

Impact of Two-Month A3020 Road Closure on the Stag Inn, Northwood

How Traffic Data and Case Evidence Reveal the Urgent Need for Targeted Business
Support

May 21st, 2025

Introduction

This report analyses the impact of the two-month closure of the A3020 (Cowes Road) near Stag Lane, Northwood, Isle of Wight, on the Stag Inn, a pub located on Cowes Road. The closure, spans from Nodes Road to Stag Lane, mirrors a 2020 closure but extends to two months, with diversions via Nodes Road, Pallance Road, Thorness Lane, and Forest Road. Using traffic data from the A3020 Traffic Analysis (2000–2023) and insights from the 2020 COVID-19 period, the report examines impacts on business operations (customer and staff access, customer experience, reputation risk, and real estate value) and argues that rejecting financial support for the closure misses critical issues, as seen in 2020.

1. Reduced Customer Access and Revenue Loss

Impact:

The two-month A3020 closure near Stag Lane would severely limit customer access to the Stag Inn, reducing footfall and causing substantial revenue loss, particularly from drive-in patrons from Newport and Cowes (ref. 2, 7).

Evidence:

The A3020 is a high-traffic corridor, with 18,905 vehicles/day in 2019 and 14,687 in 2020 on the Lonsdale Ave segment, indicating significant passing trade potential (ref. 3). The 2020 closure of Cowes Road (Nodes Road to Stag Lane) required a 1786-meter detour, deterring spontaneous visits. A two-month closure would amplify this, as customers, especially tourists via ferry routes, may avoid the area due to lengthy diversions through rural roads. Pubs rely on impulse visits, and reduced accessibility could halve daily customer numbers.

Consequence:

Lost sales of food and drink could cost thousands weekly, threatening financial stability. A two-month closure during peak seasons (e.g., summer) could lead to losses exceeding £15,000, risking layoffs or closure.

2. Impaired Staff Access and Operational Challenges

Impact:

The closure would disrupt staff commuting, causing delays, absences, or resignations, and hinder supplier deliveries, leading to operational inefficiencies and reduced service quality.

Evidence:

The A3020s high traffic (e.g., 9,368 North + 9,537 South vehicles/day in 2019) underscores its role as a primary route for Northwood (ref. 3). The 2020 closures

diversion via Pallance Road and Thorness Lane added time and distance, challenging staff from Newport or Cowes. Suppliers delivering perishables (e.g., food, beer) would face similar delays on narrow detour routes. A two-month duration increases the likelihood of staff seeking alternative jobs and suppliers prioritizing other clients.

Consequence:

Staff shortages could force reduced hours or menu offerings, alienating customers. Delivery delays might lead to stock-outs (e.g., no draft beer), further cutting revenue and disrupting operations.

3. Negative Customer Experience and Reputation Risk

Impact:

The closure would frustrate customers with difficult access and confusing diversions, leading to negative experiences, poor reviews, and long-term reputational damage.

Evidence:

The A3020 connects Newport, Cowes, and ferry routes, with peak traffic of 22,064 vehicles/day in 2007 (ref. 3), indicating its role in driving Stag Inn patronage. The 2020 closure caused local disruption, and a two-month closure would amplify frustration, as customers face traffic or get lost on rural detours (ref. 1). Search results note other Isle of Wight closures (e.g., Newport Road, Ventnor) causing division misery, suggesting public sensitivity to access issues. Customers may opt for pubs in less affected areas, like Cowes.

Consequence:

Negative online reviews (e.g., on TripAdvisor) or word-of-mouth complaints could deter future visits, reducing loyal patronage. A damaged reputation as an accessible venue could take years to recover, impacting post-closure recovery.

4. Real Estate Value and Loss of Passing Traffic Exposure

Impact:

The closure would reduce the Stag Inns visibility to passing A3020 traffic, devaluing its real estate and undermining its appeal as a roadside pub, as high traffic exposure is critical to its business model.

Evidence:

The Stag Inns Cowes Road location benefits from A3020 traffic (e.g., 14,687 vehicles/day in 2020), which drives impulse visits and brand visibility. The report highlights the road's role in connecting key areas, making the pubs real estate valuable for its accessibility. A

two-month closure diverts traffic to routes like Pallance Road, reducing exposure to potential customers. Search results (ref. 1) note that traffic impacts local perceptions, and prolonged absence of passing vehicles could lower the perceived commercial value; additionally, findings (ref. 6, pp. 27) states that Horsebridge ‘is a busy urban road’, reinforcing the impact of the loss of passing traffic due to the road closure.

