

**Title of Motion:** Critical A30 Safety Upgrade at Plusha Junction Accident Blackspot

Proposer: Councillor Adrian Parsons

Seconder: Councillor

Supporters: Councillors

**Recommendation for Council to vote on:** That Cornwall Council actively support the re-evaluation of 2015 plans (HA2015Designs.pdf) for a grade separated junction on the A30 at Plusha in order to develop a scheme and associated business case to secure funding from DfT and eventual implementation in partnership with National Highways.

**Context for the motion:** The junction at Plusha is known for its high accident rate including three fatalities in 2024 but despite proposals to permanently close the right turn from the B3257 onto the A30 eastbound, the at grade junction design will not meet current standards for the strategic road network. A grade-separated junction would effectively eliminate the likelihood of serious or fatal accidents at the location, provide safe access to Plusha Services, improve local connectivity and generate economic benefit to the wider area. Funding of such a project is not without precedent as Cornwall Council has previously funded design works for significant road improvements, including the A30 Temple dualling, the St Austell Link Road and upgrades to the A38. This proactive approach to providing Cornwall with a reliable and safe strategic road network has allowed the Government to have ready-to-implement schemes as funds became available. There is additional context provided on pages 2-9 of this document.

**Does the motion:**

**(i) Have potential financial implications for the Council?** Yes, there will be costs associated with the design re-evaluation and work to build the business case but are not expected to be significant bearing in mind the comprehensive 2015 scheme documentation available. There is precedent for investment in schemes such as this that reflect the Council's commitment to road safety and economic growth.

**(ii) Have potential legal/constitutional implications for the Council?** No significant legal issues are anticipated. The Council has successfully undertaken similar projects in other parts of Cornwall, ensuring equitable treatment across the region.

**(iii) Require further background information to enable the Council to make a decision and/or require detailed consideration?** Yes, detailed consultation with the Strategic Director responsible for this matter and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) is necessary. Their responses and any additional background information will be crucial for informed decision-making.

**Consultation requirements (Rule 12.2): Please provide details of how the proposer has consulted with the Strategic Director with responsibility for the matter (or their nominee) and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) together with the details of the consultees' response:** There is a consensus on the need for safety improvements at the Plusha junction. National Highways has previously submitted bids for funds to undertake the detailed design work. With a comprehensive plan put together it would strengthen any bid with the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver what is required. It is crucial that National Highways, as the responsible agency, takes the lead in this project to ensure efficient delivery, operation, and maintenance. The Council's role will be to support and expedite this process in partnership with National Highways.

# **The Case for a Grade Separated Junction on the A30 at Plusha**

**Please refer to the map and aerial view provided in appendix 1 on page 5.**

The following issues are explored in this briefing paper for Cornwall Council Members:

1. Accident data and projections
2. Causes of accidents
3. Traffic Levels - volume and projections
4. Economic development opportunities
5. Accident cost avoidance benefits
6. Local connectivity Impacts

## **Accident Statistics 1999-2024**

Between 1999 and 2022 there were two fatal accidents at Plusha. In 2023-2024 there were 4.

Between 1999 and 2022 there have been 11 serious accidents where people have required hospitalisation for significant injury. 10 of those accidents have taken place since 2013.

The number of accidents at Plusha or its immediate vicinity for 1999 – 2012 was 29 and from 2013-2024 essentially the same (data for 2023 and 2024 is incomplete) but the number of serious/fatal accidents increased from 10.3% to 48.3% of the total.

This can be compared with the negligible accident rate at the Kennards House and Five Lanes grade separated junctions.

## **Accident Causes**

As identified by National Highways the majority of accidents involved traffic turning into and out of the B3257. Until the recent closure of the right turn from the B3257 onto the A30 eastbound there were 8 significant issues at the junction all of which contribute to the high risk nature of any manoeuvre at the location:

1. No off slip for westbound traffic exiting on to the B3257.
2. No entry slip for westbound traffic exiting the B3257.
3. Limited capacity on dedicated turn right lane on A30 eastbound for traffic waiting to cross A30 westbound and join B3257.
4. Poor visibility of junction and signage for drivers on eastbound carriageway (there is a right hand bend before junction).
5. The close proximity of the turn in and out of Plusha Services to the A30/B3257 junction.
6. Traffic speed, volume and unpredictable lane discipline on westbound A30 making judging safe gaps for crossing on to B3257 difficult especially at peak times.
7. Inadequate space for large vehicles turning right from B3257 onto A30 eastbound resulting in partial blocking of A30 westbound lane 2.
8. Confusion or hesitation over right of way for traffic exiting B3257 to join east bound A30 and traffic turning on to B3257 from eastbound A30.

