourage long term decision-making on the protection and enhancement of the WHS and the maintenance of its outstanding universal values.

Main Considerations for the Council

5. The WHS Management Plan has been developed over the last 18 months and has followed a rigorous three month public consultation exercise in the same manner as the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
6. It has been drafted by the officers of the WHS Coordination Unit which is partner funded and hosted by Wiltshire Council as part of the Archaeology team together with Heritage and Arts teams located in the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre.
7. Wiltshire Council Officers and Members have been extensively involved in the development of the plan, particularly in relation to the following issues: highways, archaeology, arts and heritage, development management, spatial planning, landscape, legal and rights of way. All relevant officers were engaged in a Joint

Consultation meeting on the 25th of September and were content with the detail of policies, aims and actions in the WHS Management Plan.

8. The WHS Management Plan is not a Wiltshire Council plan as such, but is a shared strategic plan drawn together with and on behalf of the WHS partner organisations and local communities. Along with Wiltshire Council, the key funding partners are English Heritage/Historic England and the National Trust. Key partners and stakeholders have influenced the development of the plan via the WHS Partnership Panel and the Stonehenge and Avebury local committees.

Safeguarding Consideration

9. Wiltshire Council does not directly manage any of the sites associated with the Management Plan. The Management Plan is an overarching strategic document and does not consider the day to day management responsibilities of the site operators.
10. The Management Plan's chapters on visitor management and community engagement outline the conditions required to deliver sustainable tourism within the World Heritage Site and the partnerships required to engage the local community in accessing the historic landscape. It is within the workstreams flowing from these strategic tasks that Safeguarding considerations will be addressed to ensure children and vulnerable adults are supported to enjoy the World Heritage Site.

Public Health Implications

11. The Management Plan aims to increase public access to and enjoyment of the historic landscape of Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites. There are intrinsic health benefits in engaging with the natural world which are enhanced by the Management Plan's focus upon sustainable transport and increased walking and cycling in the natural environment.
12. The Management Plan also aims to reduce the pollution caused by excessive vehicular traffic within the World Heritage Site and limit the level of development permissible within the protected landscape to preserve the high quality environments which our rural communities benefit from. The focus upon conservation and the natural ecology within the sites will also have a positive impact upon the quality of environment within Wiltshire.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

13. Climate change is a key consideration within the Management Plan. Risks from changing temperature, storminess and flood are all identified as important factors in the management of the historic landscape. UNESCO has considered the likely impacts of climate change on World Heritage Sites globally and has published a strategy proposing to address this issue. As a result of this a Climate Change Risk Assessment for Stonehenge and Avebury was produced in March 2014 which foresees risks to the monuments and their surroundings and makes an assessment of their likelihood and severity.

14. The Management Plan has taken into account the potential of climate change upon the historic landscapes of Stonehenge and Avebury and identified appropriate and proportional measures to reduce this impact. All of the partners within the Management Panel have committed to reducing their energy and carbon consumption, especially where it pertains to the management of the historic landscape.
15. The Management Plan has been produced in consultation with Natural England and the Council's ecology officer and has had regard to the conservation of biodiversity in accordance with the Council's responsibilities under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).
16. The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit and the Council's landscape officer have also been closely involved in developing the plan, which has clear regard to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB in accordance with the Council's responsibilities under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) and aligns with the objectives of the North Wessex Downs Management Plan.

Risk Assessment

17. The adoption of the Management Plan is an essential component within the retention of World Heritage status for Stonehenge, Avebury and associated Sites. The historic landscape, and in particular the iconic locations protected within the World Heritage Site are key features of the county's tourism and branding work.
18. The key risks associated with losing the World Heritage status are reputational and economic. It is also worth considering the significant sunk investment in terms of officer time and political capital in attaining and retaining that status and the considerable additional burden upon both resources should UNESCO place the site on the 'at risk register.'
19. Wiltshire Council's formal adoption of the Management Plan and its continued participation in the work of the Management Panel are essential features of retaining the World Heritage Site status for the sites.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

20. The consultation for the Management Plan engaged communities at the local level through a variety of mediums and channels (face to face public meetings, written feedback, and group consultations with stakeholders).
21. The Interpretation, learning and community engagement actions within the Management Plan have been developed with the intention of promoting community engagement with the World Heritage Site and tackling inequalities in access.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