Consequence:

Reduced visibility could decrease customer acquisition, lowering revenue and making the property less attractive to investors or future buyers. A sustained drop in footfall could cut the real estate’s market value by 10–20%, threatening long-term viability.

5. Rejection of Financial Support: Missing Key Issues

Impact:

Rejecting financial support for the Stag Inn during the two-month closure overlooks critical issues, as seen in 2020 COVID-19 support exclusions, ignoring the pubs reliance on passing trade, high fixed costs, and recovery challenges.

Evidence:

In 2020, COVID-19 saw government support (e.g., furlough, grants), but many hospitality businesses were excluded or faced inconsistent relief (ref. 4, 5, 8). The Stag Inn, reliant on A3020 traffic (e.g., 18,905 vehicles/day pre-COVID), likely struggled when traffic dropped 22% to 14,687 vehicles/day (ref. 3). Key issues missed in 2020 included: **(1)** pubs dependence on impulse visits, unavailable during lockdowns or closures; **(2)** high fixed costs (e.g., rent, utilities) despite zero revenue; and **(3)** slow recovery due to customer habit changes. A two-month A3020 closure mirrors this, as diversions deter customers, yet councils may reject support, assuming short-term closures are manageable.

Consequence:

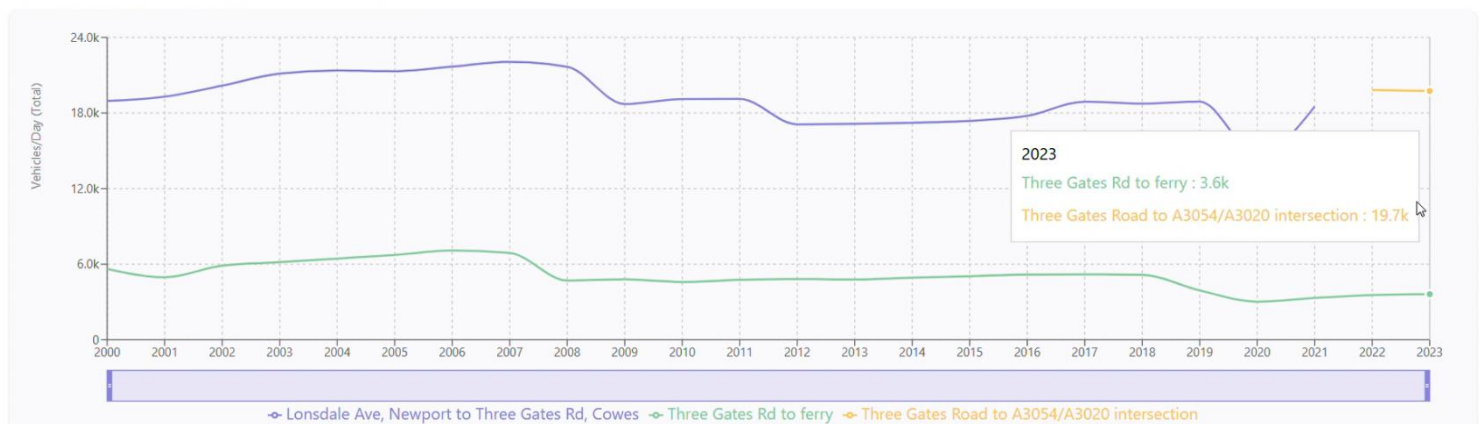
Without support, the Stag Inn faces extreme pressures, as fixed costs (£5,000–£15,000/month) outstrip reduced revenue. Exclusion ignores the pub’s role in community cohesion and tourism, risking potential permanent closure and local economic loss. Support like rates relief or grants, as offered inconsistently in 2020, is critical to bridge the gap.

Road Traffic Trends 2000-2023

These graphs represent the data from the Department for Transport (DfT) (ref. 3), Island Roads (ref. 6), and the Isle of Wight Council (ref. 7). The analysed data can be found in its respective reference section.