Issues 7 and 8 have been resolved by closing the right turn from the B3257 onto the A30 Eastbound but all the other issues will remain until the junction is reconstructed. The closure of the right turn, whilst beneficial to those crossing the carriageway at that point, has resulted in increased traffic on local roads as well as the diversion route via the Five Lanes GJ which generates its own issues. There has also been an increase in slow speed farm traffic on the A30 between Five Lanes and Plusha on both carriageways which is undesirable.

Local drivers report that issues 1 and 2 are a major contributor to unpredictable lane changing by drivers travelling on the A30 Westbound. Vehicles rapidly reducing speed in lane 1 as they exit onto the B3257 results in vehicles suddenly moving from lane 1 to lane 2 and often accelerating to take advantage of any gaps in the lane 2 traffic or causing lane 2 traffic to brake hard. Vehicles in Lane 1 also move into lane 2 to either avoid slow moving traffic joining from the B3257 or give traffic

queuing on the B3257 the opportunity to join the A30 westbound. The lack of acceleration and deceleration lanes at the junction can only be resolved by a major reconstruction.

Traffic leaving the A30 westbound is signed to give way to traffic that has turned into the B3257 from the A30 eastbound across the A30 westbound carriageway. The lack of a deceleration lane/off slip can, at busy times, result in traffic being briefly held up in lane 1 of the westbound carriageway until able to exit onto the B3257.

The lack of road capacity between the A30/B3257 junction and the turn into and out of Plusha Services further restricts traffic flow through the junctions as any hold up turning right into the services blocks the A30/B3257 junction. Relocating the exit from the A30 westbound is required to eliminate this concern.

Issue 4 arises because the turn to the B3257 from the A30 eastbound requires all drivers to move into lane 2. The signage for the right turn becomes visible about 500m before the turn which, especially in busy periods, may make it difficult for slower vehicles to safely move into lane 2. Those who know the road tend to drive into lane 2 with indicators on before the junction comes into view to avoid getting blocked in lane 1. That manoeuvre can confuse other drivers who are not familiar with the road. A conventional exit from lane 1 via a deceleration lane and overbridge/underpass onto the B3257 would eliminate the issue.

### **Traffic Volumes on A30 and B3257.**

Average daily traffic flows through Plusha increased from around 17600 in 2000 to 26000 in 2023 based on traffic census data on the A30 close to Tregadillett. Westbound traffic has increased by 40.2% and eastbound traffic by 54.8% which clearly shows that the crossing of the westbound carriageway to join the B3257 is significantly more hazardous in 2024 than in 1999. A continuing 2.1% increase in traffic would mean that within 20 years the average daily traffic volume would at 40,000 be approaching the traffic levels currently only seen on summer Fridays and Saturdays when it is extremely difficult to safely join the B3257 from the eastbound A30.

There is no data readily available to confirm the number of vehicles turning onto the B3257 from the eastbound A30. By using data from a count point on the B3257 between Coad's Green and Bray shop for 2000-2009, making some assumptions and projecting traffic flow, it is estimated that, excluding traffic going into Plusha Services and returning to the A30, there are approximately 1000 vehicles per day crossing the A30 westbound to access the B3257. Data suggests that between 2000 and 2009 traffic increased by an average of 0.6% which implies that the number of vehicles using the B3257 will increase only slowly unless there is significant development in the areas currently generating the B3257 traffic.

Overall, the accident risk at Plusha will continue to rise as traffic levels increase unless the junction is reconstructed as a GSJ.

### **Economic Development Impacts**

Plusha Services is strategically located midway between Sourton Down and Cornwall Services. National Highways have consistently opposed development at the services on the grounds that access from the A30 is poor. Applications to expand the services and provide both improved facilities for travellers AND local employment have been refused.

