

## Time for ‘first step’ on N25 dual carriageway upgrade

Eoghan Dalton Reports

A Kilmacthomas Councillor has said it is time to take the “first step” and begin laying the groundwork for an upgrade of the N25 as a way of resolving the notorious accident blackspot at Carroll’s Cross. Cllr Ger Barron’s (Lab) suggestion to upgrade the main Waterford to Cork was met with approval by Council chief Michael Walsh earlier this month.

Mr Walsh described it as the “ultimate solution” to regular road safety issues on the road.

Despite repeated warnings in recent years, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) has refused to address issues at the busy N25 junction which has been the scene of numerous near misses and serious accidents.



Carroll’s Cross junction on the N25.

The road was the scene of a fatality last July 16 when Oliver Kirwan (75) from Kilmacthomas died following a road traffic accident at Carroll’s Cross junction on the road. In a later interview with the Munster Express, Mr Kirwan’s grieving family called for action to make the N25 safer.

Cllr Barron told the monthly Comeragh District meeting last Friday that work must now start on preparing applications for the upgrade. “The best time to start is 20 years ago and the next best time is today. So you’ve got to take that first step,” he told the Munster Express following the meeting.

“It’ll probably be a decade in the making but I’d be optimistic because I was very heartened by the CEO’s support for it. “The danger is this would just lie so I want to see that first step taken.” The Labour man said Waterford’s Oireachtas members would also need to be involved in the process to help secure funding for the upgrade through the Government’s capital plan for the roads network. This chimed with comments from Michael Walsh regarding the N25 when he said any major upgrade would require a strong lobbying effort from politicians.

Cllr Barron also wants to resurrect the proposal to bring the Minister for Transport down to Waterford to visit the road and get a sense of the safety issues there.

Shane Ross had told Waterford TD Mary Butler (FF) in the Dáil last year that he found the argument to deal with safety issues on the road “more convincing” each time he heard the points raised. Cllr Barron was doubtful as to whether Minister Ross would visit if the purpose was purely to inspect Carroll’s Cross, however he added: “It would be a move forward and he may well visit if it is for examining a major upgrade of the N25.”