- a. Wiltshire Council will jeopardise its place on the Partnership Panel

and will lose influence in the delivery of the Management Plan. This will have profound implications within the following sections of the Management Plan:

- Planning (including development control)
 - Conservation
 - Roads and Traffic
 - Visitor Management and Sustainable Tourism
 - Interpretation, Learning and Community Engagement
- b. Wiltshire Council will jeopardise the World Heritage Status of the sites which will have significant reputational and economic implications for the county and the Council.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

Risk	Action to mitigate the risk
a. Escalation of resources committed to the delivery of the Management Plan.	Clear communication at both the strategic level (within the Partnership Panel) and at the operational level (within the Co-ordination Unit and at Service level) regarding the level and timescale of commitment to the actions identified within the Plan.
b. Association with controversial and potentially divisive actions within the Management Plan.	Wiltshire Council's role within each action is clearly stated within the Management Plan. Reporting on actions undertaken is monitored by the Management Panel and advice is sought from colleagues within communications on how to disseminate messages.
c. Tension or conflict between statutory duties of the Council and undertakings within the Management Plan.	Advice sought from all services during the development of the Management Plan to ensure that actions do not conflict with statutory duties. Continued dialogue with services (as stakeholders) during the process of undertaking actions to ensure continued understanding and compliance with statutory duties.

Financial Implications

22. The World Heritage Site Management Plan identifies the aspirations that each stakeholder has for the period of the action plan. The Management Plan recognises that each organisation must balance their commitment to the delivery of the plan with the resources that are available to them within any one annual cycle.

23. The Management Panel has a strategic overview of the utilisation of resources and the potential for additional financial and human resources to be attracted to deliver the action plan. Wiltshire Council has a strong voice at these meetings and is able to accelerate or postpone commitment of resources in accordance with budgetary pressures.
24. The Management Panel is supported by the Co-Ordination Unit which has a dedicated budget. The sustainability of this Unit is a key consideration for the Heritage and Arts service area and work is underway to identify an appropriate long term model.

Legal Implications

25. There are 35 actions in the Management Plan assigned wholly or in part to Wiltshire Council to implement. However, there is no legal obligation for the Council to do so. Rather, the Council has made a commitment in partnership to undertake these actions as resources of staff time and finance become available.
26. The actions fall into 7 aims; See Appendix B below for full list of Wiltshire Council action. The legal implications associated with these actions pertain to the Council's existing statutory duties as the local planning authority and the local agency with lead responsibility for roads and byways.
27. The Statutory and Policy Aims within the Management Plan require the Council to provide planning guidance, save existing policies and review and/or update other policies.
28. The Boundary and Setting / Conservation Aims within the Management Plan require the Council to undertake desk based work and undertake remedial capital work within existing resources.
29. The Present, Transmit and Interpretation as well as the Education and community Engagement Aims within the Management Plan require the Council to undertake strategic work to enhance skills of the local workforce and improve the presentation of the sites to local communities and tourists as well as undertake basic infrastructure improvements such as additional signage and landscape maintenance as existing budgets allow.
30. The Traffic Management Aim within the Management Plan requires the Council to monitor the impact of existing congestion and review the criteria for transport assessments associated with future developments. The Council is required to commit to existing design principles and develop new intervention measures, where appropriate, to reduce the impact of traffic and roads. The Council is also required to put in place measures to reduce congestion and monitor use of byways and promote sustainable transport.
31. The Research Aim within the Management plan requires the Council to continue to seek a solution to the archaeological storage pressure within the county and to develop the existing digital data set.

Options Considered

32. There are two options at this stage (post consultation and re-drafting): to either adopt the Management Plan or to Reject the Management Plan. The Management Plan has been thoroughly consulted upon with internal and external stakeholders and there has been an extensive re-drafting period to ensure that all comments have been address and where appropriate alterations made to the Plan.
33. Wiltshire Council has the lead on actions throughout the Plan, particularly where they pertain to the Council's statutory functions and duties. The Plan identifies the context within which these functions will be carried out and the importance that the successful delivery of these actions will have on the Council's wider objectives.
34. There would be a serious reputational impact for the Council should it not adopt the Plan and the Council would lose influence upon the management of the World Heritage Site. The benefits of adopting the Plan and working within the Partnership Panel outweigh the obligations placed upon the Council by adopting the Plan.
35. It is therefore a recommendation of this report the Wiltshire Council formally adopt the World Heritage Site Management Plan.

