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Object

Name

don cross

Address

**Wessexplore Tourist Services
20 Coldharbour Lane,Salisbury
SP2 7BW**

Post Code

sp2 7bw

Comments

see below

If you wish to be emailed a copy of your comment, tick this box

No

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STONEHENGE PROPOSALS 2009.

I would wish to make the following comments on the information given so far.....

1. Newspaper reports only £1million so far (SWRDA) raised towards cost of £28? million.??
2. Coaches from the east will have to negotiate extra 2 miles of singlecarriageway A303 to Longbarrow to access via A360 roundabout .On A303 there are frequent delays and heavy traffic from east especially in summer on section from Solstice Park Amesbury westwards –a further two miles of single carriageway to Longbarrow with give estimated extra time of 25 minutes needed to reach new Stonehenge centre. (A “coach day” from London=approx. 9-10 hours with driver,guide and some 35-45 pax, visiting about three-four wellknown places and costing up to £25-50 per person.)
3. On busy summer mornings up to 20 coaches may arrive at Stonehenge within an hour = estimated 800 pax. (EH quotes 900,000 a year but numbers vary timewise) How will shuttles cope?
4. The four “Shuttles” (Type & Capacity unknown but like the “tractor trailers at Eden Project”) will run only 12 times a day. If within summer times of opening = 9hours divided by 12 = 45 minutes, around one shuttle every 15mins. How will they cope with large numbers of pax who have a limited time anyway?
5. How will the shuttles cope with the inclement weather of Salisbury Plain –cold high winds,snow and rain – not like the Eden Project!
6. I estimate the journey
 - (a) from coach arrival to shuttle direct –assuming one available & able to take all pax- including tickets,toilets etc =15-20 mins,
 - (b) journey trip to Stones = 20 mins
 - (c) visit/walk round Stones = 45 minutes (dep on weather –this is an open air site with no shelter)
 - (d) Return journey if shuttle available for whole group and all present =20 minutes

(e) Group returns to coach direct –no lost or strays,disabled etc ,embus =15mins.

NB Any disabled pax slows the process considerably. Total time =2 hours.

This does not include visit to exhibition,bookshop,souvenir stall or café.(Add one hour=3hrs.)
Present visiting time is generally some 45-50 minutes to an hour with time for use of all services on site.(Admittedly congestion on site in some summer days.)

7. THE RESULT FROM THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS WILL MEAN MANY TOUR OPERATORS AND COACH COMPANIES WILL MAYBE GIVE PAX A VIEW OF THE STONES FROM A303 AND NOT VISIT,preferring another venue within their tight timescale e.g. Winchester,Salisbury, Bath ,Avebury or Lacock perhaps or venues like Stourhead or Longleat for a “Wessex” Day. OUR VISITORS HAVE PAID A LOT OF MONEY TO COME TO BRITAIN AND WANT TO SEE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE IN A DAY. The MAJORITY do not want to spend long at any one site,even Stonehenge, on an expensive coach outing. . What studies have been made on these aspects of the change?

8. Visitor numbers will drop considerably if the proposed centre is agreed on the proposed site ..Archaeologically and conservation -wise welcomed but the effect on local tourism including Salisbury may be considerable,especially as we have now no specifically local tourism support our view as when Salisbury/Stonehenge had its own trade/public organisation promoting the local area worldwide. Tour operators and tourist guides have all demanded an economic survey of the effects on tourism. Decisions by local councillors are often made without true knowledge of the facts.

9. My personal comment is similar to my objections I have raised on behalf of my business and local tourism over the last twenty years of this scheme ,namely :if EH wishes to spend another £500million plus on new ideas at least could we not please.....

reconsider the plans (a) to choose the Fargo (NT) site ? (b) to bury an excellent new visitor centre close to the existing one- underground car/coach park and all and no weather problems - or (c) make the new centre at Stonehenge Bottom (AWTG Plans 1990 et alia)?

The closure of the A344 except for access only to Stones from Airmans Cross and complete closure of the stretch from Stones to Stonehenge Bottom.(except perhaps for emergency vehicles) is generally acceptable.

(PS-The proposed new Centre looks more like a Canadian Indian Forest tribal pow-wow centre)

DON CROSS ,Managing Director,Wessexplore Tourist Services,Salisbury SP2 7BW. 20.10.09.

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