The service area and adjacent land can be developed to provide EV charging, improved catering capacity, hotel accommodation and facilities for overnight HGV motorcaravan and caravan parking as well as a campsite. As at Kennards House there would be development opportunities for small business units which would provide local employment.

Without a graded junction at Plusha, no economic development can be initiated.

## Accident Cost Avoidance

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/322862/average-cost-of-road-accidents-and-casualties-in-great-britain-uk/> provides costs of accidents as follows at 2020 prices:

Fatal Accident	£ 2,120,669
Serious Accident	£ 246,109
Slight Accident	£ 24,960

Based on these figures the cost of all accidents from 1999-2024 would be:

Fatal Accident (6)	£12,724,014
Serious Accident(11)	£ 2,707,199
Slight Accident	£ 1,023,360

Total costs of approximately £16.5m would have been avoided if a CSJ had been constructed in 2000.

With the anticipated increase in traffic volumes over the next 20 years and the observed trend in the severity of accidents at Plusha coupled with escalating cost of injury accidents the benefit of accident avoidance at Plusha will become more significant.

## Local Connectivity

The A30 provides the majority of residents with their connection to the local towns of Launceston and Bodmin and safe access to the A30 is a day to day requirement.

The GSJ at Kennards House provides access north – south for residents living in communities along the A395 and B3254 as well access to the A30. Lewannick and North Hill areas are badly served by the local road network connection to Kennards House and thus have poor access to the A30.

The GSJ at Five Lanes only provides access to the A30 for Five Lanes/Altarnun and communities on the north side of Bodmin Moor. The minor road linking the GSJ to Plusha via Trevague is single track without passing places restricting the value of the GSJ for traffic from the south of the A30 accessing the A30 eastbound.

## Local Opinion, Speed limits and Other Issues

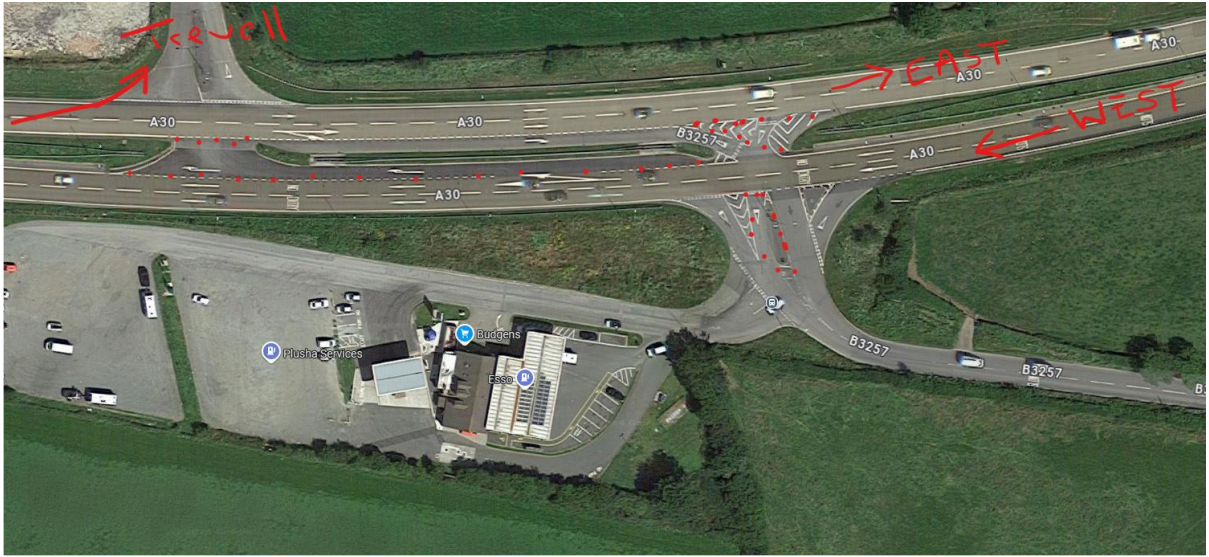
Local opinion is 98% in favour of a grade separated junction at Plusha as evidenced by the survey of attendees at the National Highways consultation in Lewannick in September 2024 by Lewannick Parish Council. The majority of those surveyed were drivers with many years' practical experience of negotiating the local network and their view are both informed and valuable.