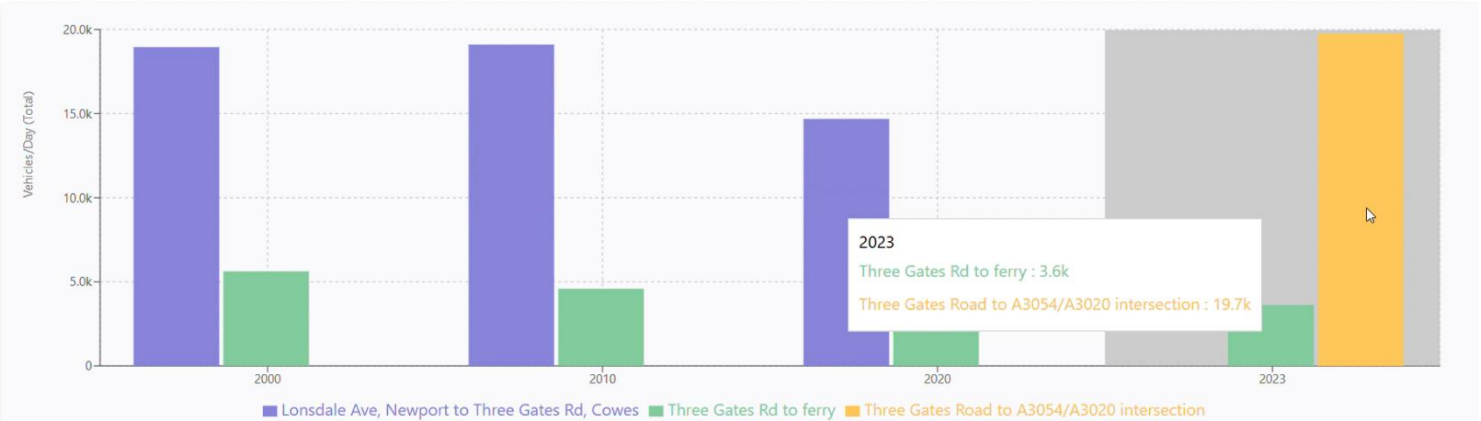
These graphs analyse average daily motor vehicle traffic on the A3020 road in the Isle of Wight from 2000 to 2023, covering three segments. Total traffic is the sum of both directions (e.g., North and South) at each count point. Traffic peaked in the mid-2000s, with the Lonsdale Ave, Newport, Newport to Three Gates Rd, Cowes segment reaching 22,064 vehicles/day in 2007 (10,791 North + 11,273 South). A significant drop in 2020 due to COVID-19 restriction was followed by a partial recovery by 2023.

Total Traffic Trends (Both Directions)



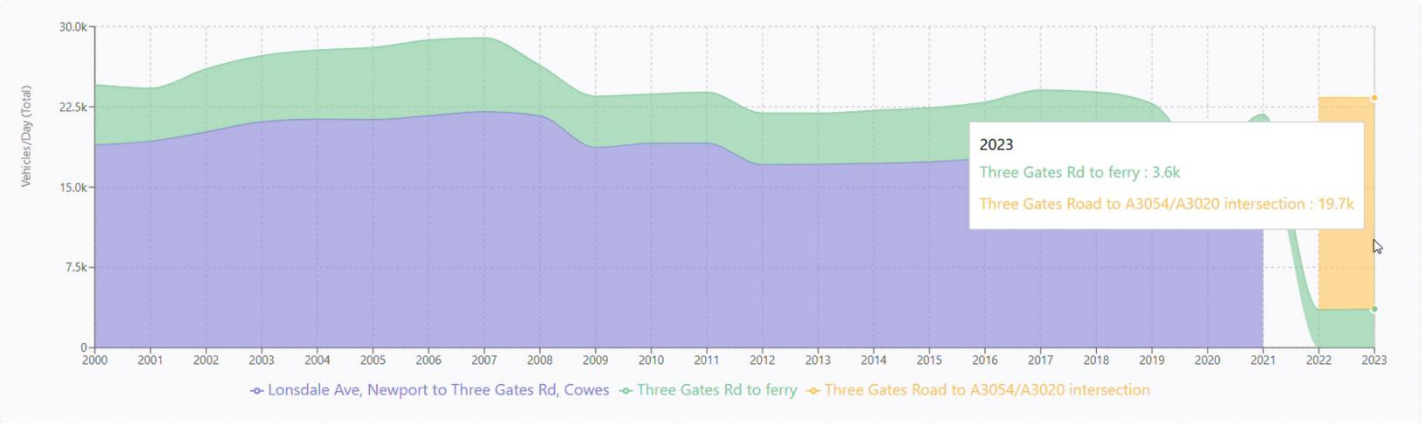
This line chart shows total daily traffic (sum of both directions) for each segment, with a significant drop in 202 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Total Traffic by Segment (Key Years)



