

A30 Loscombe Crossroads

Options appraisal

**Assessment of options for the future
operation of the junction**



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Summary

11 injury collisions since 2015

4 fatalities between 2020 and 2024

4 principal options assessed

£250k–£300k estimated cost of recommended improvements

Recommendation: Retain the closure of the central reservation and replace the temporary arrangement with a permanent scheme.

1. Why we have reviewed the junction

Dorset Council has completed a detailed safety review of Loscombe Crossroads on the A30 between Sherborne and Yeovil.

Our priority is to reduce the risk of further serious collisions while maintaining access as far as reasonably possible.

Loscombe Crossroads has a significant collision history. Since 2015 there have been **11 injury collisions at the junction**. Four people lost their lives in three collisions between 2020 and 2024.

Seven of the 11 collisions, including all four fatalities, involved vehicles travelling through the gap in the central reservation.

In 2025, following a Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths from the Senior Coroner, the council temporarily closed the central reservation. Vehicles can still turn left into and out of Marl Lane and Old Compton Lane, but can no longer turn right or travel directly across the A30.

The purpose of this review was to establish whether the junction could safely be reopened and, if not, what should replace the temporary arrangement.



2. Location of temporary closure

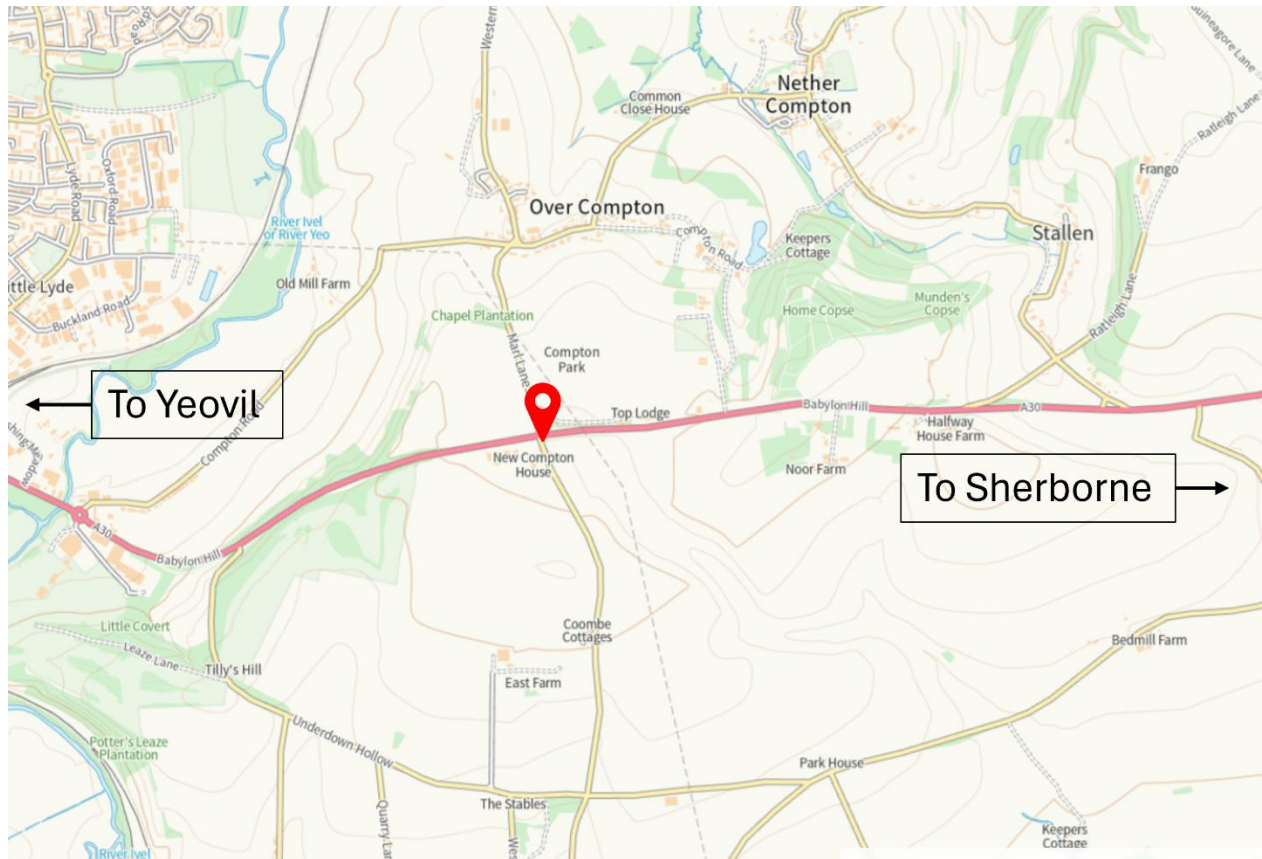


Figure 1 Closed junction

3. What did the review find?

The existing crossroads **should not be reopened in its previous form.**

Current highway design guidance does not support this type of crossroads arrangement on a dual carriageway. The review also identified shortcomings with the existing layout, including the width of the central reservation and the space available for vehicles turning off the A30.

Speed remains another concern. Although the A30 speed limit was reduced from 70 mph to 60 mph in 2024, monitoring in November 2025 found 85th-percentile speeds of **66.5 mph eastbound and 64 mph westbound** at Loscombe Crossroads.

