

“Tarmac has had a long-standing commitment to secure the long-term future of the monuments, and we’re delighted to gift this incredibly important historical site to Historic England.”

Stuart Wykes, director, real estate Europe at CRH

Planet

Environmental Stewardship

Tarmac Gifts Thornborough Henges

Tarmac has gifted two henge monuments, part of a Neolithic complex in North Yorkshire described as ‘the Stonehenge of the North’, to Historic England and English Heritage.

The Thornborough Henges land was previously part of the Tarmac-owned Nosterfield Sand and Gravel Quarry site. Tarmac’s presence at Nosterfield has been ongoing since 1995 and has been key to developing our understanding of the landscape and its history and promoting practical improvements.

Extending the conservation value of this site, enhancing local residents’ quality of life, and promoting Nosterfield as a future important destination for green tourism are key to us, and Tarmac will continue to be a key player working with others in this.

The Thornborough Henges complex, near Ripon, is an important site, consisting of three giant, circular earthworks (known as ‘henges’) each more than 200m in diameter. Dating from 3500 to 2500 BC, the henges are of outstanding national significance. The earthworks are thought to have been part of a ‘ritual landscape’, and are probably the most important single ancient site between Stonehenge and the Orkney Islands in Scotland.

Now, the central and southern henges have been gifted by Tarmac into the legal ownership of Historic England, the government’s heritage advisor, as part of the National Heritage Collection, and are managed by English Heritage.

Although the henges have remained well preserved over thousands of years, the central and southern henges were added to Historic England’s ‘Heritage at Risk



Register’ in 2009, due to historic erosion caused by livestock and rabbits.

Tarmac and Historic England have been working in partnership for a number of years to secure the future of Thornborough Henges, so that they can be enjoyed now and protected for future generations. The donation of the henges to the nation was the best option to secure the monuments’ long-term future and has led to them being removed from the ‘Heritage at Risk Register’.

Stuart Wykes, director, real estate Europe at CRH, said: “With Historic England’s help, the heritage of the central and southern henges at Thornborough will be protected and preserved for years to come, and we hope the public enjoy the breathtaking ancient site.”

Duncan Wilson, Historic England’s chief executive, said: “Thornborough Henges and their surrounding landscape form part of the most important concentration of Neolithic monuments in the North of England. They are a link to our ancient ancestors, through thousands of years, inspiring a sense of wonder and mystery. We are thrilled to have acquired this highly significant site for the nation, ensuring that these magnificent monuments are safe and will be preserved for generations to come.”