This bar chart compares total traffic (sum of both directions) across segments in 2000, 2010, 2020, and 2023. The Lonsdale Ave segment consistently has the highest traffic.

Traffic Share by Segment (Both Directions)



This stacked area chart shows the contribution of each segment's total traffic (sum of both directions), with Lonsdale Ave dominating.

Directional Traffic (Lonsdale Ave to Three Gates Rd)



This line chart shows North and South traffic for the Lonsdale Ave segment, with Southbound slightly higher. The total traffic is the sum of these values.

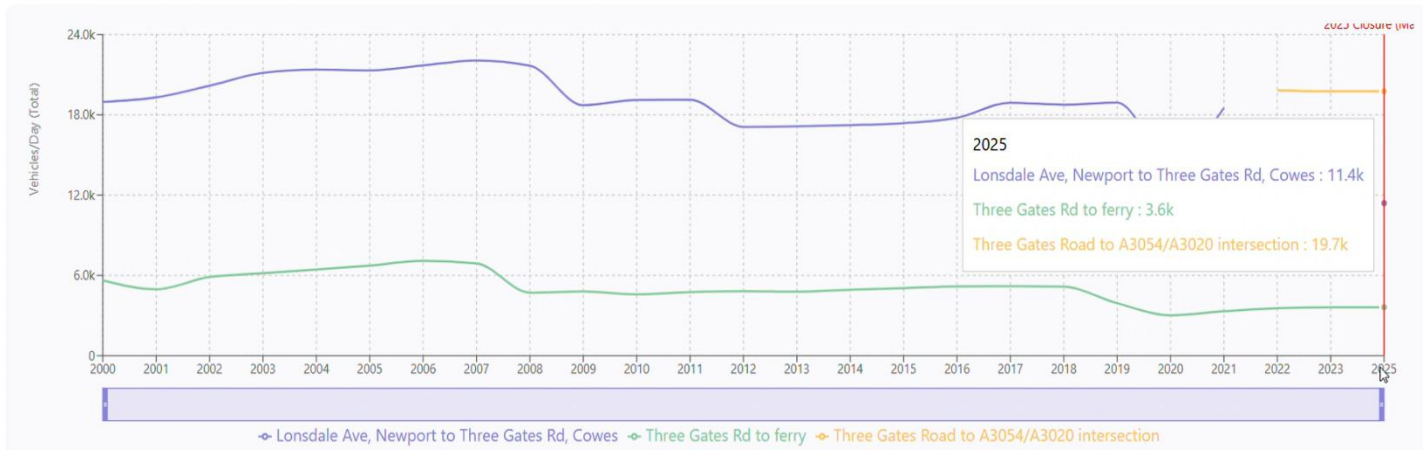
Road Traffic Trends 2000-2023 – Findings

In 2020, total traffic on the Lonsdale Ave, Newport to Three Gates Rd, Cowes segment dropped by 22%, from 18,906 vehicles/day (9,368 North + 9,537 South) in 2019 to 14,687 vehicles/day (7,294 North + 7,393 South), reflecting COVID-19 travel restrictions.