Whilst it is understood that the current 50mph speed limit is only in place for the duration of the 'roadworks', it is of very limited benefit and often being ignored which is generating further confusion on the westbound carriageway approach to Plusha. The lack of adherence to the limit was demonstrated when police enforcement action identified 375 drivers breaking the limit in two hours. Maintaining the 50mph limit through the peak holiday periods will increase congestion and make the turn onto the B3257 from the A30 eastbound even more difficult.

The lack of evidenced justification for the proposed changes at the junction is raising concerns that the impacts of the partial closure and long term safety of the junction have not been given due consideration.

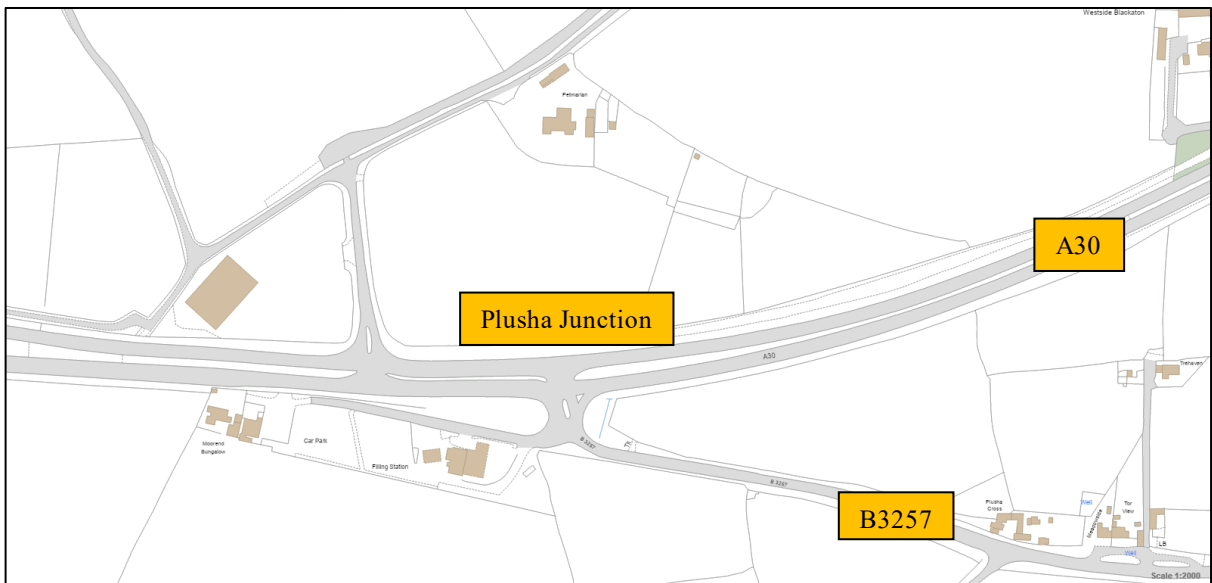
National Highways recommended a GSJ in proposals submitted in 2000 and 2015. Without a basic proposal for a GSJ and budget costings the cost benefit of the GSJ cannot be assessed.

## Appendix 1- Plusha Junction Map and Aerial View



The image above is for reference purposes.

The Red dots show lines of cones/barriers in current (December 2024) partial closure of the Plusha Junction and crossing point for Trevell traffic.



