

Excavated tunnel material

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Building the two-mile tunnel in the Stonehenge World Heritage Site landscape will produce about 1 million cubic metres of excavated chalk, which we plan to use as landscaping materials along the new route and to create a new area of chalk grassland next to Parsonage Down, north of Winterbourne Stoke.

Visualisations showing location of excavated tunnel material



Before – arable land use

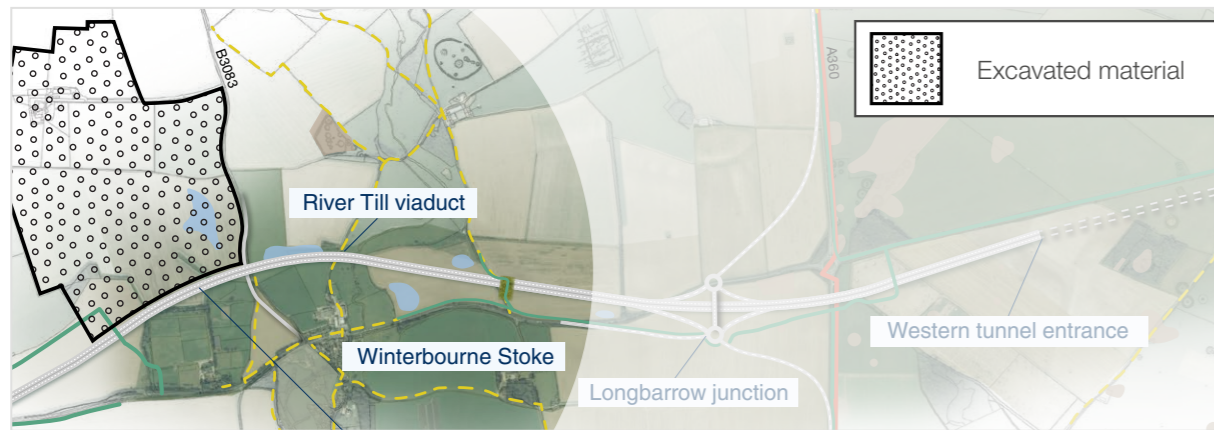


After – chalk grassland created



The excavated material will be treated, and excess water removed before being used. This needs to happen on site so that it can be transported to its final destination – even if some distance away.

All the material will be used for landscaping as it is not suitable for the construction of structural highway embankments.



Location of landscaped excavated tunnel material

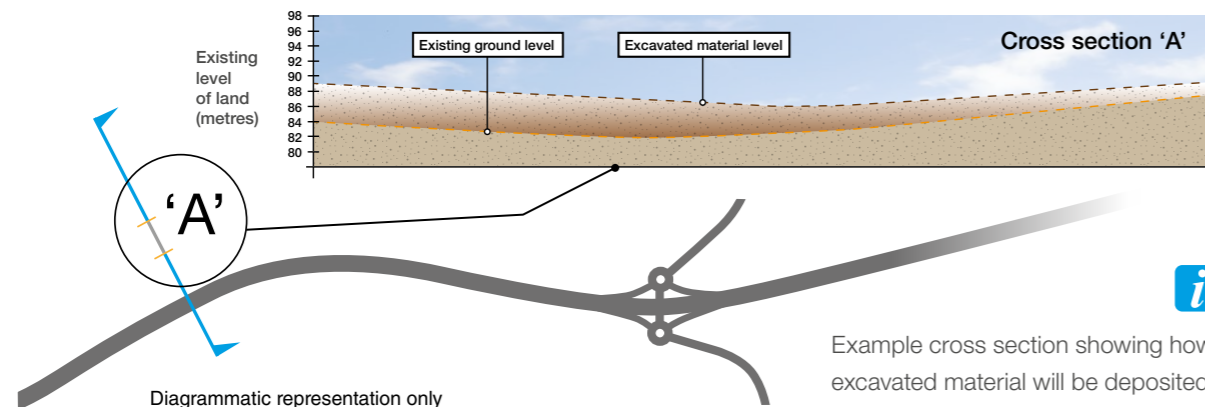
Diagrammatic representation only

The new chalk grassland area being created east of Parsonage Down National Nature Reserve will be around 45 hectares (111 acres) in size. It will be just to the south of Cherry Lodge and the closest properties in Winterbourne Stoke are approx. 600 metres away.