A3020 Traffic Analysis with Closure Impact (2000-2025)

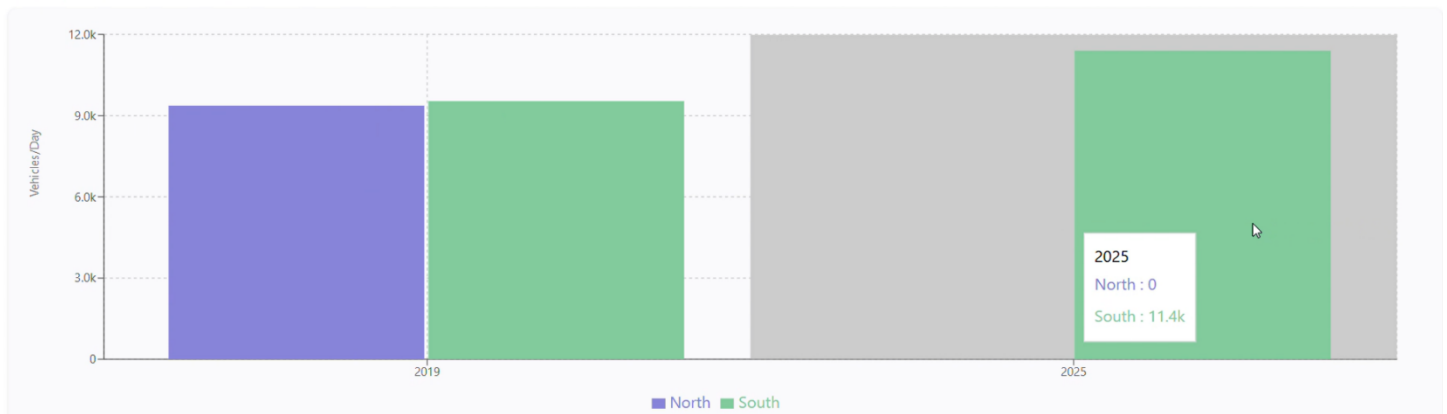
These graphs represent the data from the Department for Transport (DfT) (ref. 3), Island Roads (6), and the Isle of Wight Council (7). The analysed data can be found in its respective reference section.

Historical and Projected Traffic Trends (Both Directions)



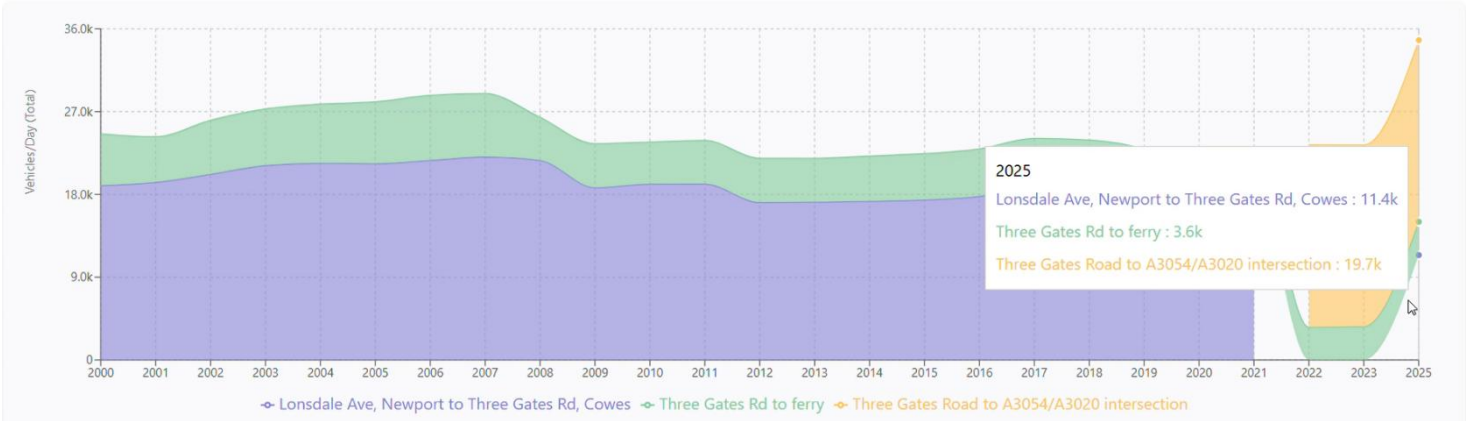
This line chart shows total traffic (sum of both direction) for each segment, with 2025 projection showing reduced Lonsdale Ave traffic (South only) during the two-month northbound closure.

Traffic by Direction (Closure Period)



This bar chart compares North and South traffic for the Lonsdale Ave segment in 2019 (pre-closure baseline) and during the 2025 closure period (May 12-July 4), showing 0 (zero) northbound traffic (diverted) and a 20% southbound increase.