## Appendix 2 - A30 Accidents 1999-2024

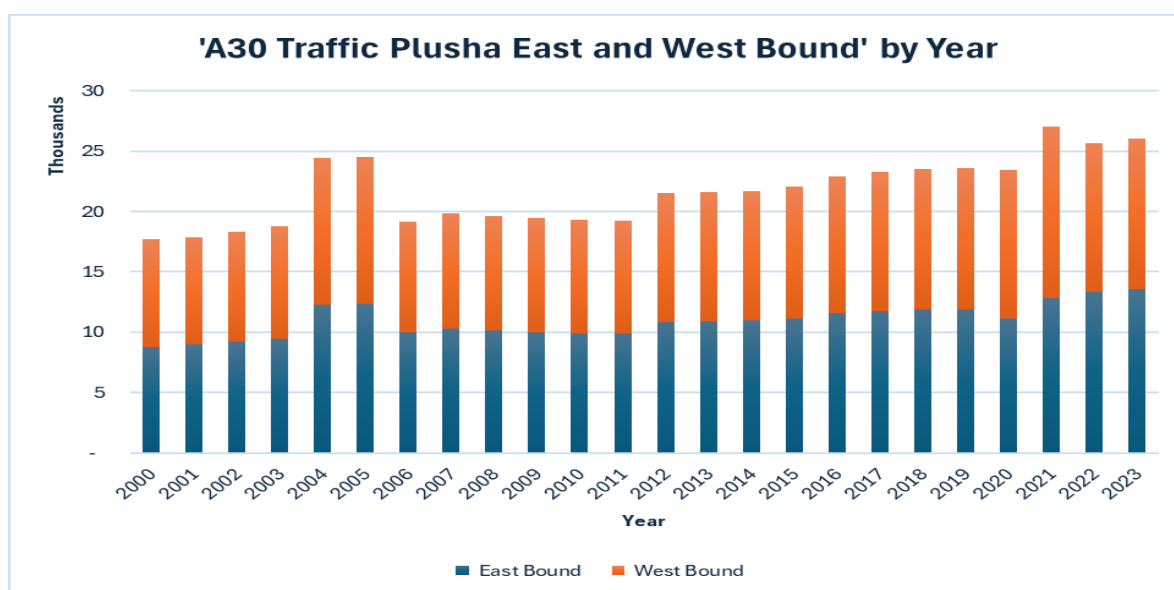
<b>Accidents A30 Plusha 1999- 2024</b>								
Date	Vehicles	Casualties	Type		Date	Vehicles	Casualties	Type
17/06/1999	2	1	Slight		21/04/2013	2	1	Serious
11/10/1999	2	1	Slight		22/09/2014	3	1	Slight
29/04/2000	4	2	Slight		07/10/2014	2	1	Slight
17/08/2000	2	4	Slight		10/04/2015	3	1	Slight
03/04/2001	2	1	Slight		17/05/2015	2	2	Serious
01/06/2002	2	1	Slight		25/08/2015	3	7	Serious
26/05/2004	2	1	Slight		27/12/2015	2	3	Serious
09/07/2005	2	3	Slight		22/04/2017	2	2	Serious
20/10/2005	2	2	Slight		22/05/2017	2	3	Serious
11/04/2006	2	1	Slight		18/07/2017	2	1	Slight
18/08/2006	2	1	Slight		16/09/2017	2	2	Slight
11/07/2007	2	1	Slight		18/12/2017	4	2	Slight
17/09/2007	2	1	Slight		28/01/2019	4	3	Slight
17/12/2008	2	2	Slight		21/04/2019	2	1	Serious
13/06/2009	2	2	Fatal		02/07/2019	2	3	Serious
19/08/2009	2	2	Slight		20/09/2019	1	1	Slight
09/03/2010	2	1	Slight		12/01/2020	2	1	Slight
05/04/2010	2	1	Fatal		27/02/2020	2	1	Slight
25/06/2010	3	6	Slight		15/12/2020	2	2	Serious
17/08/2010	2	2	Slight		28/05/2021	2	1	Slight
04/09/2010	2	3	Slight		21/08/2021	2	2	Slight
25/11/2010	3	1	Slight		11/09/2021	3	3	Slight
18/03/2011	2	1	Slight		20/12/2021	2	3	Slight
16/06/2011	2	5	Serious		07/07/2022	2	3	Slight
30/06/2011	3	1	Slight		10/11/2022	2	2	Serious
22/07/2011	2	1	Slight		01/05/2023	2		Fatal
18/12/2011	2	6	Slight		01/05/2024	2	4	Fatal
28/03/2012	2	2	Slight		12/08/2024	2	2	Fatal
05/06/2012	2	2	Slight		07/11/2024	2	1	Fatal
All Years								
No of incidents			58					
Avg/Year			2.4					
Note Accident Data for 2023/2024 incomplete based on Media reports								
Data Source 1999-2022: Crashmap.co.uk								