This means that safely reinstating the movements through the central reservation would require substantial changes to the junction rather than simply removing the temporary barriers.



4. What options have been considered?

Four principal options were examined.

Table 1 Options Assessed

Option	What it would involve	Estimated cost	Key Consideration
Staggered junction	Moving Marl Lane and creating two separate junctions	£10m to £15m	Significant construction, land requirement and cost
Roundabout	Reconstructing the junction as a four-arm roundabout	£2.5m to £5m	Major construction, potential land requirement and cost
Traffic signals	Reconstructing the junction with traffic signals controlling all four approaches	£1m to £2.5m	Restores most movements but high cost
Permanent closure with improvements	Retaining left-in/left-out access and improving the junction	£250k to £300k	Lowest cost option but requires some journeys to divert

Each of the first three options could restore some or all of the movements currently prohibited. However, they would require considerable construction, cost and disruption, and some would require land outside the existing highway. None removes every issue identified by the review.

Of these options, a signal-controlled junction was considered the best engineering option if movements across the A30 were to be restored. However, it would cost an estimated £1 million to £2.5 million, require the speed limit to be reduced to 50 mph and introduce new infrastructure and ongoing maintenance costs. It would not safely accommodate U-turns at the junction.

Taking account of the relatively low level of traffic using the minor roads, the safety benefits, costs and impacts of the options, the review concludes that this level of investment would be difficult to justify compared with retaining the closure.



5. What is the recommended solution?

The recommendation is therefore to retain the closure of the central reservation but replace the temporary arrangement with a permanent scheme.

This would include:

- physical traffic islands on Marl Lane and Old Compton Lane to make the left-turn-only arrangement clearer;
- additional traffic restrictions and signs to discourage prohibited right turns and inappropriate U-turns; and
- short sections of shared pedestrian/cycle route to improve access to the crossing point and nearby bus stops.