The material deposited here will not be heaped or in a mound but instead will be spread in thin layers across the area to recreate rolling downland, reflecting the existing dry valley. This falls from Cherry Lodge Lane to the valley rising as part of the new embankment to the north of Scotland Lodge farm.

It won't be higher than any of the surrounding hill tops and gradients of the new slopes will be similar to those currently. There will be no sudden artificial changes in level, blending into existing ground to appear as natural as possible.

The depth of the material will vary between 1 and 10 metres – with the majority (by area) under 3 metres deep.



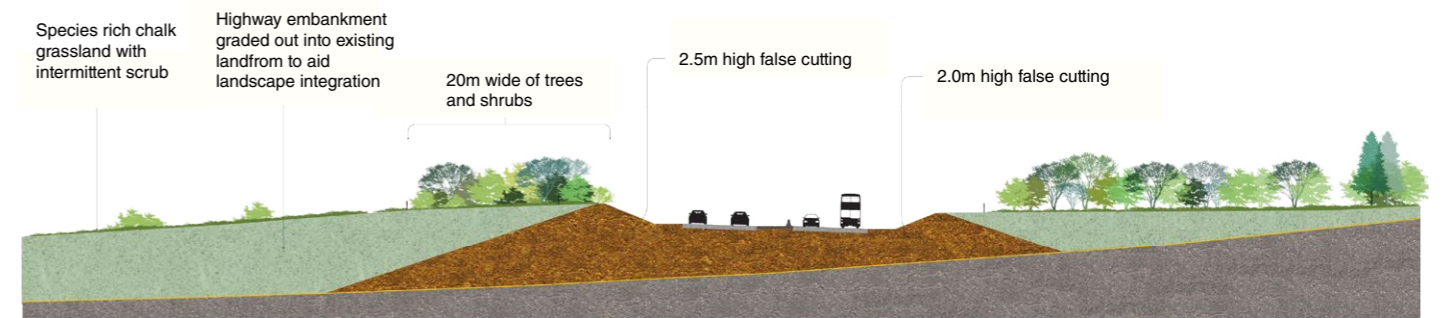
Diagrammatic representation only

Example cross section showing how excavated material will be deposited



The land will be planted with chalk grassland and wildflowers with occasional scrub. Topsoil will be added to varying depths that will also help new areas mix in with the existing landscape. New planting will take several years to become established.

The excavated material will also be used along the new road to create verges and landscaping.



Example planting and landscaping

Diagrammatic representation only

In total we will be creating more than 300 acres of new chalk grassland, connecting currently isolated pockets of grassland.

How did you decide where to put the material excavated from the tunnel?

We chose this location after we assessed all available options. We looked at whether we should use sites in the immediate vicinity or dispose of material further afield, and considered factors including impact on traffic, carbon, biodiversity, land use, noise and operational viability. For the majority of these, a local solution proved to be the better option. We then evaluated which nearby site was most suitable.

The location chosen is situated outside the World Heritage Site, and away from residential properties, but close to the western tunnel portal. It is large enough to take the material and has relatively limited visibility compared to some other options. Its closeness to Parsonage Down which is already chalk grassland can help the new chalk habitat to become established and increase the biodiversity of the local area.

Activity can be kept in one area, with no need to transport material by truck on the local road network – estimated to be up to 78 journeys per hour at the busiest times – which also reduces potential CO₂ emissions.



Why couldn't you use Ministry of Defence land?

The use of MOD land to the north around the Salisbury Plain training area was investigated and ruled out at an early stage following discussions with the MOD.

One of the main reasons the site was not considered was because it would add unnecessary traffic to local roads. Anything up to ½ million extra truckloads could travel along the A360. Also, as a suitable site would need to avoid environmentally protected and military danger areas, it could be located some distance further away than the edge of MOD land.



Want more detail?

Lots more detail can be found in our planning (or Development Consent Order) application on the Planning Inspectorate's website. These QR codes point to some of the relevant documents.



Engineering cross sections



Landscaping

Environmental Masterplan – maps and cross sections



Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan - section 5 & 6



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Tunnel Arisings strategy - Table 3-3 (from P16), Table 4-5 (from P31)

Contact us

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact us:



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