Conclusions

36. It is proposed that that Cllr Wheeler utilise his delegated authority to adopt the Management Plan thereby endorsing it on behalf of the Council.
37. The reason for this proposal is that Wiltshire Council has both a strategic role in the direction of the World Heritage Site and a key management role in the delivery of actions within the Plan. Wiltshire Council has endorsed the process of undertaking the drafting of a new Management Plan and has committed to the delivery of that Plan through the Partnership Panel and the Co-Orindation Unit.

Name of Director: Maggie Rae
Designation: Corporate Director

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Date of report 14/04/15

Background Papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None.

Appendices

Appendix A: Outline of Consultation Process (attached).

Appendix B: Summary of Full List of Wiltshire Council Actions

The following is a list of those actions assigned wholly or in part to Wiltshire Council within the Management Plan.

- **Statutory and Policy Framework:** Identify and produce the most appropriate form of planning guidance. Establish a working group to consider a Supplementary Planning Document.
- **Statutory and Policy Framework:** Wiltshire Council will review saved World Heritage Site policies from Kennet Local Plan and ensure that relevant policies are incorporated in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- **Statutory and Policy Framework:** Review existing Town and Planning Act Article 4 Directions and update as required.
- **Statutory and Policy Framework:** Develop guidelines building on existing evidence and guidance to avoid light pollution.
- **Boundary and Setting:** Map an indicative setting area for planning management purposes.
- **Boundary and Setting:** Produce a World Heritage Site Setting Study.
- **Conservation:** Design and implement management system on Byway 12.
- **Conservation:** Divert access track currently running across Cursus long barrow (Amesbury 42) to avoid damage.
- **Conservation:** Produce Historic Landscape Characterisation case studies to inform Landscape Strategy.
- **Conservation:** Identify key views between the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.
- **Conservation:** Agree and implement actions to improve the setting and integrity of Woodhenge and Durrington Walls.
- **Conservation:** Halt road-edge erosion of the B4003 in scheduled areas and manage parking.
- **Conservation:** Lessen intrusion of A4 on Silbury Hill, the Sanctuary and Overton Hill Barrow.
- **Conservation:** Improve setting of the Sanctuary and Overton Hill Barrow Cemetery by removing scrub and trees, and management of hedgerow planting.

- **Present and Transmit:** Work with partners to identify appropriate and sustainable regeneration opportunities that enhance the World Heritage Site, such as apprenticeships.
- **Present and Transmit:** Develop a World Heritage Site Landscape Access Strategy.
- **Present and Transmit:** Encourage greater exploration of the wider landscape by visitors and local community. Provide signs at key dispersal points.
- **Interpretation, Education and Community Engagement:** Develop an arts framework.
- **Interpretation, Education and Community Engagement:** Deliver an artist symposium.
- **Interpretation, Education and Community Engagement:** Review gateway signage and ensure funding for re-design and replacement.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Review trigger criteria for development related transport assessments.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Monitor impact on local communities from traffic alterations following closure of A344 and new parking at the Visitor Centre.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Adhere to Design Principles for all Highways interventions at Avebury.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Review, develop and consult on measures for the B4003.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Review, develop and consult on measures for the A4.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Where possible provide safe crossing points surrounding Avebury.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Reduce parking congestion in the Avebury Henge/village area on peak days. Enforce existing parking restrictions in the High Street and implement new ones where necessary.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Identify opportunities for implementing remaining recommendations of the Avebury Transport Strategy.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Monitor the use of byways open to traffic and seek appropriate management interventions.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Agree appropriate protocol for surface maintenance and repair on public rights of way.

- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Promote current sustainable transport options. Agree and co-ordinate messages with partners and links to Connecting Wiltshire.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Develop a new Sustainable Transport Strategy to reduce parking pressure and deliver environmental benefits.
- **Sustainable Traffic Management:** Implement sustainable transport actions from existing Transport Strategy.
- **Research:** Deliver outcomes of archaeological storage project.
- **Research:** Develop the World Heritage Site dataset within the Historic Environment Record and make available to partners.