### Appendix 3 – A30 Traffic Eastbound and Westbound 2003- 2023

A 30 Traffic Volumes 2000 -2023						
Year	East Bound	West Bound	Total	% Change	5 year average	% Increase
2000	8,743	8,940	17,683			
2001	8,983	8,904	17,887	1.2%		
2002	9,200	9,130	18,330	2.5%		
2003	9,430	9,361	18,791	2.5%		
2004	12,300	12,102	24,402	29.9%	19,418.60	
2005	12,366	12,171	24,537	0.6%	20,789.40	7.1%
2006	9,968	9,212	19,180	-21.8%	21,048.00	1.2%
2007	10,295	9,524	19,819	3.3%	21,345.80	1.4%
2008	10,095	9,538	19,633	-0.9%	21,514.20	0.8%
2009	9,986	9,446	19,432	-1.0%	20,520.20	-4.6%
2010	9,921	9,374	19,295	-0.7%	19,471.80	-5.1%
2011	9,891	9,358	19,249	-0.2%	19,485.60	0.1%
2012	10,831	10,676	21,507	11.7%	19,823.20	1.7%
2013	10,889	10,725	21,614	0.5%	20,219.40	2.0%
2014	10,946	10,770	21,716	0.5%	20,676.20	2.3%
2015	11,114	10,921	22,035	1.5%	21,224.20	2.7%
2016	11,562	11,347	22,909	4.0%	21,956.20	3.4%
2017	11,756	11,522	23,278	1.6%	22,310.40	1.6%
2018	11,868	11,623	23,491	0.9%	22,685.80	1.7%
2019	11,921	11,679	23,600	0.5%	23,062.60	1.7%
2020	11,107	12,317	23,424	-0.7%	23,340.40	1.2%
2021	12,828	14,233	27,061	15.5%	24,170.80	3.6%
2022	13,321	12,331	25,652	-5.2%	24,645.60	2.0%
2023	13,536	12,531	26,067	1.6%	25,160.80	2.1%
<b>Traffic Increase 2000 -2023</b>			<b>47%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>		

All data relates to Avergae Daily Flow over 12 months A30 at Tregadillett

<https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/#16/50.6270/-4.4099/basemap-countpoints>





## Appendix 4 - B3257 Traffic Volumes

B3257 Traffic Data 2000 - 2024			
Year	Method	Vehicles	% Change
2000	Counted	1792	
2001	Counted	1832	2.2%
2002	Counted	1744	-4.8%
2003	Estimated	1756	0.7%
2004	Counted	1989	13.3%
2005	Counted	1902	-4.4%
2006	Counted	1827	-3.9%
2007	Counted	2014	10.2%
2008	Counted	2002	-0.6%
2009	Counted	1861	-7.0%
2010	Projected	1872	0.6%
2011	Projected	1883	0.6%
2012	Projected	1895	0.6%
2013	Projected	1906	0.6%
2014	Projected	1918	0.6%
2015	Projected	1929	0.6%
2016	Projected	1941	0.6%
2017	Projected	1952	0.6%
2018	Projected	1964	0.6%
2019	Projected	1976	0.6%
2020	Projected	1988	0.6%
2021	Projected	2000	0.6%
2022	Projected	2012	0.6%
2023	Projected	2024	0.6%
2024	Projected	2036	0.6%

There is no data available for the numbers of vehicles making the turn from A30 eastbound onto B3257.

Data is available for a countpoint between Coads Green and Bray Shop. An estimated 1000 vehicles/ day travelling from Plusha towards Callington for 2024 has been derived. by calculating the average percentage increase in traffic from 2000 to 2000 at the countpoint and applying it to generate traffic flow for 2010 to 2024.

Local geography would suggest tha it would not be unreasonable to estimate that 1000 vehicles per day turn across the A30 westbound at Plusha. It is assumed that amount of local traffic leaving the B3257 after Plusha but before the count point is matched by local traffic joining.

There is no data available on the number of vehicles turning from the eastbound A30 to use the Plusha Services before returning to the A30 eastbound.

Excluding eastbound traffic turning to use the servies it is estimated that an average of 50-60 vehicles per hour make the right turn between 06:00 and 23:00 daily.

*Briefing Notes and appendices provided by Safer Plusha Action Group*