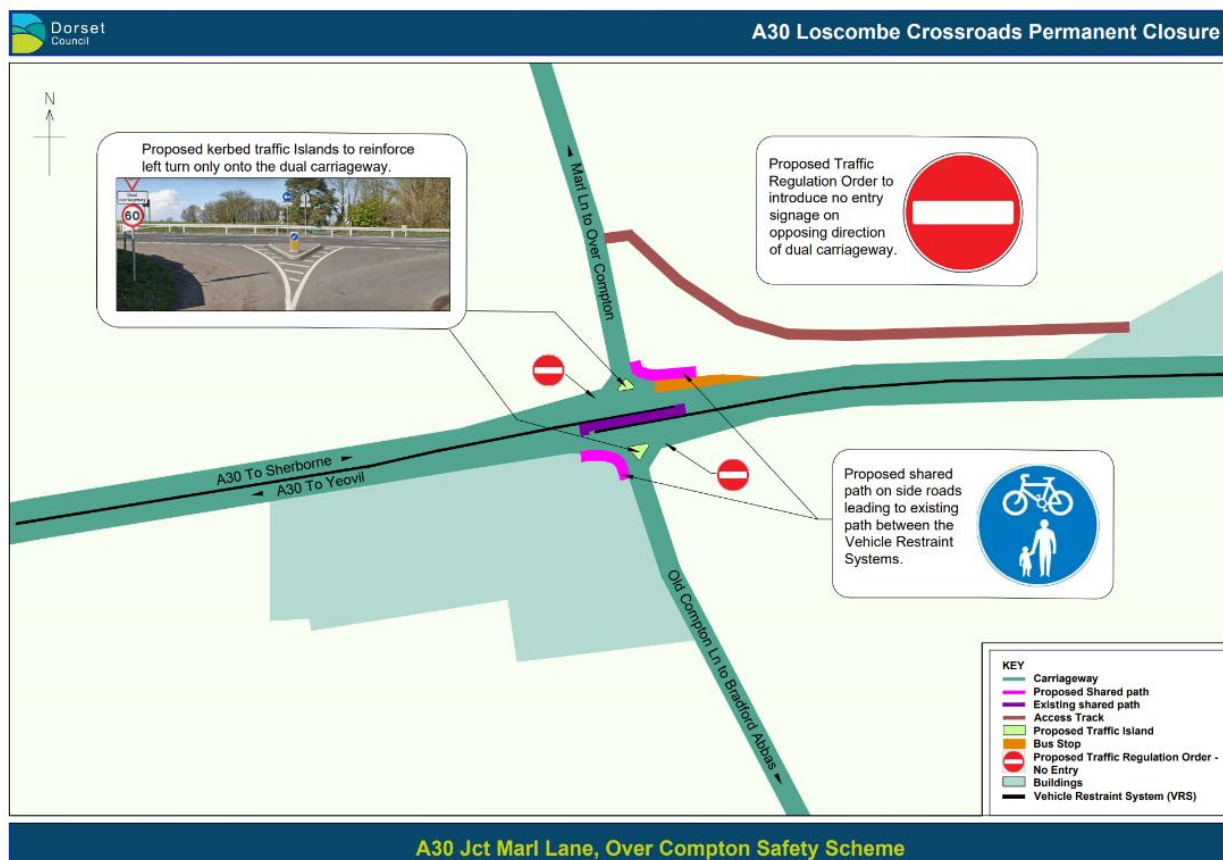


Figure 2 Indicative layout of recommended option

These improvements are estimated to cost £250,000 to £300,000.

6. What about pedestrians and cyclists?

The review recognises that the current arrangements for pedestrians and cyclists are not ideal.



The permanent scheme would improve the approaches to the crossing and provide a protected waiting area within the central reservation. The crossing itself would remain uncontrolled and would not fully meet current guidance for cycle infrastructure.

However, the number of people using the crossing remains low, and none of the recorded collisions have involved pedestrians or cyclists. Given this, the additional cost of providing a controlled crossing would be difficult to justify in terms of the road safety benefit, when considered alongside other demands on the council's limited road safety budget.

7. What about longer journeys?

Closing the central reservation means some journeys are longer.

Traffic that previously turned right or crossed the A30 now has to use alternative routes. The review identifies diversions via Babylon Hill Roundabout towards Yeovil and via routes towards Sherborne.

There is a particular issue for some vehicles over 7.5 tonnes travelling between Over Compton and Yeovil because there is currently no convenient suitable alternative route. However, traffic counts before the closure recorded very few larger vehicles making the affected movement. The council will therefore consider the impact on essential services and agricultural traffic alongside the wider evidence before reaching a final decision.

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8. What happens next?

The review recommends making the closure permanent and developing the additional highway improvements described above.

The final decision will be made by Dorset Council after full consideration of the monitoring evidence and public feedback on the impact of the closure.

