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DUAL CARRIAGEWAY ESSENTIAL FOR PEMBROKESHIRE

Welsh Conservatives are calling on the Assembly Government to think again about their "point blank" refusal to consider dualling the remaining stretch of the A40.

The idea of expanding the single carriageway into a double has been discussed since the 1950's but nothing has been done, despite the idea having huge public support in the Pembrokeshire area.

Preseli Pembrokeshire AM Paul Davies will raise the issue in the Assembly this afternoon:

"It is a nonsense that the main road leading to Pembrokeshire - an expanding centre of industry, a tourism hotspot, and the gateway to Ireland - is a single carriageway.

"With two LNG terminals opening soon, bringing more jobs to the region and the holiday park Bluestone due to open next year, we must make sure the road links we have are not even exceptional - but just of a reasonable standard. The current situation is poor.

"The A40 is tremendously busy. While the National Road Traffic Forecast shows annual average growth of traffic at 1.8% - on the A40 between 2000 and 2006 it has been 4.1%.

"Apart from the fact that this proves the expansion is needed - it would also undoubtedly reduce the number of accidents, injuries and deaths.

"As if benefits to safety are not enough, then surely with such a poor draft budget settlement for Wales just announced, the Assembly Government should be doing everything it can to improve the economy in thriving areas like Pembrokeshire.

"A lack of good transport links is a strong disincentive for businesses and employers. We have a unique opportunity in

Pembrokeshire provided by the energy sector, with the location of two new LNG terminals, so lets build on that - not stamp it out before it's even got going.

"Environmentally - the benefits are obvious too. Is it not better to have a dual carriageway running smoothly, rather than a road clogged with gas guzzling cars revving their engines, while stuck behind slow moving vehicles.

"There are so many benefits to expanding the A40 the list is almost endless, but as long as this list is falling on deaf ears Welsh Conservatives will continue to make the point on behalf of the people of Pembrokeshire."