Traffic Share by Segment (Both Directions)



This stacked area chart shows the contribution of each segment’s total traffic, with a 2025 projection reflecting reduced Lonsdale Ave traffic during the closure.

Directional Traffic (Lonsdale Ave to Three Gates Rd)



This line chart shows North and South traffic for the Lonsdale Ave segment, with 2025 projecting no northbound traffic (diverted) and a 20% southbound increase during the two-month closure.

Closure Impact Analysis, Findings, and Conclusion

Impact Analysis:

From May 12 to July 4, 2025, the A3020 Horsebridge Hill, including the Lonsdale Ave segment, will be closed northbound, diverting est. 9,368 vehicles/day to Forest Road, Whitehouse Road, Rolls Hill, and Pallance Road. Southbound traffic is projected to increase by 20% to 11,396 vehicles/day, causing potential congestion at junctions like Nicholson Street. Residential diversion routes may face capacity issues, with local concerns about safety and emergency access. Mitigation includes traffic lights, clear signage, and promoting public transport. A brief two-way reopening during the Isle of Wight Festival (mid-June) may increase traffic but ease northbound disruptions.

Findings:

The 2025 northbound closure reduces Lonsdale Ave traffic to 11,396 vehicles/day (South only), a est.40% drop from 2019's 18,905 vehicles/day, comparable to the 22% decline in 2020 (14,687 vehicles/day) due to COVID-19 restrictions (ref. 3). It is notable to suggest that during the period of COVID-19, government/local support was offered during 2020, and this analysis demonstrates the reduction in traffic (ref. 4, 5, 8), which has not been seen before post-pandemic.

Conclusion:

The Lonsdale Ave, Newport to Three Gates Rd, Cowes segment is a vital Isle of Wight route, with historical traffic peaking at 22,064 vehicles/day in 2007. The two-month northbound closure in 2025 will significantly reduce total traffic and strain diversion routes, requiring robust traffic management to minimise disruptions and ensure safety for residents and emergency services. The traffic analysis reveals significant pressures on local infrastructure that will directly impact business like The Stag Inn, including local events.

Conclusion

The findings of this report present a clear and evidence-backed assessment of the disproportionate economic, operational, and reputational risks posed by the two-month A3020 road closure to the Stag Inn and similar enterprises on the Isle of Wight, while also including local events. Historical and projected traffic data show that this segment of the A3020 - particularly the Lonsdale Avenue corridor - has consistently served as a high-volume access route, with up to 22,000 vehicles daily at its peak. The diversion of northbound traffic in 2025 represents a near 40% traffic loss, a scale of disruption comparable only to the exceptional conditions of the COVID-19, 2020 pandemic.

Unlike 2020, however, current mitigation and support mechanisms are either insufficient or altogether absent. The closure threatens to halve daily customer footfall, disrupt staffing and supply chains, and severely reduce the business's visibility and trade potential risking long-term decline in revenue, customer loyalty, and property value. This compounded impact is not hypothetical; it is quantifiable and grounded in Department for Transport and Island Roads data from 2000–2023, as well as operational realities witnessed during the prior COVID-19 disruption.

From a policy and economic resilience standpoint, this case underscores a critical gap: infrastructure works, while necessary, often proceed without integrated business continuity planning or contingency support for those most affected. The exclusion of the Stag Inn from temporary relief or rates mitigation reflects a misalignment between transport planning and local economic safeguarding.

It is therefore imperative that local authorities and stakeholders consider targeted interventions - such as short-term grants, business rates relief, and local promotional campaigns; this would be to offset losses and preserve the viability of community assets like the Stag Inn. Beyond this immediate case, the findings call for a broader review of how traffic management, infrastructure planning, and small business support can be better synchronised in future works across the island and similar semi-rural regions.

Reference List

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- [Ref. 5] HBAA (2020). Written evidence submitted by HBAA.
- [Ref. 6] Island Roads, 2023. Appendix 1 – Road Closure Notices. [pdf] Available at: <https://iow.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16914/Appendix+1.pdf> [Accessed 19 May 2025].
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- [Ref. 8] ScreenSkills (2020). Written evidence submitted by ScreenSkills.